

MEDIA AND FILM STUDIES

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS FROM STUDENTS

Students in the Media and Film Studies (MFS) department often ask questions whose answers are provided below. Each MFS student is expected to use the Daystar University catalogue as a guide in making decisions about classes, and as a source of information on university policies and procedures. The catalogue may be found on the Daystar University website under Downloads (<http://daystar.ac.ke/downloads.htm>).

Students are also expected to take responsibility for their academic journey and personal choices on campus. They should aim for positive interactions with peers, teachers, and staff inside and outside the classroom, studios, and other facilities. Each student should also take advantage of extra-curricular activities and opportunities so as to create professional networks, build portfolios, and position themselves to best advantage when they are ready for internship, graduation, and the world of work.

Every student is also expected to be professional in their interactions with members of staff and faculty. They should visit the office to raise administrative issues, and see their academic advisor for academic queries. Students should avoid calling, texting or sending Whatsapp messages for non-emergencies to faculty or staff.

Questions:

1. When should I declare my major?
2. Can I take a prerequisite together with the course that follows it?
3. What is the procedure for going on practicum?
4. What is a senior project?
5. What does it mean to be on academic probation?
6. What happens when I have a question/complaint about a grade?
7. How should I choose classes to be able to complete my program of study while following prerequisites and other requirements?

1. WHEN SHOULD I DECLARE MY MAJOR?

BA Communication students should decide what area of study they will concentrate on by second year. Currently, the areas of study are Print, Electronic, Advertising, or Public Relations. After making the decision, they should declare their major by informing the registrar's office. Declaring one's major by second year enables students to start taking prerequisite classes in their area of study early enough to ensure they finish their academic programme in the projected time.

2. CAN I TAKE A PREREQUISITE TOGETHER WITH THE COURSE THAT FOLLOWS IT?

No. Prerequisite courses are designed to be done to provide a foundation that is then needed for the course that follows. The Daystar University catalogue provides guidelines

for print and electronic media on how to select classes while observing the prerequisite requirement. For advertising students, the guideline is available under Question 7 below. NB: The department DOES NOT give notes to the registrar's office to allow students to do a prerequisite with the course that follows it.

3. WHAT IS THE PROCEDURE FOR GOING ON PRACTICUM?

In fourth year after completion of course work, students have the option of going on practicum/internship or doing a senior project. For students who have no job experience, the department strongly encourages them to go on internship where they gain valuable exposure to the workplace. Frequently, many of those students are absorbed in that organization or elsewhere. Many workplaces prefer to keep interns for about three months which is encouraged. The department requires that the student complete 7 weeks of practicum (280 working hours).

Students should begin practicum after:

- completing most courses in their area of concentration
- completing the prerequisite course for their area of study (Electronic Media: COM 467; Advertising: COM 459/ COM 472/3; Print Media: COM 436/ COM 459/ COM 474)
- registering for COM 507
- getting departmental clearance.

To apply for practicum, students should take the following steps:

- a) Complete the required prerequisites as per the course description above. Under no circumstances may a student begin a practicum without fulfilling the prerequisites or without getting department clearance.
- b) Register for COM 507.
- c) Request the latest audit from the registrar. Submit the audit to Continuing Education Office (in Nairobi Campus) or communication administrator (in Athi River Campus). A copy of the audit should be submitted to the MFS department. At this point permission to do the practicum is granted by the Practicum Coordinators using the requisite slip.
- d) The student receives an official letter from the Department, which is used to identify an organisation for practicum.
- e) Once an organisation has been identified, the student should ensure they get an official letter from the organisation, where they will attach. Submit details about the organisation on the sheet that will be provided by MFS department.
- f) The student is assigned a supervisor from the Department.
- g) The student then receives two documents. One is a worksheet, which is to be photocopied to fit the seven weeks required by the University. Students are required to fill worksheets on a daily basis describing tasks given and specific work undertaken. The student must also ensure that the workplace supervisor signs daily, against each task. The second document the student receives details guidelines for writing the practicum report.
- h) The department supervisor engages the student and a visit to the organisation is planned in conjunction with the workplace supervisor.

- i) The student completes the seven weeks practicum and submits a report using the report writing guidelines. Please note that most practicums are three months. Students are encouraged to stay for the full three months or longer depending on the contract.
- j) In addition to the report, the student is assessed separately by the workplace supervisor using the assessment form provided by the Department.

4. WHAT IS A SENIOR PROJECT?

A senior project is an independent project that a student can opt to take in their final year. It is worth 4 credit hours and entails a student doing research on a topic of their choice with the guidance of a faculty advisor. On completion, the student submits a research report for assessment. If a student wishes to do a senior project, they approach the HoD in the semester they wish to do it, so that they can be allocated a faculty supervisor to guide them.

5. WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO BE ON ACADEMIC PROBATION?

Diploma and undergraduate students who do not attain a grade point average of at least 2.0 will face probation. If a student is placed on probation, they receive a letter from the registrar's office notifying them of their status. A student gets three chances to improve their GPA. After that, if the student does not get a GPA that is 2.0 and above, they are discontinued.

Many students who get notice of discontinuation often choose to come to the department to plead for a chance to be readmitted. The department has **NO OBLIGATION** to support a student for readmission. Students on probation should make every effort to get out of probation with the chances already given. They should seek academic advice early from members of faculty, and aim to address the issues causing their poor classroom performance before being discontinued.

6. WHAT HAPPENS WHEN I HAVE A QUESTION/COMPLAINT ABOUT A GRADE?

If a student only wishes to understand why they attained a particular grade, they can have a discussion with the lecturer concerned.

However, if the student has a complaint/dispute concerning the grade they attained in a particular course, they should fill in a grade complaint form available from the school administrator. The form is then submitted to the department's exam officer who addresses the matter administratively.

7. HOW SHOULD I CHOOSE CLASSES TO BE ABLE TO COMPLETE MY PROGRAM OF STUDY WHILE FOLLOWING PREREQUISITES AND OTHER REQUIREMENTS?

The Daystar University catalogue provides a guideline for Print and Electronic Media majors on the order of courses they should take. This order of courses also ensures that prerequisites are done as required. Advertising students can use the guideline below.

ADVERTISING MAJOR (BA)						
1ST YR			2ND YR			
Semester I	Credit Hrs	Semester II	Credit Hrs	Semester I	Credit Hrs	Semester II
INS 111	3	INS 112	3	ACS 101	2	COM 223
BIL 111	3	BIL 112	3	ECO 111	2	COM 226
ENG 111	3	ENG 112	3	INS 212	2	COM 243
		PHY112	2	PHL 111	3	COM 263
ENV 112	3	BIO 111	2	BIL 212	2	COM 344
MAT 102	3	HPE 113	1	COM 231	3	Minor/Elective
ART/LIT/MUS111	3	COM O99	0 (3)	POL 111	1	
TOTAL CREDIT HRS	18		14(17)		15	
3RD YR			4TH YR			
Semester I	Credit Hrs	Semester II	Credit Hrs	Semester I	Credit Hrs	Semester II
INS 313	3	COM 321	3	INS 412	3	COM 450/451/461
RET 320	2	COM 323	3	COM 422	3	COM 473
COM 302	3	COM 448	3	COM 449	3	Minor/Elective Practicum
COM 322	3			COM 459	3	/Senior Project
COM 346	3	Minor/Elective	6	COM 419	3	
Minor/Elective	3			Minor/Elective	3	
TOTAL CREDIT HRS	17		15		18	