

List of Activities/programs conducted for BS(DYoD) students during Feb-August 2025.

1. Travelogue Film: A Journey of Learning Beyond the Classroom

February 10-26, 2025

The *Travelogue Film* is a heartfelt visual narrative that captures the academic and personal exploration undertaken by students of the BS Design Your Own Degree (DYOD) program at the Islamic University of Science and Technology (IUST) during their study tour in January 2025. More than a record of destinations visited, the film offers a reflective lens into the deeper learning that unfolded through immersive experiences, critical conversations, and collective reflection. It engages with historical sites, artefacts, and local arts and crafts workshops—bringing theory to life through direct engagement.

The journey, as documented in the film, takes viewers through culturally rich landscapes steeped in history, enabling a form of learning that transcends traditional classroom boundaries. From the silent stories embedded in ancient architecture to the vibrancy of regional handicrafts and the spontaneous peer discussions along the way, each scene resonates with the principles of experiential education. The film stands as a powerful reminder that authentic learning often occurs when we step out into the world with curiosity and openness, allowing lived experiences to shape our understanding.



The purpose of creating this film was not only to preserve these meaningful moments, but to serve as a living testament to how academic exposure can be transformed into personal growth and

intellectual awakening. It aims to inspire future cohorts to embrace learning beyond textbooks and to recognize the profound value of field-based educational journeys.

Credits

Direction: Dr. Saqib Wani, Mr. Taha Mughal

Camera: Aazim Ashraf, Sinan Showkat

Editing: Farhan Salroo

Narration: Aisha

Script Assistance: Suha Mirza

Production Management: Aazim Ashraf, Farhan Salroo

Technical Support: Mr. Mohammad Yaseen Pandith

Link: <https://youtu.be/c5pft0JmCHU?si=Cv0kRHCp2iEcs8bT>

2. Movie Screening:

Friday, 7 March 2025

A movie screening session was organized by the Department of Design Your Own Degree (DYOD) to offer students valuable life lessons through cinematic storytelling. The film *Queen of Katwe* portrays the inspiring journey of Phiona Mutesi, a young chess prodigy from Uganda, who overcomes numerous challenges to rise to national prominence. Her perseverance and resilience—fueled by the unwavering support of her mother and the dedicated mentorship of Robert Katende—resonated deeply with students, offering them a powerful and relatable example of how personal determination, family support, and guidance can shape one's path to success. The screening provided students with a profound and reflective experience, highlighting key values such as courage, persistence, and the transformative impact of mentorship.



3. Seminar on Conservation, Cultivation, Processing and Entrepreneurship Development in Medicinal Plants:

Monday, 10 March 2025

The one-day seminar was organized by the Department of Environment, Sustainability and Climate Change (DESCC), IUST for students of Design Your Own Degree (DYOD) program, held at Conference Hall of the Rumi



Library. The event featured prominent guests including Prof. Sheikh Bilal Ahmad, Regional Director, RCFC-NR II, National Medicinal Plants Board (NMPB, New Delhi), SKUAST-K and Dr. Shakir P. Sultan, Scientist, CSIR-IIIM Srinagar as the invited speaker. The seminar also featured a special address by Prof. Parvez Ahmad Mir, CEO, CIED, IUST and a welcome note by Prof. Humayun Rashid, Prof. of Practice, DESCC, with seminar



introduction by Dr. Dharam Chand, organising secretary. The seminar was attended by Dr. Sumira Nazir Zaz, Coordinator DESCC, Dr. Aabid Hussain Shalla, Dean School of Sciences, Dr. Yasir Altaf, Dr. Zubair Ahmad, Dr. Muzaffar Ahmad Macha, Dr. Mohammad Saleem and Mr. Taha Mughal, along with the DYOD 2024 student cohort. Dr. Dharam Chand opened the session with an insightful introduction, highlighting the often-overlooked importance of medicinal plants in Jammu and Kashmir and their potential not only as a local resource but as a contributor to global trade. The engaging presentations and knowledge shared by the distinguished guests captivated the audience and led to an enriching and thought-provoking discussion.

