

## **11. Filmscreening, Media Fest, Government Degree College, Baramulla:**

17th June, 2025

The students of BS Design Your Own Degree (DYoD) program of the Islamic University of Science and Technology (IUST) participated in the Media Festival 2025, organized by the Department of Media Studies, Government Degree College Baramulla, on 17th June 2025.

As part of the event, the travelogue film directed by the DYoD students, Farhan Salroo and Azim Ashraf, was officially screened. A team of over ten students had earlier contributed to making the film which documents the educational journey and experiential learning of the students, marking their first collective attempt in the field of filmmaking. It captured their reflections, travel experiences, and learning beyond the classroom.

The festival witnessed wide participation from across the Kashmir Valley and beyond, bringing together a diverse group of filmmakers, educators, students, and journalists. The screening of the IUST travelogue was met with appreciation, providing a valuable platform for the students to showcase their creative skills and gain first-hand exposure to the world of media and cinema.

This opportunity served not only as a milestone in their academic journey but also as a catalyst for encouraging future pursuits in the creative and media industries. The participation highlighted the potential of interdisciplinary learning and the emerging talent nurtured under the DYoD program at IUST.



## **12. Short Film on “*Living Literature*” – Skit-Based Project**

June, 2025

As part of the department’s creative engagement initiative, students produced a seven-minute skit-based short film under the theme “*Living the Literature.*” Designed as an experiential learning exercise, the project enabled students to engage with literary texts beyond traditional reading—through performance, interpretation, and media production.

The process began with script development, where students selected and adapted a literary work, reimagining it for visual and performative presentation. All the plays were videographed. The production team independently managed all aspects of the production, including scripting, direction, cinematography, acting, editing, and overall coordination. This allowed students to develop a broad range of skills, including visual storytelling, teamwork, logistical planning, and post-production editing. It was instrumental in documenting five different skit performances.

Through this activity, students explored how tone, mood, and themes of literary texts can be communicated through performance, expression, and audiovisual elements. The project provided an opportunity to embody characters, reflect on narrative structures, and translate written literature into an engaging and accessible format.

The film was supervised by Mr. Taha Mughal and directed by Imran Muzaffar, with cinematography by Aazim, Ayaan, and Sehreem. Voice-over was provided by Ahwar, and editing was completed by Imran Muzaffar and Sehreem.



### 13. Experiential Learning in Action at Open Day 2025

Wednesday, 18<sup>th</sup> June 2025:



The Open Day not only showcased the creative outcomes of the Design Your Own Degree (DYOD) program but also served as a live demonstration of its commitment to experiential learning. The department organized students into teams with clearly defined roles and duty rosters, enabling them to manage different sections of the event and engage meaningfully with visitors.

One rotating team was assigned to handle on-the-spot queries at the central information kiosk, ensuring that guests received guidance and clarity about the program. Simultaneously, another group of students took the lead in explaining the department's activity-based pedagogy through the *mannequin exhibit*, which visually narrated the learning journeys of DYOD students.

Further highlighting the program's emphasis on emotional intelligence and reflective engagement, a third team curated the *Dear You* installation. This heartfelt space featured handwritten letters by students addressed to their mentors, peers, and loved ones. Visitors were deeply moved by the authenticity of these letters and were invited to participate by writing the names of those they are grateful for—turning the exhibit into a shared space of appreciation and connection.

Complementing the exhibits, two short films produced by the department were screened throughout the day. These films captured the essence of the DYOD philosophy and gave audiences a deeper understanding of how learning is constructed through collaboration, self-reflection, and contextual relevance.

As part of the department's outreach initiative, a special session was conducted for 53 students and 3 teachers from Government High School Pattan. This interaction was led entirely by DYOD students, who introduced the visitors to the program's philosophy, academic structure, and scope



for personalized career pathways. Through direct engagement, these students served as ambassadors of experiential learning, making abstract ideas tangible for the young attendees.

components made the Open participatory demonstrating the DYOD innovative approach to education

investment in student agency, creativity, and community.



