



Dr. Marcel A. Hetu has been an educator, Professor and Olympics coach for nearly 40 years. His experiences have taken him all over the world.

Dr. Hetu holds his PhD in Sociology, a Master's Degree in Educational Administration and a Bachelor's Degree in Education.

Marcel's educational leadership experiences include being Director of Academic Affairs for the University of Phoenix (USA); Dean of Instruction for Heald College of Technology (USA); Director of Outreach for Special Olympics, International (USA) and Director of West Hills College (USA).

Dr. Hetu has been an Olympic Coach for Saudi Arabia; Head Track and Field Coach for California State University, Hayward (USA); USA Olympic Sports Festival Coach and Manager (USA) and International Olympic Committee Consultant. He has been recently selected to Hall of Fame for his accomplishments.

Dr. Hetu is also an author of a book called *The Race of My Personal Life* as well as various articles related to teaching methods, educational technology, and coaching methods and techniques.

In today's digitized world the use of computerized and online technologies seems inevitable, especially in the world's high-tech think tanks such as Silicon Valley, where more and more companies offer online jobs. This means that all levels of education should prepare students to digital learning and interaction. The article by an outstanding American educator Dr. Marcel A. Hetu elucidates problems and possible pitfalls of transition to digital technologies in educational institutions, outlining the approaches to dealing with them and offering the best solutions.

У сьогоденному світі цифрових технологій використання комп'ютеризованого і онлайнного навчання здається неминучим, особливо у високотехнологічних аналітичних центрах, таких як Силіконова Долина, де все більше компаній пропонують роботу з віддаленим доступом (онлайн). Це означає, що освітні заклади всіх рівнів повинні підготувати студентів до навчання та взаємодії «у цифровому форматі». Стаття провідного американського педагога доктора Марсела Хіту висвітлює проблеми і можливі перешкоди на шляху до цифрових технологій в освіті. Автор розглядає підходи до їх розв'язання і пропонує найкращі рішення.

DIGITAL LEARNING – THE IMPACT ON EDUCATORS

**Dr. Marcel A. Hetu, PhD,
Professor**

I have been teaching for nearly fifty years and at every educational level including university, secondary, and elementary. I have also taught at both private and public schools at these levels. During these years there have been many changes in the way we deliver education and how students learn. However, the introduction of technology in the classroom has truly changed how educators work with students and colleagues. I want to discuss how technology has presented some negative issues with educators and educational institutions throughout the world. These issues will cause many educators to leave their profession or be eliminated. It may also cause many institutions to have fewer educators in their supply pool.

Presently I am teaching World History at a private secondary school in Nevada, USA. There are over 600 students in the school and 99% of them will be accepted into a university during their last year. Nearly 98% of them will score in the 95% of top academic achievers in the United States. The students are very intelligent and have rigorous courses that help them have outstanding academic success. Most of the teachers use various teaching techniques to help students learn their subject material. Lecturing, facilitating, group projects, and online teaching are some of the teaching techniques used in and out of the classrooms. There is definitely more lecturing (probably 90%) used. Use of technology, especially computer use, is more of a support for learning. However, educators are now beginning to see and “feel” that technology will be making a far greater impact on student learning. Many of us are being required to take “Digital Learning”

(computer learning) training and certification programs in order to be able to teach any course in the future. For example, at my secondary school I am now required to successfully complete at least two Digital Learning courses during a one-year program. If I do not complete them, I will not be rehired by my school.

While educators understand the importance of technology in the classroom (as educational support resources), they are very worried that school administrators are going to replace them with computers, digital learning, and computer programs. They are also concerned that students will focus more on technology tools rather than developing learning skills. I call this “digital driven” rather than “student-learning driven.” Additionally, educators are worried that students will become like robots with no social, emotional, or reactive skills. The students will become too predictable, too programmed.

Many of us, who have been educators for a long time, also feel that we are being forced to teach students in a manner we don't totally believe is the best way to teach. We teach with the idea that our teaching techniques are student-centered, not computer (digital) centered. We do not want to develop robots, or demonstrate non-sensitivity teaching methods. Yet, in many countries the emphasis will be on digital learning.

Recently I was introduced to the term “Digital Humanity”. The term means that students and professors who use computers to teach and learn must always remember that we are humans and not robots. Humans have emotions, spirit, and souls. Robots can only demonstrate those human characteristics when they are programmed to do so. It is critical that we remember these facts, and not to try to believe that robots can replace the professor and student in the classroom.

One very dangerous practice that institutions can take is to completely eliminate professors. This would, of course, save the institutions from having to pay professor's salaries and benefits, and bring more money to them. However, the interaction between the student and professor would be eliminated, and we would have developed robotic learning and teaching. We would lose "Digital Humanity", and thus, lose the "feelings" of teaching and learning.

In conclusion, educational institutions must continually value the professors that educate our students. Educators must use technology as a resource and support system rather than the main teaching and learning tool. If we fail to take this path, we will produce robots in the future. We will ultimately see our profession dimension and potentially fade away.

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