

Ensure you enroll for a course you won't regret

Monday April 1 2019



Although there are many forces that may influence choice of a course to study, students are encouraged to be careful not to study what they may not find useful. STOCK PHOTO

In Summary

There are various reasons students enrol for certain courses. For some, it is where their marks take them, others because they are passionate about it or some because their parents prefer the course. But before you enrol for a course, be sure it is what you want to study, to avoid future regrets

Advertisement

By Dorcus Murungi

In 2016, Makerere University students protested the institution's decision to scrap 32 courses. The affected students complained that the decision would affect their chances at gainful employment in the competitive job market. Commenting on the institution's decision, Prof John Ddumba Ssentamu, the vice chancellor of Makerere University then, said some of the courses were merged, dropped totally or restructured to give holistic training to students. He added that students must understand that curriculums are always reviewed.

And while Makerere was restructuring courses, in Mukono at Uganda Christian University, some new courses were being introduced. According to Ivan Najjuka, the university spokesperson at the time, the decision to review their curriculum to include new courses was because the institution aims at giving their graduates a competitive advantage in the job market. “The need to train professionals who are whole in the sense of knowledge, integrity as well as stewardship directed the institution’s decision to include new courses,” he said. But with the various changes in courses of study at our institutions, what should inform one’s choice?

Passion

Solomon Eriatu, a former student at Kampala International University, says he had always been passionate about journalism and when it was time for him to join university, he could not look any further than a course which would offer him the much desired training. And so Eriatu enrolled for Mass Communication. “I am an extrovert and sociable person and basing on those character traits and my passion for news reporting, I decided to join journalism class. My role models are all media people and I had been practising how to write stories since primary school.” Similarly, Judith Akwelele enrolled for a Bachelors in Child Development because of her love for children. “I could not have opted for any other course as my passion for children is unrivalled. And contrary to popular belief, I had high grades that are synonymous with those who enrol for courses such as Law. At least I felt happier than my colleagues doing Law because they were influenced by their parents,” she says.

Inspiration

Often times, students envision a conducive and favourable working environment ready to embrace them after university through the eyes of their role models. Sean Rukundo, a graduate of Procurement and Logistics, currently a CIPS student at Uganda Management Institute, says he was inspired to study procurement and logistics because of his father’s success. “Having seen my father move through the ranks in a government ministry’s department of procurement, I was inspired to pursue the same course. I envisioned a job market in favour of procurement officers. Unfortunately, times are dynamic and I have not been able to find a stable,” narrates Rukundo.

Money

factor

Despite her passion for Law, 43-year-old Mary Ouma, enrolled for Bachelor of Arts in Education because she was getting government sponsorship on the latter at Makerere University. “The high tuition fees for law school left me with no option but to venture into teaching. Fortunately, I have grown to love the profession. And luckily the job market is very favourable for my kind even with the changing times,” she says.

Grades

Although some are driven by passion, others are forced to choose certain courses by their scores in national examinations. For instance Martin Kaganzi’s dream of joining journalism class still remains a dream. “I was given Public Administration at Kyambogo University as my 14 points at UACE could not allow for Journalism,” he shares. Some students opt for certain courses after getting intimidated out of the ones they have been admitted to. Most universities give students a window of two weeks to if they are to switch. Akwelele reveals that some of her peers joined Child Development course because they thought it would be easier for them to pass and be free

from retaking papers. Similarly Sheila Alupot, a third year student of Nkumba University switched from Mass Communication to Bachelors of Social Work and Social Administration after feeling overwhelmed. “The multiple theories and numerous fieldwork assignments in the Journalism class scared me,” she says. According to Doreen Metta, a lecturer at St Lawrence University, students need to get career guidance. “Students who receive career guidance are well equipped with the knowledge of which courses to study.” Metta encourages both teachers and parents to be involved in providing the rightful career guidance to their children so that by the time they get to university, they are sure of what they want to pursue. “Parents should be involved in exposing their children to different materials and practices that will help them make their choices. Understand your child’s interest in say; medicine, and allowing them to interface with medical persons as well as be exposed to hospital environments,” she advises.

WHAT THE STUDENTS SAY

“I enrolled for a Journalism course because I had always admired being a presenter either on television or radio but because I encountered a lot of challenges getting into that field, I got demotivated and now I just write.”
 Kezia Koburungi, Mass Communication student KIU

“We live in a world of technology and innovations. I figured I could capitalise on this to come up with innovations that can solve our country’s challenges.”
 Collins Nuwagaba, Masters in Computer Security, UTAMU

Phased	out	courses	at	MUK
B.	Ethics	and	Human	Rights
B.		Information		Systems
B.		Information		Technology
BSc		Agricultural		Engineering
BSc		Mechanical		Engineering
BSc	in		Biomedical	Engineering
BSc				Statistics
BSc	in		Business	Statistics
Master		in		Mathematics
Master	of		Mathematical	Modeling
BSc	in		Conservation	Biology
BSc	in		Fisheries	Aquaculture
BSc		in		Ethno-botany
B.		Sports		Science
B.		Physical		Education
Master		of		Geology
Master of Petroleum Studies				