#### 14. DYoD Students Showcase Culinary Creativity at Food Fest 2025 18<sup>th</sup> & 19<sup>th</sup> June, 2025

As part of the Food Fest organized by the Department of Food Technology on 18th and 19th June 2025, students from the Design Your Own Degree (DYoD) program brought creativity and cultural flavor through two engaging food stalls—*Khen Waan* by Azim Ashraf and *Masala Masti* by Ahwar Jeelani. *Khen Waan*, meaning “the place to eat” in Kashmiri, offered a carefully curated menu featuring *tosha*, *pani puri*, coconut truffles, Lays chaat, and traditional kheer—each item a crowd favorite. *Masala Masti* served a refreshing mix of *gulab-jamun* ice cream, mojitos in mango, green apple and black currant, beverage *sharbat-e-muhabbat*, and chilled buttermilk.

Both students collaborated with peers from other departments, including Department of Journalism and Mass Communication, Department of Electronics & Communication, Department of Food Technology and Department of English Literature, making the stalls not only culinary successes but also vibrant examples of interdisciplinary teamwork. This collaboration fostered rich peer exchange and cross-departmental learning—an embodiment of the DYoD program’s spirit of flexibility and initiative. As one student participant reflected, “It wasn’t just a stall—it was a celebration of taste, fun, and a once-in-a-lifetime experience.” The stalls turned into hubs of flavor, fun, and firsthand lessons in planning, coordination, and leadership.



**15. IUST participates in One-Day Faculty-training Workshop on Design Your Degree (DYD) Initiative hosted by University of Kashmir**  
Friday, 20<sup>th</sup> June 2025

The Islamic University of Science and Technology (IUST), Awantipora, participated in a one-day workshop titled “*Design Your Degree (DYD) in alignment with NEP 2020 – Achievements, Challenges, and the Road Ahead*”, hosted by the University of Kashmir at Gandhi Bhawan, Srinagar. The workshop was organized by the NEP Cell in collaboration with the Centre for Design Your Degree,



University of Kashmir. The event inaugurated by Hon’ble Vice Chancellor Kashmir University, Prof. Nilofer Khan, brought together academic leaders, educators, and policy thinkers to reflect on the evolving models of higher education driven by flexibility, interdisciplinarity, and student agency as envisioned in the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020. DYD coordinators from institutions across both Jammu and Kashmir division participated and presented their approaches, frameworks, and on-ground experiences related to the Design Your Degree initiative. An expert session led by Director CIC, Delhi University, Prof. Shoba Bhattacharji, emphasized the need of collaborative learning models to nurture curiosity, creativity, and adaptability in students. The lecture urged institutions to reimagine rigid disciplinary boundaries by questioning traditional academic pathways. The speaker also applauded the DYD initiative as a bold step towards restoring autonomy to the learner.

In the following session, Dr Asif ali Banka, Academic Coordinator, DYoD; and Mr Taha Mughal, Assistant Professor DYoD represented IUST’s DYoD program in the workshop. The team’s presentation focused on flexible academic pathways at the university that empower students to design interdisciplinary and personalized learning journeys tailored to their aspirations. While highlighting the academic structure, exit options, main challenges and opportunities the department has, the presentation focussed on the program’s emphasis on learner-centered education through design thinking, experiential learning, and real-world projects. The later part of the presentation also discussed a series of creative pedagogies that the department has been practising to impart the essence of the curriculum. Two student-directed short films from the department, on the heritage study tour and a compilation of skits performed for *Global Literature* module, were also shared with over 20 workshop attendees, offering a compelling visual narrative of the innovative pedagogies being experimented with, on campus.



*Figure 2: Workshop attendees and student observers during the Inaugural session held at Gandhi Bhawan, University of Kashmir. Image: UoK*

Discussions during similar presentations by other institutions addressed challenges such as faculty readiness, faculty incentivisation, pedagogical transitions from conventional to project-based learning models, and the need for personalized mentoring through scalable institutional frameworks. Participating institutions also explored the structural, administrative, and academic reforms required to implement DYD effectively.

Following the presentations, the teams engaged in hands-on development of curriculum for a Semester IV (Bridge Semester) course for Kashmir University's DYoD program while exploring majoring streams for advanced semesters. The participating institutions included:

- Shri Mata Vaishno Devi University
- Baba Ghulam Shah Badshah University
- Parade College Jammu
- University of Jammu
- Islamia College of Science & Commerce Sgr
- Centre for Design Your Degree, University of Kashmir
- Islamic University of Science & Technology
- College of Education, Srinagar
- Amar Singh College, Srinagar

The workshop concluded with renewed commitment from all participating institutions to collaboratively advance flexible and student-centered academic ecosystems in the spirit of NEP 2020. The team's presentation highlighted the department's commitment to the cause as well as opened up