

UNIVERSAL NEWSLETTER

MARCH 2024

Monash Continuing Degree (MCD) Program Orientation Day

The UCB campus welcomed the new intake T1 2024 of Engineering, IT, and Business students in the Monash College Diploma (MCD) Program with an orientation event on February 18, 2024. Incoming students with their parents received welcome packs and attended keynote speeches by Professor Ismail Hossain, Dean of Academic Affairs, and UCB's President and Provost, Professor Hew Gill. Colleagues from Monash College and Monash University joined online to discuss destination programs and scholarship details.

The Program Coordinator, Dr Sadia Afreen, and faculty members provided essential guidelines on the Monash course structures and academic policies. A current student, Ms. Noushine Sharmile Khan, shared valuable insights on time management and study skills through a presentation titled 'Sharing (experience) is caring'.

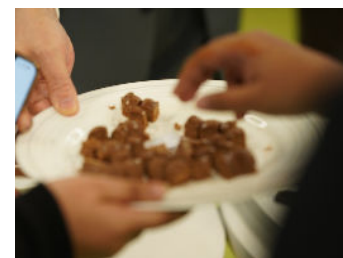
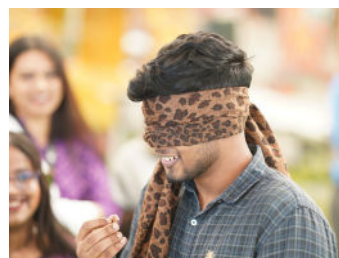
The UCB Student Council engaged newcomers in interactive session, offering insights into campus life and extracurricular activities, followed by a guided campus tour. The UCB IT department conducted a session on setting up Monash accounts and utilizing IT resources. The event concluded with a lively atmosphere, fostering excitement and anticipation for the academic journey ahead.

If you know anyone who would like to join the next MCD intake contact us now admission@ucbbd.org



Chocolate Day Celebration

On February 8th UCB students were dipped in the delightful world of chocolate as we celebrated Chocolate Day in a scrumptious way. We treated our students to a variety of delicious chocolate bars, inviting them to share and savour the different tastes and textures with their friends. The day was filled with exciting chocolate-themed activities, keeping the fun and learning flowing. One game that had everyone giggling was "Guess the Chocolate." We blindfolded participants and presented them with six different plates, each containing a distinct chocolate flavor: Milk Bubble Chocolate, Supreme Smooth Milk Chocolate, 70% Cocoa Dark Chocolate, Mild Dark Chocolate, Milk Chocolate, Extra Creamy Milk Chocolate and 100% Cocoa Dark Chocolate. With each tentative bite, the blindfolded students had to guess the flavour and feel which kind of chocolate they were tasting. The crowd chose which chocolate should be presented to each contestant and the uncertainty added a delicious twist to the classic guessing game. Laughter and excitement filled the air as students tested their taste buds and revelled in the chocolatey fun, leaving a sweet and creamy memory for all our students.





Monash Progression Day

UCB organised a Monash Progression Day on 5th February 2024 for all Monash University Foundation Year and MCD students. Ms. Azra Karim, Representative of Monash University in Bangladesh and Mr Daniel Lum, Recruiter of Monash University, Malaysia were present to provide students with lots of information about academic programs, scholarships, and life at the Monash campuses.

Existing students were given a very thorough overview of the many Monash University programs available in Australia and Malaysia, and encouraged to ask questions about the many different options. There were also some prospective students with their parents in attendance at the event, and they benefited greatly from the information shared about Monash and the pathway programs available at UCB. The event ended with one-on-one counselling sessions with each student finding out which Monash options were best for them and their life ambitions.



UCB National Quiz

A national online quiz for students, with big cash prizes for the winners.

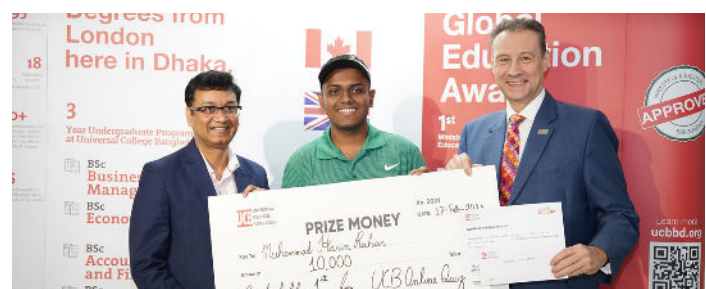
UCB organized the first national online Quiz for Senior Secondary students in Bangladesh on 8th February 2024. Students from 80+ schools across Bangladesh, registered for the event and lot of excitement was observed among the students taking part in the online Quiz. The excitement was noted by the UCB organising team and it was decided to make this online event a monthly occurrence.

The challenging Quiz rounds covered questions on Logical Thinking, General Knowledge, Science, History, Geography and current affairs.

The prize distribution for the event happened on 17th February 2024 at the UCB campus, where all the prize winners were awarded certificates and cash prizes. Prize money worth 40 thousand BDT was shared among the winners. Professor Hew Gill, President & Provost, UCB and Mr. Amit Prasad, Chief Operating Officer, UCB, presented the grand prizes and certificates.

Winners:

- 1 Muhammad Hasin Rahman - Dhaka College
- 2 Ahnaf Anis - Adamjee Cantonment College
- 3 Aribah Farzeen Shah - The Aga Khan School, Dhaka (AKSD)
- 4 Zawad Islam - Playpen School
- 5 Wazee Wahid Sazid - Adamjee Cantonment College





SAGC Science Club Event

A party from the UCB visited the SAGC 6th Mega Science Festival, held at Shaheed Bir Uttam Lt. Anwar Girls' College on the 9th of February. This marked the first outdoor visit organized by the UCB Science Club in 2024. The students participated in the Biology and Chemistry Olympiads at the festival, giving them the opportunity to delve into the realms of natural sciences and test their knowledge in the disciplines.

UCB students and lecturers also enjoyed the vibrant project exhibitions covering themes such as green technology, waste management, sustainable space exploration, robotics and IT. Ms. Aura Rahman, Lecturer in the Faculty of Science & Engineering, commented "This visit to SAGC Science Fest has been an enlightening experience for our students who got a taste of the power of science outreach through this. Hopefully very soon we will be organising science-oriented events at UCB as well, under the Science Club".



Eduko Pathways Show

Eduko Pathways, a sister concern of UCB, organized an international Education Fair on Saturday 3rd February 2024 Saturday at the Westin Hotel on Gulshan Avenue, Dhaka. UCB participated in the fair with two stalls, one each for our Monash University and University of London-London School of Economics programmes. Our dedicated counselling team spoke to hundreds of students and shared lots of information about how UCB programmes are excellent pathways to studying abroad. Our close relationship with Eduko Pathways means that our students have 100% support to make the transition to Monash University Australia or Malaysia, with

Eduko helping UCB students with everything from visas to booking accommodation – and the best part is that all this help is free. Huge interest was also expressed about studying international programmes in Bangladesh. Many global study aspirant students were very interested to find out what they can stay in Bangladesh to complete a full three-year University of London degree under the academic direction of the London School of Economics at the UCB campus in Dhaka.



Polhela Falgun & Valentine's Day

On February 13, our entire student body, academic and support staff, and members of the UCB Board convened to greet the first spring day of the Bengali calendar and to celebrate Valentine's Day.

Led by the Student Council students decorated the campus with colorful flowers, papers, and posters to capture the spirit of Spring and the return of warmer weather after the bitter days of winter. All present were dressed in the vibrant colours of growth and new life to capture the joyful spirit of Spring.

As part of the celebrations a "Pitha Festival" was held. Attendees were able to sample from a very wide selection of tasty pitha cakes from around Bangladesh, and to see the many different shapes and colours, and to compare the variety of tastes and textures. The pitha ranged from the very elaborate to the relatively simple and many students remarked upon how enjoyable it was to try some many different pithas at the same time and to sample unfamiliar cakes from different regions. The busy programme concluded with group photos and renditions of famous Falgun songs.

