

MAK splits mass communication

BY ANDREW SSENYONGA

The department of journalism and communication at Makerere University has completed the review of its curriculum that led to the creation of two degree programmes in mass communication.

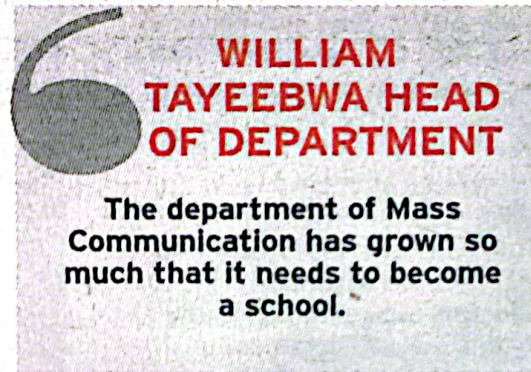
Under the proposed new curriculum, the current four-year bachelor of journalism and communication degree has been split into bachelor of journalism and multimedia studies and bachelor of public relations, corporate and development communication, with each having a master's programme.

The proposed programmes are intended to equip students with relevant knowledge and skills to deal with the dynamics and complexities of the fast-growing and changing fields of journalism and communication. If approved, the department will start offering the programmes in the academic year 2018/2019.

■ GROWTH OF INDUSTRY

On Thursday, during the university's annual media convention 2017 at Makerere, the department head, Dr William Tayeewa revealed that the industry had expanded massively and amendments were needed.

"For 20 years, we have been running one programme, although in 2004 we started the master's programme. The industry has continued to grow so much that it is important to revise the programme to respond to the needs of



the industry," he said.

Tayeewa added that the department of Mass Communication, has grown to become a school.

"The programmes are expected to reduce the years of studying to three, as opposed to the current four," he said.

■ MEDIA UNDER THREAT

The annual media convention 2017 was convened under the theme: "Media and governance in emerging democracies and hybrid regimes; reporting elections in East Africa region 2015".

It was intended to look at the coverage of elections in the East African region and Uganda in particular, in the period 2015 to 2017.

The keynote speaker Prof. John Jean Barya, the head of the department of public and comparative law, School of Law Makerere university said there is a myriad of illegal measures against the media perpetrated by state.

"These include collusion between media owners and government to protect

government interests in exchange for adverts and profits, firing of critical journalists, closure or threats of closure of media houses, raids and occupation of the same," he said.

He noted that the role of media before, during and immediately after elections must be understood in the context of the kind regime that reigns in Uganda.

The state minister in charge of general duties Mary Karoro Okurutu said, "Despite the economic imperatives facing the media industry, professional journalists still lack multimedia and other digital storytelling skills."

■ CRANIMER MUGERWA AWARD

At the convention, Vision Group awarded Makerere university best photo journalism student Badru Katumba with the Cranimer-Mugerwa award.

Mugerwa was a *new vision* photo journalist who excelled in photography during challenging times.

According to *New Vision* photo Editor Jimmy Adriko, Mugerwa delivered quality work despite the challenges in the equipment at that time.

Katumba scooped the award with sh1m, a plaque and a six-month paid placement at Vision Group starting January next year.

Two other students, Eronie Kamukama and Ivan Lugambwa also received the Tebere-Mudin award and sh1m for their outstanding performance in print media from Monitor publications based in Namuwongo a Kampala suburb.