

Top 10 Challenges Faced by Higher Education

Higher education has long been our society's primary platform for breeding competent professionals for our industries. As the years go by, the demand for higher education increases. Based on a statistic from UNESCO, the number of higher education students in 2040 is expected to reach 594 million worldwide; that's more than half of the higher education student population in 2016. With that in mind, we can all expect the higher education industry to boom in the future. However, it won't be without challenges. Challenges such as changing [technology trends](#) and university growth will incline higher education institutions to adapt. In this article, we'll show you the top 10 challenges in higher education that institutions must overcome.

Emerging Technology and Digital Innovation

With the rate of how fast they're changing in recent years, it's safe to say that technology and digital innovations will never stop evolving in the future times to come. The constant emergence of new digital technologies will be a challenge for institutions because they have the potential to change educational structures. In that case, institutions must integrate these technological advancements into their systems to maintain their education quality and [university ranking](#). Educational institutions have to keep up with technology if they're to deliver timely and relevant education.

High Costs of Running a University

Universities are certainly not a cheap establishment to run for their respective administrators. For one, resources and tools necessary for classes, lectures, on-campus activities, and on-campus operations are costly, especially if they're technologically brand new. Other than that, the high salaries of deans and professors increase labor costs. Many factors contribute to the high costs of keeping universities running. University administrators must cover all of them to meet their checklist of student outcomes.

Cultural Shifts

[Social media](#) influence, social issues, political ideals, and new scientific/technological discoveries are among the primary factors that cause cultural shifts in our society. Cultural changes can affect the type of education that institutions deliver to their students. How so? Cultural shifts can make a particular set of knowledge irrelevant or out of date. In that case, educators must revise their [lesson plans](#), and administrators should change their curriculum.

Student Enrollment

As stated earlier, UNESCO expects the higher education student population to balloon to 549 million in 2040. That indicates that the number of students enrolling every year until 2040 will increase potentially. Educational institutions will have to ready themselves in catering to a [higher student enrollment](#) rate in their respective campuses. They may need to start building more dormitories and campus buildings. Other than that, for sure, they'll have to [hire more professors](#) to handle additional classes.

Changes in Needs and Expectations From Various Industries

The industries of our civilization are always experiencing changes for many reasons. If you do an [analysis report](#) about these changes, you'll discover afterward that the needs and expectations of the industries from the educational sectors are among them. Universities might have to change their coursework programs so that they can produce graduates who can meet the demands of company employers. The skillset and competencies that the students will have to absorb from their universities have to be timely if they're to excel in their field of study.

Student Wellbeing

Challenges in student wellbeing will never be out of the equation in higher education. After all, the wellbeing of students is a crucial component of their learning capabilities. Many advanced analytics and surveys have backed up that fact. With those in mind, it's a primary responsibility for university administrators, professors, and counselors to keep tabs on the wellbeing of their students. They need to ensure at all times that their students are in the right condition to absorb knowledge and be a part of a campus setting.

Changes in Knowledge Creation

Changes in knowledge creation are always bound to happen due to the pursuit of discoveries and innovations in our civilization. Higher education institutions must deal with them to make their students more competent once they become professionals in their chosen field. The challenge of knowledge creation changes is that administrators will have to invest resources to revamp their educational system. Plus, educators must undergo extensive training and review to understand these changes better.

Attracting and Retaining Potential Students

Nurturing the best talent is one of the main objectives of higher education institutions. But before they can achieve that, they have to attract and retain potential students. First, administrators must offer scholarships for students with excellent secondary school GPAs. Second, they have to optimize their student welfare programs to maintain students with high potential. Nurturing students and molding them into professionals is a long process that requires the dedication of both educators and the students themselves.

Making Research Sustainable

Sustainable research is hard to come by nowadays due to rapid changes in different fields of study. However, higher education institutions must invest their time and effort to formulate sustainable research to provide knowledge that'll be relevant in generations to come. Higher education researchers must act like futurists to make discoveries that'll stand the test of time. If possible, they may have to exhaust their resources and invest in advanced tools to make their research successful and sustainable.

Emergence of Alternative Education

The emergence of alternative education might eradicate UNESCO's expectation of a 549 million higher education student population in 2040. Alternative education is a cheaper and faster educational pathway to become a professional. This puts higher education institutions in a tough spot. Of course, some enrollees might prefer alternative education with the belief that it'll provide them the same skills and competencies as higher education. Online classes, last-mile training programs, and crash courses are among the examples of alternative education.

Despite numerous challenges, we firmly believe that the higher education sector of our society will continue to stand strong in the years to come. How so? That's because many of the youths of our civilization need higher education to fulfill the hunger of their curiosity and to become professionals in their preferred fields. However, drastic changes with the education system will happen eventually, no doubt.