Prof Hew publishes in Nature Communications

Prof Hew Gill, President & Provost of UCB, is a member of the 82-strong international research team which has just published a ground-breaking research paper in the prestigious journal Nature Communications. The article entitled "Changes in Social Norms during the Early Stages of the COVID-19 Pandemic across 43 Countries" is a global collaboration that studied how social norms changed in response to the threat of disease during the COVID-19 pandemic. Drawing on the influential tightness-looseness theory, which proposes that societies become "tighter" or more normatively constrained when exposed to threats such as earthquakes, disease, wars, or famine, they anticipated that social norms would tighten after the emergence of COVID-19. To test this, they built a unique dataset that combines rich existing data on social norms, collected just before the pandemic, with data that they collected from nearly 15,000 people in the same populations across the globe during the first months of the pandemic. By doing this, the researchers were able to identify how multiple social norms changed after the emergence of the disease.

Surprisingly, and in contrast to expectations, tightness changed little as did most of other measures of social norms. Instead, social norms of handwashing, a norm perceived to be directly relevant to the threat of disease, became substantially stronger. These results suggest that in the early stages of the COVID-19 pandemic, norms specifically related to the threat changed quickly, while unrelated social norms took longer, or required different threats, to change. This work makes a fundamental contribution to our understanding of social norm change and may help anticipate the future reactions of countries to similar crises, as well as suggest intervention strategies to deal with future crises rapidly and effectively.

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nature communications

Article

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Changes in social norms during the early stages of the COVID-19 pandemic across 43 countries

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Check for updates

The emergence of COVID-19 dramatically changed social behavior across societies and contexts. Here we study whether social norms also change. Specifically, we study this question for cultural tightness (the degree to which societies generally have strong norms), specific social norms (e.g. stealing, hand washing), and norms about enforcement, using survey data from 3 respondents in 43 countries recorded before and in the early stages following the emergence of COVID-19. Using variation in disease intensity, we shed light on the mechanisms predicting changes in social norm measures. We find evidence that, after the emergence of the COVID-19 pandemic, hand washing norms increased while tightness and punishing frequency slightly decreased but observe no evidence for a robust change in most other norms. Thus, at least in the short term, our findings suggest that cultures are largely stable to pandemic threats except in those norms, hand washing in this case, that were perceived to be directly relevant to dealing with the collective threat.



Glenfest

On Saturday, February 17th Glenrich International School organized an amazing event that captivated over 3,500 attendees. A group of 25 students from MUFY and MCD programs, accompanied by staff from UCB, attended the Glenfest and had an unforgettable experience with thrilling rides, enchanting performances and a diverse mix of people from various backgrounds.

Students and their families took part in many thrilling activities, ate lots of delectable food, played entertaining games, and enjoyed live music, performances, dance competitions and non-stop entertainment! Shawon Gaanwala's electrifying show, puppet performances and the buzzing atmosphere added to the magic of this carnival, creating cherished memories for all.



Language Martyrs Day Commemoration

February 21st dawned with a poignant resonance in the hearts of millions of Bangladeshis at home and worldwide. The significance of this day, known as Ekushey February, reverberated deeply throughout the nation.

The presence of all UCB students and staff at a commemorative event was a testament to the enduring legacy of those brave souls. Students, faculty, and support team members stood shoulder to shoulder, united in their respect for the martyrs. Students, dressed in traditional attire, formed a vibrant mixture of colors, symbolizing the richness of Bengali culture.

The day unfolded with a series of activities aimed at respecting the sacrifices made by members of the language movement. Students presented a short play that was written, directed and acted by students from across UCB.

The drama was laden with emotion, echoing the sentiments of a nation that refused to be silenced. Dancers gracefully expressed tales of bravery and sacrifice using the traditional Bengali movements to speak volumes about the struggles endured and the triumphs achieved. Musical accompaniment was provided by a student band which filled the air with the melodious strains of traditional songs that echoed the spirit of Ekushey—a spirit that remained fearless in the face of hardship. These performances, including such a large number of students, captured the essence of the day, immortalising moments of unity, and leaving all with very profound memories.



Leap Year Day

February 29th only comes once every four years, so UCB celebrated the rare event of Leap Year Day. Students made artworks on the theme of Leap Year, with the leaping frog emerging as a common motif to symbolise the Leap Year Day. The commonly accepted origin of the term Leap Year is that normally each day advances by one date in the calendar each year, but after a Leap Year the days advance by two dates.

The Leap Year brings the calendar back in line with the orbit of the Earth around the Sun which takes approximately 365 $\frac{1}{4}$ days, so every fourth year an extra day is added to the calendar. There are many strange traditions associated with February 29th, particularly the idea that the roles of men and women are reversed. People born on February 29th are known as 'Leaplings', but for many official purposes their birth date will be set to 28th February so that they are able to go to school, begin voting, get married, etc at the same age as other people.

