Speaker 1

How do you use technology now?

Speaker 2 (Dr Rowan Michael)

In my courses, I use technology in several different ways. We have Twitter feeds, we also use blogs and wikis. We use the Wimba classroom for consultation and also for some lectures.

Speaker 1

How do you think you see your use of technology changing?

Speaker 2

I think there’s going to be a lot of changes with technology, particularly in the realm of students’ social life that are going to impact on the way we teach and also the way learning is conducted at universities. To be specific, I think there is going to be a breakdown in the barriers between work life, social life and kind of the university life of students. So technology is going to need to be flexible. There will be an increased emphasis on connection with people and collaboration for learning, so I think we will see a change from perhaps a content driven, or a content provider type situation to a situation where students are interacting and collaborating even more than what is happening now.

Speaker 1

What core skills will learning and teaching academics need in 2020?

Speaker 2

Academics will need to have flexibility as well as constantly upskilling themselves in the use of different technologies for learning. If students are using social media more, and different forms of social media than we see today and academics are trying to use those forms of social media in the classroom, then there will need to be a regular change. As fashion trends change in social media usage among students, we will need to change them in the classroom as well, so I think there will be a need for academics to be flexible and to constantly change the way they are engaging with students through technology use.

Speaker 1

How do you think you and your colleagues will be using technology in 2020?
Speaker 2

[This appears to be answering another question]
Absolutely. When we look at how technology is being used, it’s people connecting with people. So I think one of the fundamentals of learning is that it’s about the connection of student to student, and student to teacher. That’s not going to change. I think we will need to see open learning spaces that are available to students 24/7, where students can kind of spontaneously meet and collaborate and work together, so I think we’ll see a change in the nature of the physical spaces, but I don’t think we’ll see the physical spaces removed entirely.

Speaker 1

Is the way in which students and lecturers interact changing?

Speaker 2

I think when we look around higher education today, we still see many of the same forms of teaching that were occurring 500 years ago, with an expert up the front facing a large group of students. Perhaps some changes are things like now we see a greater representation of females in the audience, or greater diversity in the student body, but essentially it’s still that one to many type interaction. I think that’s going to change. Just as we’ve seen technology change from a one to many type approach, to many to many, we’re going to see education become many to many, where there’s greater collaboration, where there’s different communities of expertise being developed and we see communities developing content and the provision and learning around that content, as opposed to a single lecturer perhaps providing that content.

Speaker 1

How do you see technology changing in your research practice?

Speaker 2

We will need greater research into the way we use technology in learning and teaching, and actual empirical evidence that demonstrates that this technology or that technology is beneficial for student learning. Currently, I think there is a tendency to go with whatever is cool or exciting, or engaging, but I think we need to look at how technology meets learning needs and is pedagogically sound in that sense.

Speaker 1

How do you see universities using technology in 2020?
Speaker 2

Well, I think one of the greatest changes is going to be that the barrier between social life, work life and uni life is going to be reduced, so students are going to want to connect with content and information seamlessly between those areas. That’s going to mean that learning spaces change, it’s going to mean that the classroom environment changes, and I think we are going to see greater implementation of technology use to allow that seamless access by students. I think students are going to want to connect with other students through technology, as well as with staff members, and that kind of engagement and collaboration is going to increase, so we are going to see much greater use of social technologies that facilitate collaboration and engagement. One thing that technology now allows us to do is have students work on real projects in real time, and so rather than teaching them about how to do something hypothetically, you can teach them through actually doing it.

[end of recording]