The seminar focused on how willpower and perseverance play a key role in shaping successful entrepreneurial journeys in the field. Prof. Parvez Ahmad Mir emphasized the importance of being innovative and persistent in order to achieve meaningful success. The session inspired students to view challenges as opportunities for growth and to pursue their goals with determination. The seminar concluded with a vote of thanks by Dr. Sumaira Nazir Zaz, followed by the felicitation of the esteemed invited guests.



4. Workshop on Media Literacy: Monday, 24 March 2025

As part of its commitment to promote critical thinking, responsible digital engagement, and informed citizenship, the Design Your Own Degree (DYOD) Program at the Islamic University of Science and Technology (IUST) organized a Media Literacy Workshop on 24 March 2025. The

event, held in the DYOD classrooms, was conducted under the aegis of the Media Literacy Initiative of the Office of Dean Outreach, and marked the commencement of a long-term institutional engagement with issues surrounding misinformation, digital manipulation, and media awareness.

The workshop was led by Dr. Heeba Din, Assistant Professor at the Department of Journalism and Mass Communication (DJMC), IUST, and a certified media literacy trainer with DataLEADS under the Google News Initiative's FactShala University Network Programme. As a trained educator in media literacy, Dr. Din brought both academic expertise and practical insight to the session.

This workshop was the first in a planned series under the University's formal partnership with DataLEADS, following the recent signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to establish a Media Literacy Hub on the IUST campus. This strategic collaboration places IUST among a select group of just 50 institutions nationwide chosen to participate in the FactShala University Network Programme—a prestigious initiative focused on equipping students with the tools to navigate today's complex digital landscape with discernment and integrity.



Designed to meet the urgent need for media and information literacy in the age of misinformation and synthetic media, the workshop provided students with a robust set of critical skills and digital strategies. The session addressed the following core areas:

1. Identifying misinformation and disinformation
2. Understanding deepfakes and manipulated content
3. Strengthening fact-checking and verification abilities
4. Mastering advanced search techniques using Google's Super Searchers curriculum



The session was attended by both batches of DYOD students (2023, 2024) and was enriched by the presence and support of faculty members Dr. Saqib Wani and Mr. Taha Mughal, who underscored the session's relevance and encouraged continued student engagement in such transformative educational initiatives. By curating and

executing this workshop, the DYOD Program has taken a decisive step toward embedding digital literacy into its academic framework. This effort aligns seamlessly with IUST's broader vision of community-centric education, where students are empowered not only as scholars but as informed, ethically grounded participants in the digital public sphere.

5. Seminar on Catalyze the Implementation of NEP-2020 in the University

Wednesday, 09 April 2025:

As part of the initiative to *Catalyze the Implementation of NEP-2020 in the University*, the first lecture of the NEP-2020 Lecture Series was held on 09 April, from 3:00 PM to 4:00 PM, at the DYOD Department, AB-III (Ground Floor). The event was organized by the Design Innovation Centre/DYOD Programme and featured a session by Mr. Taha Mughal, Assistant Professor DYOD. The lecture focused on the outcomes of Problem-Based Learning (PBL) and innovative pedagogical approaches aligned with NEP-2020.



Drawing from a DYOD Heritage study tour 2025, the session showcased real-world applications of PBL, emphasizing experiential and student-centric learning. The event witnessed enthusiastic participation from both faculty and students, with active engagement during the discussion and Q&A, setting a promising tone for the upcoming lectures in the series. In addition, several students actively engaged in the lecture itself, contributing thoughtful reflections and participating in the discussion.



During the session, certificates of appreciation were distributed to students who actively participated in the creation of the study tour film and documentation. Their dedication, creativity, and collaborative spirit played a vital role in capturing the essence of experiential learning promoted by the DYOD Programme.