Fyruz Business Workshop

Universal College Bangladesh hosted an event for Business Studies O and A Level students jointly with Fyruz Education Services – FES on Friday 16th February 2024y at UCB Campus in Gulshan-1. Mr. Fyruz, head of FES, conducted an informative Business Studies Workshop for more than 50 Students from various well reputed educational institutions. The workshop focused on business concepts and how students can link what they learn in class to the real world. Mr Fyruz also gave some insights into exam questions and some top tips on how to get the highest marks.

Sparking that innovative spirit, getting those critical thinking juices flowing, and encouraging an entrepreneurial mindset our President, Prof. Hew Gill, led an interactive session with the all the students. Prof Hew explained the many international study opportunities available in Bangladesh with UCB, and how students can make the most of their skills by studying local to go global.





Havard ManageMentor Session

Students from Heritage School and from Manarat Dhaka International School & College attended an amazing, Harvard ManagementMentor (HMM) certified course session on Presentation Skills at Universal College Bangladesh on 3 February 2024. HMM courses are curated by Harvard Business Publishing Education and pull together the key information and learning points identified by Harvard University over the years. The course was delivered by Mr. Dewan Yazdani, Senior Lecturer in the UCB Faculty of Management & Marketing, an expert on making excellent presentations who really thrilled the students with his knowledge and expertise.

The students from Heritage School were accompanied by their teachers Mr. Abdullah Bin Hossain and Ms. Faria Alam Mam. Teachers Ms. Sharmin Akter and Mr. M.A Mohshin Quraishi accompanied the party of students from Manarat Dhaka International School & College. Students were very happy to receive their certificates from Professor Hew Gill, President & Provost of Universal College Bangladesh, who also made a short address explaining how transferrable skills are key to future career success.

HMM sessions are hosted at the UCB campus and are free for all students who attend. If you would like to take part in any UCB event or for the UCB team to visit your organisation or institution, please contact us now: marketing@ucbbd.org

Workshop in the Park

What could be more relaxing than doing a stress management workshop amidst the greenery of a Gulshan park?

Our in-house Psychosocial Counselor, Ms Rahnuma-E Jannat, facilitated a workshop on "Stress Management: Connecting with Nature" for UCB Monash University Foundation Year students in Gulshan Lake Park. The workshop was a fun-filled activity-based learning session where students learned about the symptoms of stress, identified healthy and unhealthy coping strategies, how to carry out self-reflection, when to seek help, and how nature can help them in managing stress. Many passers-by in the park were interested to see a UCB teaching-and-learning session taking place outside and stopped to pick up some valuable life lessons from our expert Psychologist.



Events in March

As usual, the UCB Student Club and campus will be very busy with lots of events in March.

UCB Monthly Online Quiz

A National Monthly Online quiz for the month of April will be held on 3rd April 2024. Grade 10,11 and 12 students can participate in the quiz contest online, with big cash prizes equivalent to 40,000 BDT for the winners.

International Women's Day

On 7th March 2024, UCB will be hosting a vibrant celebration for International Women's Day, honoring the achievements and contributions of women worldwide.

Monash Information Day, visit by Jo Mithen, CEO, Monash College

CEO of Monash College, Australia, Jo Mithen's visit to Universal College Bangladesh promises to inspire and ignite academic curiosity among students through her visit to UCB on 9th March 2024.

Prof Hew visits local schools

Prof. Hew Gill, President & Provost, UCB plans visit schools in Bangladesh with the aim to enhance memory skills development through engaging and insightful sessions.

Commonwealth Day

Universal College Bangladesh will host a dynamic Commonwealth Day celebration, fostering cultural exchange and unity among its diverse student body.

World Happiness Day

Universal College Bangladesh will joyously celebrate World Happiness Day on March 20th, spreading smiles and positivity throughout its community.

World Poetry Day

On March 21st, UCB will host a celebration for World Poetry Day, featuring readings, workshops, and open mic sessions.

Independence Day

On March 26th, UCB commemorates Bangladeshi Independence Day with cultural performances, discussions, and flag-raising ceremonies.

