



Message from the Lecturer and Acting Head of Department

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The Department of Journalism and Communication (DJC) at Makerere University has held the Annual Media Convention (AMC) every year since 1998. The AMC brings together media and communication professionals, members of civil society and the general public, civic and political leaders to discuss topical issues in journalism, media and communication in the East African region.

The theme of the AMC changes each year, in response to what the DJC and the industry consider a pressing issue of the times. This year's theme is "Media, ICTs and Development: The New Era of Productivity and Transformation of Journalism and Communication" with the key aim being to draw discussions on how Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) are enhancing

development in the country and region. The 2015 AMC is a platform for scholars to share knowledge on how new media tools and platforms are impacting the teaching of journalism and communication. It is also an opportunity for students and teaching staff to interact with practitioners in journalism and communication to hear about the best practices in the industry. The discussions ought to inform policy development and reinvigorate agendas for advocacy.

The emphasis of most presentations is on how new media, particularly social media, are changing ways practitioners in journalism and communication gather, process and disseminate media content. The discussions also examine the deployment of the various platforms such as blogs, podcasts, wikis, message boards and others where individuals come together to produce and share media content. Some presenters examine the impact of social networks and forums such as Face book, Myspace, YouTube, Twitter, Flixter, LinkedIn and others on the practice of journalism and communication.

While new media technologies provide an opportunity to journalism and communication professionals, they also present a challenge since ordinary individuals can use the same tools to gather, process/produce and distribute media content to many others. The work, which was a preserve of the mainstream media, is now open to ordinary citizens. Aware of these developments, the

DJC is completing the review of the undergraduate and graduate programs to provide a richer curriculum with courses that enable our students to engage with concepts such as online journalism and citizen journalism; but also new techniques in multimedia production, web design, development and content management systems, animation, audio-visual production, streaming, new media monetization and regulation, mobile applications, as well as computer aided research.

The proposed disaggregated program offers two Bachelor's and two Master's degrees in journalism and multimedia studies as well in public relations and development communication. The proposed new programs provide students with a unique blend of new media theory and practice, equipping learners with the necessary skills for future work or research in the field of new media and multimedia production. The new program aims to develop critical thinking with an in-depth understanding of new media and its role in the holistic development of society.

The new program will place more emphasis on hands-on training with students working in teams with actual industry agencies to produce comprehensive and useful new media products. This is complimented with dedicated multimedia computer laboratories in which students produce cutting edge interactive and multimedia products.