

FROM CLASSROOM TO CAREER:

University Initiatives

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In the fast-paced, technology-driven global economy, universities in Bangladesh are playing a pivotal role in preparing students for the job market. These institutions are adopting innovative strategies, fostering industry collaborations, and updating curricula to ensure that graduates are equipped with the necessary skills and knowledge to thrive in their careers. Recognizing the importance of practical experience and industry exposure, these universities have become facilitators, bridging the gap between academia and the job market. Through various initiatives, they empower students to not only compete but excel in the competitive job market.

Curriculum Innovation

One of the fundamental ways universities in Bangladesh are preparing students for the job market is through curriculum innovation. "There has been a marked shift towards automation, artificial intelligence, data science, and cybersecurity, with a growing demand for professionals skilled in these areas. Traditional roles have transformed, requiring new competencies and interdisciplinary knowledge. In response, IUBAT is proactively recognizing this revolution and continuously updating its curriculum to meet these emerging needs," shares Prof. Dr. Abdur Rab Miah, Vice Chancellor, IUBAT.

"The newest industrial trends and technical developments are reflected in the frequent updates of our academic programs. Modern subjects like artificial intelligence, data science, and sustainability are included within the curriculum to make sure students are knowledgeable about current problems and technologies," shares Professor Dr. Eaysmin Ara Lekha, Vice Chancellor, Uttara University.

On the other hand, Prof. Dr. Nazrul Islam, Vice-Chancellor, Northern University of Bangladesh adds, "We need to structure our educational system around the evolution of the job market. We have yet to fully incorporate

topics such as artificial intelligence and data science into our curriculum. Ideally, by now, most students should have completed their graduation or at least attained a master's degree in these fields."

Ahsanullah University of Science and Technology (AUST) continuously revises its course content based on feedback from industry stakeholders and alumni. This ensures that the programs remain relevant and that graduates are well-prepared to meet the demands of technology-driven sectors.

"The curriculum, the backbone of the courses of each department, has been developed to promote critical thinking and openness for the students to learn. It provides them with the required knowledge and skills to tackle the challenges of the 4th industrial revolution (4IR) and gives them the confidence and skills to continue to adapt," shares Prof. Dr. Abdul Awal Khan, Vice Chancellor, International Standard University (ISU).

Keeping pace with the evolving job market and addressing the demand for related academic courses, Prof. Dr. Mohammad Nurul Huda, Head of Department of Computer Science and Engineering (CSE), United International University (UIU) shares "We offer some special courses like Business Analytics, Fintech, Supply Chain Management, AI & Robotics, Cyber Security, Data Science, Business Intelligence, Health Informatics, Software Engineering, Courses on Very Large Scale Integration (VLSI) and Renewable Energy to our students to become experts in various skills."

Prof. Shams Rahman, Vice Chancellor, East West University also recognizes the need to prepare students for the 4IR and adds "We have submitted several programs to the University Grants Commission (UGC) focused on the latest technologies, specifically artificial intelligence and machine learning. We have developed a specialized curriculum for a new program titled "Artificial Intelligence and Machine Learning," which will be offered under the Computer Science



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and Engineering Department. We anticipate that this curriculum will be approved shortly. Additionally, we are prioritizing the development of a new program in Data Analytics."

Practical Experience and Hands-On Learning

Hands-on learning experiences are crucial for bridging the gap between theoretical knowledge and real-world application. American International University Bangladesh (AIUB) emphasizes mandatory internships and project-based learning. These experiences provide students with invaluable exposure to professional environments, allowing them to apply their academic knowledge in practical settings.

"Through internships, co-op programs, and industry partnerships, our students have the opportunity to apply their theoretical knowledge in real-world settings. These experiences not only enhance their practical skills but also provide valuable insights into professional environments, making them more job-ready upon graduation. Our collaborations with leading companies and organizations in various sectors facilitate these opportunities, bridging the gap between academia and industry," shares Prof. Dr. Chowdhury Mofizur Rahman, Vice Chancellor (designated), State University of Bangladesh.

Shanto-Mariam University of Creative Technology (SMUCT) also focuses on practical learning, especially in creative fields such as fashion design, graphic design, and interior architecture.

"We are guiding the students to explore and utilize their capabilities and strengthen their

critical thinking, analytical and leadership skills to enable them to frame the vision of their respective careers to face the challenges in the global settings," adds Prof. Dr. Md. Shah-E-Alam, Vice Chancellor, Shanto-Mariam University.

"Academic courses at BRAC University are designed to equip students with both theoretical knowledge and practical skills relevant to their career choices. The courses also include workshops and fieldwork which provide a broader understanding of their areas of interest," shares Syed Mahfuzul Aziz, Vice Chancellor, BRAC University.

Career Services and Employment Support

Robust career services are essential for helping students transition from university to the workforce. Uttara University's Centre for Employment Development (CCD) offers a comprehensive range of services, including employment fairs, mock interviews, resume seminars, and individual career counseling. These initiatives help students develop the skills needed to succeed in job searches and interviews.

"At AIUB, the Office of Placement & Alumni (OPA) supports students with resume building, job search strategies, interview preparation, and networking, and facilitates connections through job fairs. In addition to technical proficiency, workshops and seminars focus on soft skills such as communication, ethics, lifelong learning, leadership, and teamwork, enhancing students' employability," shares Dr. Carmen Z. Lamagna, Vice Chancellor, AIUB.

Similarly, Presidency University has a placement cell that has developed a robust placement ecosystem ensuring the successful employment of all students. "By offering a comprehensive and adaptive curriculum, the university ensures that its graduates are well-equipped with the knowledge, skills, and experience required for success in their chosen fields," adds Prof. Abul Kalam, Dean and Professor, School of Business, Presidency University.

BRAC University continues to support students even after they graduate. The university operates a dedicated office to inform students about career prospects and assist them in securing internships and job placements through career counseling sessions. BRAC University also has a Professional Skills Development Program designed to help students in their last year of school prepare for the working world.

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