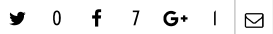




# Why you shouldn't rule out studying in US just yet

The Dean of the University of Bridgeport clears the air on the travel ban and asserts his institution's research might

Published: 24th March 2017



**Seema Rajpal**  
Edex Live



Students at University of Bridgeport

**T**hat's what I tell my students all the time!" exclaimed Professor Tarek Sobh, Dean of the School of Engineering, University of Bridgeport, USA, when he saw the headline '65% kids will do jobs that do not yet exist', in The New Indian Express earlier this month. He was visiting Chennai when we caught up with him to speak about the travel ban and the fear it is causing among other things.



View point: The campus of University of Bridgeport

### Ground reality

Let's get to the bottom line – numbers. In the US, there are 280 engineering schools, which when combined at the bachelor's and master's level, graduate about 80,000 students in engineering and computer science. The US needs, for its economy and companies, a quarter million students. There is a drastic shortage of scientists, computer scientists and IT professionals. No matter what politicians say, facts are facts. Our schools of engineering can't produce these many students. Even if there is a push, it will take years.

The one thing that affects the current exchange in terms of IT and labour between India and the US is the rule to suspend expedited processing of the H-1B visa. The only population that this might affect are the people transferring directly from India on contracts without getting a degree in the US. This enables people who move to the US to get their degrees, as this is the most seamless way to get a tech job in the country.



*People in the US need to project engineering as an exciting profession, which is still lacking in some cases*

**Prof Tarek Sobh, Dean of University of Bridgeport**

### The problem in the US

We are not graduating enough students in the field of engineering. It is not portrayed as a 'sexy' profession anymore. I tell students, everything built today is conceived and designed by an engineer. We are going to be in a very different world from now. Concept of manual labour, serving people, managing things will disappear. For example, buildings will be constructed by drones. This is not science fiction, this will be reality.

### Need of the hour

We are preparing students for jobs that don't even exist. Who would have thought years ago that jobs like autonomous product engineering, social media marketing, and sustainable engineering would exist today? They need to be exposed to many disciplines to help students cross the aisle when it comes to careers. The key is educating all in an interdisciplinary manner.

**In the ranks: The University of Bridgeport is the largest graduating programme in the state of Connecticut and the only other large graduate programme in that part of the US is at MIT**

### Dealing with queries

When Indian students approach me I tell them to talk to their colleagues, seniors and friends and ask them for their experiences. There are many Indians doing incredibly well in different classes of society.

**Indians being shot**

indians being shot

A reason for all of these bigoted and racist events being highlighted is the rhetoric in the political campaign. Events like this happen in every country. Had this happened a year ago, would you be reading about it in the papers? Maybe not. The rhetorical kind of atmosphere is putting this news on the first page not only in India but in the US as well. There is no mass hatred or bigotry.

Reach Out: [www.bridgeport.edu](http://www.bridgeport.edu)

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