

The 'blended campus': The decentralization of learning

Graeme Finlay and Hayley Fisher

Warren and Mahoney

Abstract:

The portability of technology and the accessibility of information has changed the requirements of university spaces to purely deliver content.

The increasing awareness of the importance of soft skills and forming 'work ready graduates' as well as a recognition of the increasing pace of societal change has resulted in the need to provide a variety of both formal and informal spaces that encourage interaction, collaboration and innovation.

The question of the future is not what the modern classroom will look like but where and how the bulk of learning will take place.

More and more Universities are talking about students as customer, experiential learning environments and 'placemaking' compelling students to be a part of a social as well as intellectual community. 'the university village' Technology support is a huge factor in the success of this idea. This is accompanied by an increase in the use of the 'internet of things' encouraging personalised learning. In the physical sense this may mean more and more smaller highly IT enabled spaces in comfortable and informal settings, (thinking LU forbes stage 1 and 2) Where educators can interact with individuals and smaller groups.

Congregating people together in mass groups in lecture halls will not be necessary as lectures can be live streamed or 'on-demand' (the MOOC model or the netflix as an example.) The demise of large formal spaces for teaching though they ,may still be required for team or social gatherings.

Universities primary roles as keeper of knowledge is diminished through the easy access of information - Universities' other role as facilitator of critical thought and innovator becomes paramount. The rise of, maker spaces and innovation labs and community spaces, fostering creativity and experimentation and collaboration will become the future and mainstay of the physical campus.

Bio: