

Do marketable courses – Musingo

By Abou Kisige

Principals of colleges and institutions of higher learning have been asked by state minister for higher education Dr John Chrysostom Musingo to put emphasis on marketable courses if their students are to be employable.

"President Yoweri Museveni has on many occasions emphasised that institutions of higher learning should offer high-value programmes which are relevant in the job market," Musingo said.

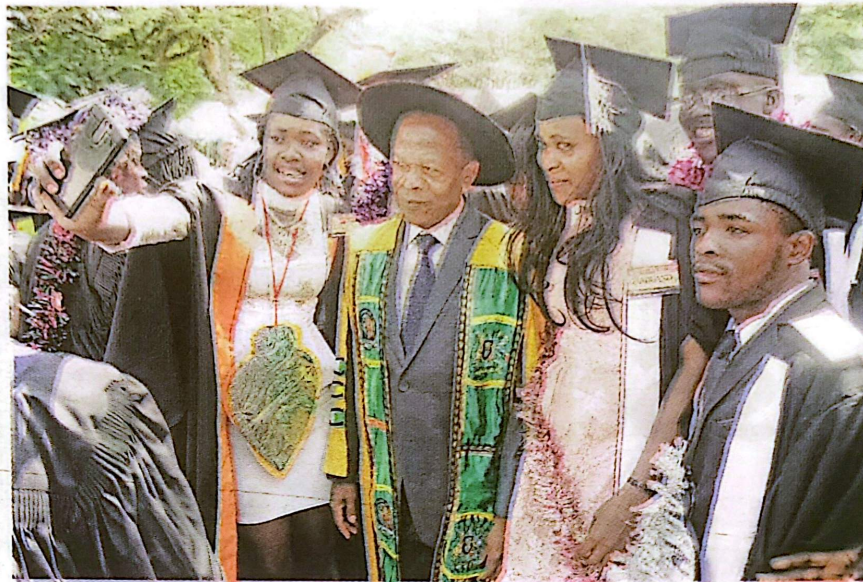
He made the remarks while presiding over the 12th graduation ceremony of Uganda College of Commerce Pakwach in Pakwach district over the weekend.

Much as the Government and other private investors are investing in vocational and tertiary education, some of the students who graduate, still remain jobless. This, according to Musingo, is partly because they studied courses that are unmarketable.

Some of the marketable courses, according to the 2016 International Labour Organisation journal *Study of Vocational Education in Uganda* include mechanical engineering, carpentry and joinery, electrical installation and agriculture.

A total of 626 students graduated with certificates and diplomas in various disciplines, including records and information management, purchase and supplies management, clearing and forwarding and procurement and stores management, among others.

Musingo (in green gown) taking a selfie with some of the graduands during the 12th graduation ceremony of Uganda College of Commerce Pakwach over the weekend. Photo by Abou Kisige



Musingo said by offering demand-driven programmes, colleges would automatically be advertising themselves nationally and internationally.

"The market knows what it wants; it will not take on your products if you do not offer them value for money. Take on well-packaged and well-delivered courses, tailored to the job market demands," Musingo advised.

He said institutions risk getting out of the market if they do not continuously review their curriculum

Good courses

Marketable courses include engineering, carpentry and joinery, electrical installation and agriculture

to address the needs of the labour market.

"I do not want you to take parents and students for granted. I believe you know of once great schools in this country that have become nothing," Musingo advised.

He advised them to replace fear with curiosity to overcome the uncertainties. "In order to be successful in life, you must have more than a transcript. You require a plan, organisation, passion and a strategy to achieve," Musingo said.

He asked students to use the distinctive quality education acquired to change the challenges into opportunities, saying with these, they would outsmart the rest.

The principal of the college, Deus Mutesigensi, urged students to use the knowledge acquired to change the environment and society for the better. "Avoid drug abuse, bad peer influence, be responsible citizens prepared to traverse the vast economic challenges and become models in your respective communities," Mutesigensi said.

"The skills you have acquired will only help Uganda to develop if you keep healthy in your heart, head and body," Mutesigensi added.

Bosco Musinguzi, one of the students at the college noted that if they pursued courses, which offer unique skills in the communities, they would get jobs.

The executive secretary of Uganda Business and Technical Examinations Board, Onesmus Oyesigye, asked students to appreciate the Government for the enabling environment which has provided them with technical and financial support to attain their desired goals.

"This college has over time offered demand-driven academic programmes and produced graduates who are making a big impact in different sectors of the economy," Oyesigye said.

He said this is a tremendous achievement towards skills development for social economic transformation of the country.