Tec Rector: Universities have to reinvent themselves

Exploring pedagogies in order to provide new learning experiences is part of the role of universities, said **David Garza**, Rector and Executive President of **Tec de Monterrey**, at a global forum.

Garza spoke on the panel *"Navigating Change: Emerging Models in Higher Education,"* at the "Reinventing Higher Education" event organized by IE University and University of Miami.

He pointed out that **universities are evolving towards becoming multiversities,** meaning **institutions where education is not limited to teaching in a classroom.**

*"We're an institution that's **going to be multimodal**. So, it's not face-to-face: it's hybrid, it's online, it's in the metaverse, it's going to be **multi-stage**.*

*"You don't just attend, but rather you come for four years of immersion. It will be **multi-experiential**,"* he highlighted.
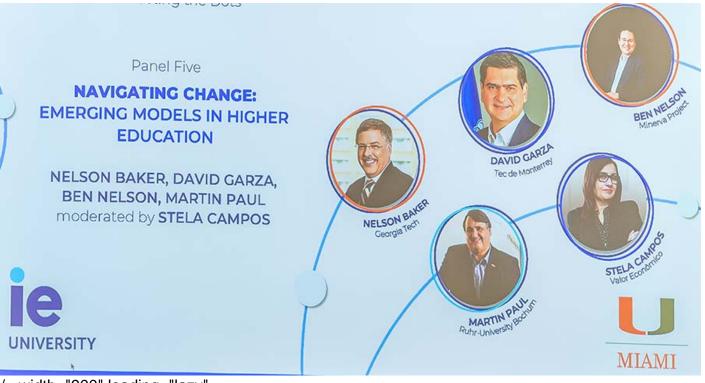
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Garza pointed out the need for **educational institutions** to **reinvent** themselves.

*"We're living through the change of an era and, usually, when you change eras, you don't realize it. So, speaking of **reinventing** ourselves, we need to do that not only in terms of technology but also **pedagogy**.*

*"There are ecosystems that surround students and that is also important. We have to examine what happens within the classroom or within the **online experience** or within the **metaverse**, or wherever this **learning experience** is taking place,"* Garza explained.

Participating on the panel in addition to the Tec executive were **Nelson Baker**, professor at the Georgia Institute of Technology; **Ben Nelson**, founder of the Minerva Project; **Martin Paul**, Rector of Ruhr-University Bochum, Germany; and **Felipe Portocarrero**, Rector of the University of the Pacific in Peru.

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Sharing features of the Tec's educational model

Moderator Stela Campos invited **Garza** to share information about the **Tec21 Educational Model**, in which the focus is on challenge-based **learning** experiences, flexibility, and constant guidance for students throughout their degrees.

*"We began using the **Tec21** educational model in 2019. It took us almost eight years to develop it.*

*"In 2013, we started by asking ourselves: when students graduate, will they be using **technologies** that haven't been invented? Will they work in jobs that don't currently exist? Will they try to solve problems that we haven't yet identified?"*

Garza explained that, as a result of these questions, they **visited more than 40 universities**, reviewing how they could **improve education**.

*"Now, our **curriculum is challenge-based**. 50% of the curriculum contains traditional courses, but the other 50% are challenge-based experiences. These experiences are designed by a faculty member.*

*"A problem is **identified within each experience and students analyze what they can do to solve it**. This means you can have multidisciplinary students working on the same challenge,"* he remarked.

He added that the **Tec21 Model** is **flexible**, so students don't need to choose a major at the beginning of the degree, but rather they can **explore different fields.**

*"**Speaking of reinventing ourselves, we need to do that not only in terms of technology but also pedagogy.**" - David Garza*

*"**You choose one of 4 areas**, which we call **gateways**, and then you have some electives which allow you to figure out what you really like and then you begin to specialize.*

*"So, for example, if you're a chemical or computer engineer, you might say that you want to go into cybersecurity or that you want to diversify with a concentration in finance. This is a very quick overview of the **Model**,"* he said.

He explained that creating the **Tec21 Model** was both a challenge and a long process because the objective was to create a unique model that no one else was using.

*"We have to **deal with resistance to change**,"* Garza concluded.

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