Open Discussion #3

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MAY 2025

Theme

Dilemma between Education and Preparedness in Digital Space

NexComm 2025 & DigitalWorld 2025

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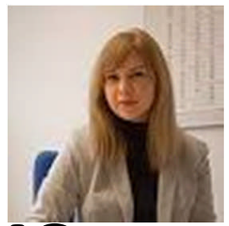

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Themes

A. Curriculum Inertia vs. Industry Evolution

B. Skill Obsolescence (deskilling) and Lifelong Learning

C. Practical Gaps in Problem-Solving and Innovation

D. Misaligned Evaluation and Credentialing Systems

E. Digital and Cognitive Readiness for the AI-powered Era

F. Educator Preparedness and Institutional Mindset

A: Curricula

Curriculum Inertia vs. Industry Evolution

- Graduates lacking adaptive, cross-disciplinary, or digital competencies
- Continuous learning as a strategic necessity (e.g., micro-credentials, bootcamps)
- Balancing foundational knowledge with short-cycle skills
- Incorporation of self-learning, online tools, and resilience training

- What are examples of fast-moving fields that academia consistently lags behind?
- Who should own the responsibility for curriculum updates — faculty, institutions, or external stakeholders?
- How do we balance academic integrity with market relevance?

B: Deskilling

Skill Obsolescence (deskilling) and Lifelong Learning

- Mismatch between static university curricula and rapidly evolving industry needs
- Emerging domains (AI, data ethics, sustainability, digital platforms) not included in core programs
- Bureaucratic obstacles, latency, procrastination, and accreditation delays in curriculum reform
- Role of industry advisory boards are hardly shaping academic directions

- Are universities training students for first jobs or for continuous evolution?
- How can institutions formally integrate upskilling and reskilling into alumni pathways?
- Should degrees include built-in "renewal" mechanisms, like certifications?

C: Practical innovation

Practical Gaps in Problem-Solving and Innovation

- Lack of exposure to real-world scenarios and constraints; there is no earning from failures
- Project-based, challenge-driven, and industry-coached learning as reform paths
- Missing integration of ethical reasoning, design thinking, and decision-making under uncertainty
- Entrepreneurship, product management, and systems thinking as missing links

- Why are many graduates uncomfortable with open-ended or ill-structured problems?
- How effective are internships and capstones in closing the experience gap?
- Should problem-based learning become a dominant pedagogy?

D: Evaluation vs Credentials

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Misaligned Evaluation and Credentialing Systems

- Rigid grading systems vs. demonstrated capabilities and outcomes
- Poor recognition of informal and experiential learning
- Disconnect between degrees and real qualifications (skills vs. diplomas)
- Shift toward competency-based and portfolio-based assessments
- Lack of education on innovation

- Do grades still reflect readiness or are they an outdated proxy?
- Should portfolios, simulations, and real-life deliverables become standard metrics?
- How can universities validate informal and self-taught competencies?

E: Digital and AI awareness

Digital and Cognitive Readiness for the AI-powered Era

- Deficient digital literacy and computational thinking in non-technical disciplines
- Cognitive overload and superficial learning from over-standardized curricula
- Neglect of critical thinking, human-AI interaction, and explainable systems
- Emerging cognitive tools (e.g., LLMs, LCMs, AR/VR, simulation labs) in education

- Are today's students cognitively prepared to collaborate with AI systems?
- What basic digital or AI literacy should every graduate possess?
- How can immersive tools (e.g., VR, LLMs) be used responsibly in learning?

E': AI literacy

- Student's digital fluency vs total reliance on AI
- Educator's choice of balancing between technological support and centered learning.
- Graduates' basic digital/AI literacy, data literacy, and AI ethics

- Immersive tools in learning: clear educational focus, students' ethical awareness of digital environments, and emotional well-being (immersive rooms vs VR Goggles)

F: Skilled educators

Educator Preparedness and Institutional Mindset

- Educators' lag in adopting modern tools and interdisciplinary methods
- Institutional resistance to change status: academic silos and tradition-bound curricula
- Training the trainers: upskilling faculty in pedagogy, tech, and open practices
- Role of open-source materials and collaboration with industry educators

- Are most professors modeling the kind of learning they expect from students?
- What institutional barriers discourage innovation in teaching?
- Should faculty development be mandatory and regularly assessed?

F': Preparedness – Skilling and Deskilling

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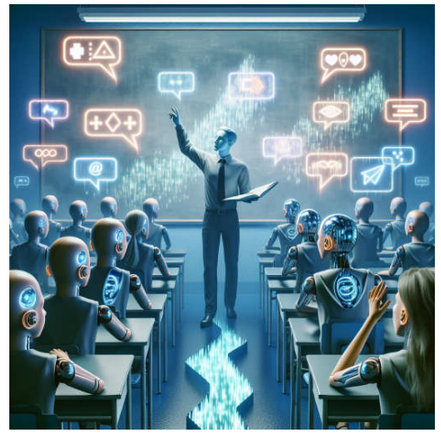
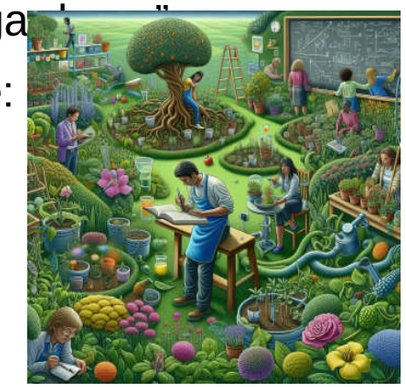
- Educators should avoid immersing their students into the *Uncanny Valley*

(M. Mori) and try "webbing" teacher's and students' narratives to foster a sense of security and trust

- To overcome institutional barriers, such as rigid curricula, reward systems, which prioritize research output over teaching excellence, Scholarship and Learning (SoTL) could be a solution. Teacher "as a ga[illegible]"
- Embedding faculty development into institutional practice: mandatory support and assessment, innovation and collaboration, accessible professional development





Formal education vs real-world

Misalignment is neither accidental nor irreversible.

Diligent actions are needed.

Task: reimagine academic curricula not as static repositories of knowledge, but as living frameworks — adaptable, interdisciplinary, and anchored in the evolving needs of society and technology.

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F. Educator Preparedness and Institutional Mindset

Two lanes

Education for research and discovery

Practical education

THE STAGE IS YOURS