

CAPE BUSINESS NEWS

15 Nov 2012: GSB Spearheads Cyberculture In Africa

In a move that will save paper, improve teaching capabilities, and enrich learning experiences, the UCT Graduate School of Business (GSB) is going cyber.

From next year students at the GSB will access all their course material, including textbooks, online through a virtual, subscription-driven, library archive called Cyberlibris. Students will be able to access their personal libraries anytime and will have the option of accessing thousands of related textbooks, essays and presentations.

"We decided to go this route because most of our students are on campus intermittently, particularly modular students. So, through Cyberlibris, we can offer them much more support, 24/7," says Walter Baets, director of the GSB.

"The other reason is to escape the issue of students having to lug textbooks around, and risk the books being forgotten or lost. Now, it's simple: thousands of books in the library; to be accessed anytime."

Baets expects that having access to all this information, much of which will be earmarked as essential reading for GSB students, will enrich the teaching environment because the lecturers can pull from many sources and make those sources available for the students immediately, effortlessly, as full text.

He says it will also enrich the learning experience because of the opportunity students have of exploring many sources, enhancing their understanding of any subject. And, with a social media aspect to it, the students and lecturers can engage and share insights, thoughts, tips, and resources. Students can also add the results of their own research.

More than 60 business schools and universities globally make use of Cyberlibris' large academic digital libraries.

There is also an environmental aspect to the move to digital.

"As a business school we always stress the need to consider the environment, yet up until now we've had to print thousands of textbooks. Through this application, we can reduce our environmental footprint by cutting down our paper usage," he says.

For now, the school will be giving digital tablets to its 2013 MBA and Executive MBA students to enable access to the library.