

CHUSS Undergraduate Freshers Challenged to Champion Humanities

Makerere University's College of Humanities and Social Sciences (CHUSS) has challenged its newly admitted undergraduate students to embrace academic excellence, leadership and innovation as they prepare to project the college's global reputation.

The call was made during the 2026/2027 CHUSS Freshers Orientation Ceremony at the College Quadrangle, where the Principal Assoc. Prof. Helen Nambalirwa Nkabala urged hundreds of new students to see themselves as intellectual assets capable of transforming society through knowledge in humanities and social sciences.

Assoc. Prof. Nkabala said CHUSS students must reject misconceptions that humanities disciplines are less valuable than science and technology fields, arguing that social knowledge remains central to communication, governance, innovation and human development.

You are the excellent minds we must mine for the world

Nkabala told freshers that their admission to CHUSS represented an opportunity to demonstrate the relevance of humanities and social sciences in solving global challenges.

She described the college as the intellectual and moral foundation of Makerere University, saying its disciplines provide the critical skills required to interpret, communicate and apply scientific and technological discoveries.

"Wherever you go, when you hear people say that the Humanities and Social Sciences are nothing, just tell them that such a statement is coming because there is a lack of knowledge and understanding. Take your time to educate whoever does not appreciate this field."

She added:

"It is for that reason that we are 'The Mine of Excellent Minds' and YOU are those excellent minds. We shall mine until the entire world gets to know that you arrived."

The Principal encouraged students to remain committed throughout their academic journey, emphasizing discipline, resilience and personal responsibility.

"All the professors and administrators standing before you today were once where you are sitting. If we navigated this path successfully, you will also go through it and come out triumphant."

CHUSS is a university within a university

Deputy Principal Assoc. Prof. Eric Awich Ochen reinforced the college's strategic importance, describing CHUSS as one of Makerere's largest and most influential academic units.

He said the college plays a critical role in producing the human capital required to drive Uganda's development agenda.

“CHUSS is the most vibrant college in Makerere University and is universally regarded as the true soul of the institution. Vice-Chancellor Prof. Barnabas Nawangwe consistently refers to our college as ‘a university within a university.’”

Ochen told students that their training in fields such as political science, journalism, psychology, social work and performing arts would equip them with skills necessary for national transformation.

“Achieving Uganda’s economic transformation requires high-quality human capital, and CHUSS is the primary incubator of that transformative human capacity.”

Use knowledge to solve society’s challenges

Representatives from the School of Social Sciences introduced freshers to programmes under Social Work and Social Administration, Political Science and Public Administration, and Sociology and Anthropology.

Dr. Peter Nareeba, representing Dean Dr. Justus Twesigye, encouraged students to develop strong research habits and understand the role of social sciences in addressing governance and community challenges.

“The social sciences equip students with analytical tools to understand and respond to complex societal problems.”

Dr. Kizito urged students to focus on critical thinking, research and practical application of knowledge.

Your voice shapes society

Officials from the School of Languages, Literature and Communication urged students to recognize the power of language, media and storytelling in shaping public opinion and preserving culture.

Dr. Levis Mugumya, representing Dean Prof. Sauda Namyalo, introduced departments including Journalism and Communication, Literature, African Languages, European and Oriental Languages, and Linguistics.

Head of Journalism and Communication Dr. Aisha Sembatya Nakiwala said communication students occupy a strategic position in the digital era.

“Communication students are at the cutting edge of modern media, digital narratives and public advocacy.”

Poet and academic Dr. Susan Kiguli advised students to remain attentive to university experiences that contribute to their growth.

“Every minute detail in university life is critical to your eventual success.”

Hard work determines success

The School of Liberal and Performing Arts encouraged students to combine creativity, discipline and intellectual curiosity.

Representing Dean Prof. Pamela Khanakwa, Dr. Charlotte Mafumbo told students that academic success depended on commitment.

“Hard work kills no man; it is laziness that does.”

Dr. Christine Mbabazi Mpyangu said CHUSS provides a platform for intellectual growth and character development, while arts lecturers highlighted the role of music, theatre and performance in society.

You are constantly becoming

The School of Psychology advised freshers to take responsibility for their choices as they transition into university life.

Prof. Roscoe Kasujja from the Department of Mental Health warned that increased freedom at university requires maturity and self-management.

“From the moment we are born, we become, and we continue to become. Now that you are here at Makerere, the reality is you are actively becoming.”

He encouraged students to seek help whenever they experience academic pressure or emotional difficulties.

“Mental health is not a static destination—it is something you must actively nurture day by day.”

Grades are earned, not given

CHUSS Registrar Mr. Vincent Abigaba guided students on academic regulations, examinations and semester requirements.

He reminded students that the academic calendar consists of 15 weeks of teaching followed by examinations.

“Faculty members do not give retakes; students earn their grades based on effort, attendance and compliance with assessment requirements.”

Protect your digital identity

ICT Lead Mr. Arthur Opio introduced students to Makerere’s online systems, including ACMIS, student email services and e-learning platforms.

He warned students against cyber threats and misuse of digital accounts.

“Do not share passwords, click suspicious links or visit unsafe websites that expose your devices and information.”

College Librarian Mrs. Justine Namuddu encouraged students to use library resources early in their academic journey.

“If you do not make the library your best friend early, it will call for you as an emergency during exam time.”

Sexual harassment will not be tolerated

Officials from Makerere University’s Gender Mainstreaming Directorate warned students against harassment and discrimination.

Ms. Cynthia Komakech Ayaa said the university maintains a zero-tolerance policy against sexual misconduct.

“Sexual consent is non-negotiable, and violations attract serious disciplinary and legal consequences.”

Embrace Leadership, CHUSS chose you

The 91st Makerere University Guild President, Sentamu Churchill James, a CHUSS alumnus, encouraged students to develop leadership skills and maintain discipline.

He said CHUSS has historically produced influential student leaders.

“You did not choose CHUSS; CHUSS chose you! You are in the only college where true leaders are made, not born.”

He attributed his rise to leadership to three principles:

“Prayer, Discipline and Unyielding Dedication.”

Use freedom responsibly

Former CHUSS student leaders Belinda Nanyange and Woti Ambrose advised freshers to balance independence with responsibility.

Nanyange said university freedom should be used positively.

“Makerere will give you freedom you have never experienced before—no one will force you to attend class or do prep. Use that freedom to build lasting networks and define your legacy.”

Current CHUSS Guild Council leaders assured students that their office would continue advocating for student welfare and organizing academic and social activities.

The orientation concluded with presentations from cultural, religious and academic student associations, welcoming freshers into the wider CHUSS community.

Story by Andrew Twahirwa - 4th Year Journalism and Communication Student
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