

Selecting right study programme is key – Prof Healey



Students line up to enrol at the FNU Nasinu Campus Academic Office.

As celebrations for New Year's gradually subside, the focus turns to the business end and for most parents, it's about preparing their children for the new school year.

For first year students enrolling at universities, becoming more independent, exploring new study environment, meeting new people and making new friends can be exciting and a bit over-whelming at the same time.

Moving out of one's comfort zone can be intimidating for students but luckily all universities have Orientation Weeks where freshmen are provided important information relevant to their studies and how to get around the respective campus.

Fiji National University (FNU) Vice Chancellor Professor Nigel Healey highlights some important points of discussion parents and their children are likely to undertake before finalising study programmes they will pursue.

Choosing the 'right' study programme

When Harry Potter visits Diagon Alley to buy his first wand, the owner of Ollivander's tells him that "the wand chooses the wizard". To some extent, study programmes are like wands – they choose you. Ask yourself: What subjects do I really enjoy? What subjects am I good at? Unless you are interested and talented in a subject, picking it to study at university is likely to be a mistake. You will either lose motivation or struggle to graduate at the end.

Right subject combination

Luckily, for most of us, there is more than one subject that we enjoy and are good at. The second stage is to decide which of these subjects is likely to give you the most satisfying and fulfilling career. I remember loving history at school and being one of the top students. Unfortunately, the career prospects in history are limited, so instead I chose economics, which I also enjoyed and seemed to be reasonably good at.

Once at university, it is important to select courses that complement your main study programme. For example, if you are majoring in economics, you might want to choose mathematics and statistics, as advanced economics can be very quantitative. Or you may be interested in economic policymaking, in which case choosing courses in politics gives you a broader understanding of the field.

Blue collar vs white collar

Many parents understandably, but often mistakenly, want their children to aim for higher education and a "white collar" job in an office. But many young people are more interested in practical subjects where they can work outdoors with their hands and be creative, viewing the idea of spending all day in an office with horror. At the same time, there are exciting job opportunities open for skilled tradespeople, both in Fiji and overseas. For students interested in setting up their own businesses, self-employment as a carpenter, electrician or plumber is a very real option once they have accumulated a few years' experience and a reputation for quality.

The economy needs both blue collar and white-collar workers and one is not superior to the other. The key is choosing the study programme that will lead to a career where you can fulfil your potential.

Advantages of studying at FNU

FNU is a vocational dual sector university. "Vocational" means that our study programmes lead to real jobs. We design our study programmes in consultation with employers and ensure that all our students have the opportunity for a work attachment during their time at university, so that they are prepared to join the labour force after graduation. "Dual sector" means that we offer Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) at Certificates 3 and 4 levels and Diplomas at 5 and 6 levels, as well as higher education which includes bachelor's and master's degrees and PhDs.

FNU is a fully comprehensive university, offering everything from agriculture to medicine, business to engineering. And because we are a dual sector university, students can learn a trade, go into the labour force for a few years, and return to university to upgrade their qualifications to a bachelors' or master's degree.

Enrollment for Semester One 2019 is underway at all Fiji National University campuses around the country.

Students are encouraged to visit any of the FNU Campus or roadshow team located at strategic locations around the country to pick up enrolment forms or receive professional counseling from senior academic team to assist with enrolment into preferred study programmes.

For further information regarding enrollment contact: Fiji National University Academic Office | **Phone:** 339 4000 | **Extension:** 2310/2311



Students receive assistance from FNU Academic staff during enrolment at the Nasinu Campus