

# Feather in the cap for business school Research Director

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The University of Cape Town Graduate School of Business (GSB) Research Director, Ralph Hamann, has been appointed to the position of full professor by the Ad Hominem Committee of Commerce, as of January 1, 2014.

Hamann, who has been Research Director and Associate Professor at the GSB since 2010, has made significant contributions towards the GSB's position as the top business school in Africa, and Director of the GSB, Walter Baets, says that the school is gratified by his promotion.

"I want to congratulate Ralph with this formal recognition of the good work he is doing, both for the GSB and for the wider research community. His contribution as research director has been tremendous and has impressively changed the research activity at the GSB for the better," says Baets.

Hamann teaches on sustainable enterprise and research methodology in the school's MBA and EMBA programmes. His research is on organisational and governance responses to complex social and environmental problems, and his research group focuses on themes including business and climate change, company-community relations, food security, and cross-sector collaboration.

In his time at the GSB, Hamann has also published a series of interesting contributions, organised and contributed to conferences, and played an active role in community-oriented projects.

"All of which contributes to the aim of the GSB: being a high quality and highly relevant business school in an emerging market," says Baets.

His work has been featured in South African and international media, including *Business Day*, CNN International, and *The Times* (London).

As a school aimed at promoting a shift towards sustainable and responsible business, Hamann believes the GSB is a good fit for his values. "There is a wonderful alignment of the GSB's mission and my interests. I really appreciate the GSB's commitment to being a business school with a difference, with a strong emphasis on innovation and the social role of business," says Hamann.

Hamann has an MSc (with distinction) from the University of Cape Town and a PhD from the University of East Anglia (UK) on corporate social responsibility in mining in South Africa. He is a director of FutureMeasure, a company that provides a web-based sustainability performance management system, and is a co-founder and chair of the Southern Africa Food Lab, a multi-stakeholder initiative in support of food security. He is also director of the Cape Town Partnership, an organisation linking public and private sector in working toward sustainable urban development strategies and initiatives. Most recently, he co-founded the Network for Business Sustainability: South Africa, which bridges the research-practice gap by linking visionary business leaders with global management scholars.

Despite wearing so many hats already, Hamann shows no signs of slowing down; and says that in his new role he looks forward to carrying his research forward.

"I see myself at a new beginning in my research career. I have done quite a broad array of things; publishing on diverse themes, doing a range of advocacy work, being research director, and so on. In this next phase, I would like to focus more and to spend more time on reading, data collection, and writing. Ironically, it seems that with growing seniority in academia many of us actually do less research. I'd like to resist that trend and get back to more reading and writing. So I suppose I'd

like to do fewer things but to do them better, and to participate in the most interesting and well-informed scholarly conversations," he says.

That's not to say it's all about work: "I am also a believer in the many benefits of time off work, so I aim to do more stuff with my kids and surf a bit more," says Hamann.

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