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Beware of false prophets in higher education

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The idea of false prophets has been around among monotheistic religions (Judaism, Christianity, and Islam) since their inception. The concept of someone predicting events that will occur against the established dogma, thus, is not new. Likely that concept has been expanded to include the one who challenges the conventional wisdom in areas such as medicine and technology. There is nothing inherently wrong with challenging conventional wisdom, but those who are not well-read in science and medicine may be misled by their hard facts and well-grounded insights after years of serious study.

It is not surprising that all the challenges faced by higher education in this country, a number of which have profound and gloomy implications for the future of higher education, from those forecasting that in a few years teaching will be online to the disappearance of libraries, and education based only on hand knowledge (from facts) and not on skills.

We are now seeing how many of these predictions are being realized. For instance, in 2004, I attended the Online Course Innovation Conference (OCIC), that was supposed to provide free education to all. It failed then as it failed now despite the fact that some very common representatives of higher education, such as for example the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT), have been involved in experimenting with it.

When an individual creates, or develops a business model, study after study (of some of them) is removed from the public view due to the fact that the completion rates of those taking their type are way below expectations (of the instructors, do not forget it). Further, those who seem to finish these courses are those who very much students who are willing to invest the time and energy in them. Certainly they do not get the same kind of education as those who go to a high school or aspire to advance in their education toward a degree that will improve their chances of getting a well remunerated job.

It is no wonder that according to some studies, such as a 2011 report by the Pew Research Center, only 29 percent of Americans felt that online courses offered equal value to learning in the traditional classroom. So why all these other prophets and false prophets have failed so far? The reason is very simple: they see students as consumers of a commodity rather than a diverse individuals with diverse needs than want to participate is an activity that they are not very very social.

Anybody can learn facts by reading books or a speech because it is a very time and money present challenges when it comes to verification of the information. But this should not be the purpose of education. It is not to imbue students with facts. After all, they are going to forget most of what they have memorized shortly after exams are over. The reason, according to their subjective tests, to develop skills that will make them more attractive in the job market.

These are the skills employers look for in employees. They do not necessarily want to hire people who are incapable of formulating problems based on their own insights. But let us be fair the fact that the conditions that have allowed for the emergence of these false prophets – the new technology and the Internet – have been created by many faculty members themselves. Because people who teach in higher education, do not seem willing to recognize their own weaknesses. To be honest, I am not talking about soap, that is, to be fair in class what is already in the textbook while only being available to answer questions about material that can be difficult to understand.

Therefore, it is not surprising that we have been the source of fake prophets in higher education. How can we identify them? One way is by carefully examining the source of the information. Most (although not all) cite this or that study to sustain their predictions. The problems is that people cannot distinguish between the evidence while ignoring studies that contradict their predictions. They find the answers they are looking for at the root of the very concept of self-fullfilling prophecies – people who think they are going to be, or are expected to be, will cause themselves to become true.

The other is the use of buzzwords. Phrases that are commonly used are “active community,” “collaborative environment,” “technology-driven classroom,” “futuristic classrooms,” “readiness for MOOCs,” “You have to be ready,” “These are the phrases describing the classes that are now out of place.”

The problem is that this phrases describing the classes that are now out of place. It is a new old practices embellished with new appurtenances.

Dr. Aldenomero Romero Jr. Letters from Academia

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Heroin

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For the Intelligence

Junior Miss Italian St. Louis Jessica Benson,

Heroin continues its trend in St. Louis church fire string

TST (LSU) — Police arrested a 22-year-old black man sus-
pected of setting fires at several St. Louis churches, including one of the many African-American churches in the area. The suspect has been identified as James Miller. He was caught and charged with several counts of arson.

Police spokesman Schon Jackson said the man was taken into custody without incident and that the investigation is ongoing.

Anne Duffin, 78, was one of the first people to arrive at the incident scene. "I was just walking down the street when I saw smoke coming from one of the churches," she said. "I immediately called 911 and put my neighbors on alert."

The fire broke out Oct. 20. One of the churches had an inspection by the St. Louis Fire Department on Oct. 14, and the inspection included the maintenance of the facility. However, the firefighter had confirmed that the inspection was not finished on time.

There was a fear in a lot of people that someone would set a fire and put their lives at risk. This is a common fear in many communities, especially in St. Louis.

In the time since the incident, the community has seen a decrease in crime, but the fear remains. People are still cautious and have increased security measures in place.

The churches have been working closely with the police to ensure the safety of their congregations.

The police have been actively investigating the case and have arrested the suspect.

The investigation continues, and the suspect is awaiting trial after being charged with multiple counts of arson.

The police are asking for the public’s help in identifying other potential suspects.

For the Intelligence

Zach Foote/Intelligencer

Kerry Gable, an associate professor in SIUE’s School of Pharmacy, speaks Thursday at Heroin Taskforce meeting.

Village

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The ordinance also states that anyone in violation of the rules will be "notified that he is violating terms of the ordinance and will be asked to leave." If the offender does not comply, then the presiding officer shall order a police officer to remove the offender from the meeting." It continues to say that "if the offender continues the disturbance outside the meeting room where the meeting is located."