6. Two-day Workshop on Building Integrated Photovoltaic Technology

Wednesday to Thursday, 16th to 17th April 2025:

DYOD students participated in one of the sessions of the two-day workshop conducted in Lal Ded Auditorium by the Departments of Architecture, Electrical Engineering, and E&C Engineering, IUST in collaboration with some national companies. The workshop aimed to enhance skills in solar energy integration within buildings. As a part of department's ongoing efforts to expose students to emerging and diverse professional fields of study, the workshop helped students identify their interests and inclinations in the field. The event served as a significant platform for student networking and knowledge exchange.



7. Seminar on Reviving education of India through NEP

Wednesday, 29th April 2025:

The seminar by Dr. Sumira Nazir Zaz argued how the modern education system has largely failed in India to ensure both employment and holistic development, due to its one-dimensional approach centered solely on formal academics. In contrast, India's much earlier education systems emphasized a more integrated model of learning—one that blended skills, values, and livelihood training. Using the case study of Kashmir's economy vis-a-vis Indian traditional schools, the presentation highlighted the urgent need to reconnect education with skill enhancement rooted in one's own culture, artisanal traditions, and local land-based resources. The *Design Your Own Degree* program was argued to be a platform to realize this vision by enabling students to create more contextually relevant and future-ready learning paths.



8. Pop-up Market Activity [Entrepreneurship & Innovation]:

Wednesday-Thursday, 4-5 June 2025

As part of the experiential learning initiative for DYOD students, a hands-on activity was conducted to provide practical exposure to the entrepreneurial process. This initiative was integrated into the Business Fest 3.0, where students were encouraged to explore and develop real business ideas based on direct customer insights.

To begin with, students conducted surveys and interviews within the university campus to identify market needs, consumer preferences, and potential gaps. Based on these findings, they ideated and refined feasible business concepts, which were subsequently brought to life through a pop-up market set up during the fest.

The pop-up market featured a diverse range of student-led stalls focusing on beverages, interactive games, and women's accessories. Students took full ownership of the process by sourcing raw materials, manually preparing a variety of beverages, and designing exciting games to attract footfall. Notably, women's associations were also involved in setting up accessory stalls, adding value and inclusivity to the event. Through this experiential activity, students underwent the complete entrepreneurial journey, which included idea generation, feasibility analysis, financial planning, marketing and promotion, and commercialization.



The initiative offered concrete, hands-on learning and equipped students with essential entrepreneurial skills such as creativity, planning, customer engagement, and teamwork. It proved to be a highly enriching experience, successfully blending theory with practice in a dynamic, real-world environment.



9. Skit Activity:

Tuesday, 17th June 2025

At the Alumni Meet 2025, held on June 17 at IUST, second-semester students from the Design Your Own Degree (DYOD) program presented a powerful skit tracing the spiritual journey of *Rumi—From arrogance to enlightenment*. Performed by Fawad (as Shams Tabrizi), Sami (as Rumi), Jehangir (as Mehjoor), Sinan (as Rumi's student) and Mugais in the university's Nund Reshi Auditorium, the performance captivated the audience with its emotional depth and profound message of inner transformation.

The skit was part of the department's ongoing efforts to bring innovation into pedagogy through experiential learning. Originally developed and showcased as an evaluated exercise for the compulsory module *Global Literature*, taught by Associate Professor Dr. Inayat Rasool, it was among the finest performances of the semester. The theatre activity was coordinated and mentored by Assistant Professor, DYOD, Taha Mughal.



The performance in the Alumni Meet added a deeply reflective and spiritual dimension to an evening that celebrated both personal growth and IUST's growing academic and professional

legacy. With over 300 alumni in attendance, the skit was widely appreciated becoming a key highlight of the event.



10. Cultural Performance:

Tuesday, 17th June 2025

At the Alumni Meet 2025, held on June 17 at IUST, second-semester DYod student Ahwar participated in a cultural dance performance celebrating the gathering of over 300 alumni in the event. The dance performance gained appreciation and applause from the audience.

