

A Prayer for
Academic Excellence
On the occasion of the Inauguration of Dr. Carmen Walters

Dear God,

You are Almighty and All-Wise. Grateful are we, your children, that You share your wisdom liberally with those who ask. Our dear Eagle Queen has for generations helped to lead students into the discovery of truth. From the granular truths of molecular structure and chemical bonding to musical composition, artistic expression and computer sciences, You have allowed Tougaloo to impart truth, encourage exploration, and facilitate discovery of the vastness of Your creation. Thank You, Father, for entrusting such a charge to us and for believing in us to inspire the kind of inquiry and ingenuity that would open the hearts and minds of humanity to the truths that govern Your creation.

Now God, we ask for the grace needed to continue in this tradition of truth seeking and academic excellence. While we are certain that You have given us the ability to compete and be victorious in all areas of the academy, oftentimes, our task is made more difficult as many of our students come to this campus having suffered educational disparities that are no fault of their own. They come from school districts that have been underresourced; systems that have been targeted for state takeover; classrooms that are in disrepair. These are not excuses, but realities that impact education. But we rely on the God who has always performed miracles with what was thought to be insufficient. Just as Your son took a few fish and a few loaves and blessed it until it was more than enough for the needs of the people, Lord, we ask that you do it again. Do it again with our campus, our resources, and our students.

O God, take that which we have and willingly offer to You and use it for your glory and for the good of these precious students who seek wisdom and truth. Use the gifts, skill, talents, and passions of our faculty to challenge students to think critically, write carefully, and speak clearly. God, we ask that You use President Walters to lead this charge. Give her the insight and wisdom needed to see clearly the course before her and the courage required to set the coordinates to reach a greater level of excellence that sets a new standard for education. Imbue her, her cabinet and the Tougaloo College community with an incessant fire for academic excellence that shall not be extinguished or even made the dimmer by challenge or change. Direct Dr. Walters in Your truth as a new generation of scholars present and give themselves to this experience to having their intellects interrogated to the extent that the brilliance within comes shining through as a beacon piercing through the moss draped trees of our dear Tougaloo.

This is our prayer. In your holy, mighty and righteous name,
Amen.

Submitted by Rev. Reginald M. Buckley,
Class of 1994