



## Emerging Fields of Study: New Subjects Offered by Private Universities in Bangladesh

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IRINA JAHAN

The private University scene in Bangladesh has seen an incredible change since its days of commencement in the 1990s. An increasing number of universities in this country are striving to offer the best possible programs to prepare the youth for the demanding and challenging future ahead. All of these programs have been designed with meticulous precision and are expected to provide any individual under the field of study to get an exceptional understanding of the subject. Additionally, students are also provided with sound professional training which will help them apply this knowledge in real world scenarios and hopefully make them the beacon of change that their institutions aim to make them.

### Media and Journalism

Of the several programs being offered, Media and Journalism Studies in particular has been growing as a popular choice of major.

The Department of Media Studies and Journalism (MSJ) at the University of Liberal Arts Bangladesh (ULAB) was established in 2004 and offers graduate (Masters in Communication)

and undergraduate (Bachelor of Social Science) programs. The Department of Communication provides graduate and undergraduate programs to equip students with the knowledge, skills, and ethical principles needed to succeed in the media landscape. In order to better educate students for the changing media landscape, it also intends to adapt the curriculum in light of advances in AI and 4IR.

In a conversation, Dr. Mohammad Shazzad Hossain, Assistant Professor and Director of the Centre for Excellence in Teaching and Learning, said, "My academic experience has shown me the immense value of preparing students for an increasingly technology-driven future. By leveraging innovative teaching methods and instilling a passion for continuous learning, I aim to equip students with the skills they need to thrive in the ever-evolving digital landscape."

Likewise, and with a similar aim, several other private universities - Independent University of Bangladesh (IUB), Canadian University of Bangladesh, State University of Bangladesh and more recently United International University (UIU) have taken the initiative



IMAGE: FREEPK

to establish their Journalism and Media Studies Department.

### Anthropology

In Bangladesh, Anthropology is a field of study that is less known amongst most people but is of great importance. Independent University of Bangladesh was the pioneer in introducing Anthropology in private universities in this country. Following their footsteps, private universities such as Chittagong Independent University and BRAC University started its own Anthropology program.

BRAC started this department in 2013 with only 5 students. Now the number of students enrolled in the program is over a hundred and seem to be an increasingly popular choice of Minor for many Economics and English graduates.

Dr. Moiyen Zalal Chowdhury, Professor of Anthropology at BRAC University says, "I have been teaching Anthropology for six years, both in Japan and Bangladesh. As our society has become more technologically integrated, it is crucial to address the human aspects. Anthropology helps us to build the connection between economy, technological advancement

and human condition. It enables students to be prepared for all sorts of professional avenues including the developmental sector'.

### Engineering in Various Fields

Universities offering Textile Engineering, a much relevant field of study for our country, include International Standard University of Bangladesh and Southeast University.

The Department of Textile Engineering of Southeast University, Dhaka started its

journey in 2006 by launching BSc in Textile Engineering. The Department is consistently putting out its best efforts to provide an international standard Textile Engineering program and contribute to research to benefit the textile and fashion industries worldwide.

"Textile Education is, by necessity, the most comprehensive course of university studies and it holds great potential for a student's bright future" says Dr. Syed Atiqur Rahman Chairman of the Textile Engineering Department.

Another such essential field of engineering available in the country is the Industrial and Production Engineering in institutions such as American International university of

Bangladesh. AIUB's Department of Industrial and Production Engineering (IPE) started its academic journey in the spring 2019-2020 semester. The first batch of IPE consists of more than 20 students. IPE is a broad field compared to other engineering disciplines. Currently in the industry, IPE graduates are sought extensively in the job market due to having diversified knowledge of different fields.

Dr. Md. Ehsanul Haque, Head of the IPE department, commented, "IPE graduates are hot cake in the job market nowadays. Each and every industry is hiring IPE graduates because these graduates are able to play the vital roles of being an engineer and a manager at the same time. We hope our IPE graduates will have that much potential to face the challenges of the fourth industrial revolution and will contribute to the prosperity of our country."

Other universities such as State University of Bangladesh is offering both graduate and undergraduate programs under their Food Engineering and Technology department; and the Canadian University of Bangladesh has a department for Maritime and Shipping for those looking for a career in the respective sectors.

### Fashion Designing and Technology

Bangladesh only has a handful of design and fashion technology programs running in the undergraduate and Masters level. Uttara University is one of such very few universities which have had a Fashion Designing and Technology Department. Known as the Fashion and Merchandising Technology department, it was established in the year of 2012 to create professionals of international standard for the apparel and fashion industries. Fashion Design and Merchandising Technology is considered as a modern need-based course which has huge opportunities for the students to compete in their national and international job market.

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