

E-Learning Opportunities on a Satellite Campus: The Faculty of Military Science, Stellenbosch University

ABSTRACT

Programmes offered by the School for Security and Africa Studies houses both residential, as well as distance education candidates. Given the fact that no parallel lecturing capacity exists within the school, it is up to the individual lecturer to handle both pathways simultaneously. At the same time, postgraduate programmes run in a similar manner and thus demand of the lecturer to teach simultaneously to residential as well as off-campus candidates. One way to establish a golden mean how all the different categories of students are drawn into a common environment is to make use of the WebCT programme on offer by the Stellenbosch University campus.

Utilising the WebCT domain brings about particular opportunities to assist the lecturer in reaching out to every student and even on an international level, but also brings about a certain set of challenges. Building upon the opportunities whilst marginalising the obstacles is perhaps a very good way to approach this e-domain. In this regard particular understanding transpired that stem from working in the environments of Military Strategy and Research Methodology. Small student numbers, student access to CIS facilities and assuming that all students have embraced the e-learning culture point to some of the difficulties. A singular e-point of entry for all information and the conceptual room to present a full array of teaching functions make this pathway one not to be ignored. Not excluding or alienating students from an educational opportunity remains a central thought and one that just cannot be ignored. It is thus important not to become machine minded, but to also understand and show compassion towards those candidates that struggle to remain within the realm of e-learning.

For both the lecturer, as well as the student, e-learning through the WebCT domain offer more opportunities than difficulties and it is important for the average lecturer to take cognisance of what is on offer for a satellite campus such as that of the Faculty of Military Science.

Dr F. Vrey
Lecturer & Subject Chair
Military Strategy
Faculty of Military Science
Stellenbosch University