

Programme to connect future South African leaders to global conversation in a post-Covid-19 world

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The University of Cape Town Graduate School of Business has become the first business school in sub-Saharan Africa to join CEMS - Global Alliance in Management Education.

The UCT GSB joins the CEMS global network of 32 existing academic members (leading business schools), 70 corporate partners (multinational companies) and seven social partners (NGOs), dedicated to educating and preparing future generations of international business leaders, through the top ranked CEMS Master in International Management (MIM).

This one-year Master's programme, which will open registrations in May 2020, for its first intake in South Africa in September 2021, prepares young leaders to contribute to a more open, sustainable and inclusive world.

The partnership is set to tap students studying in Cape Town into the heart of an emerging global conversation as the world resets itself after the Covid-19 pandemic. The partnership with CEMS will open up Cape Town more widely to the shared expertise of the CEMS global network of leading business schools on every continent, as well as international corporate partners who can offer students broad exposure to global business challenges.

It is also believed that the UCT GSB's expertise of teaching students how to produce excellence in a tough operating environment as well as its entrepreneurial spirit, will benefit the whole CEMS global network at an uncertain time.

Preparing students for thinking on a global scale

Beverly Shrand, Programme Director of the MIM at the UCT GSB, says: "Covid-19 has revealed the fragility of our globalised society. Now, more than ever, we need to prepare future leaders for thinking systemically on a global scale. Joining CEMS will help our students to do exactly that.

"Business schools along with our students are having to grapple with the reality that the world – and the way people live, work and learn – has changed forever. We need to be prepared for bigger, more frequent global disruptions in the future because they are going to keep on happening. More important, is how the students as future leaders, will respond to solving complex problems in the varying contexts. I believe that we have a unique role to play in shaping the conversation going forward."

A multicultural, boundless classroom

The CEMS Master in International Management is a one-year, pre-experience programme delivered by CEMS Academic and Corporate partners that offers students the opportunity to be educated in a truly multicultural and boundless classroom. Students with a sound academic track record, who wish to embark on a career in management that spans the globe will find this to be the ideal postgraduate programme.

Students enrolled in the programme study for one semester at their home university, with mandatory study abroad in a different CEMS member school. In addition to completing a home degree, students complete a consulting project and a compulsory international internship. Upon graduation, students' careers take a truly international path in a great variety of sectors and in many cases within multinational companies:

- 98% are employed or continuing their studies
- 95% are living outside of their home country

- 74% work for multinational companies

Roland Siegers, Executive Director of CEMS, says that modern business education is a developing field - the continuous interaction among CEMS stakeholders keeps innovation at the forefront, making CEMS the ideal choice for future international business leaders.

“The MIM emphasises personal and social responsibility in business decision-making, leadership and citizenship, informed by ethical reasoning, personal integrity, and respect for social diversity. The programme helps students understand and navigate the international business environment, whilst equipping them with the knowledge, skills and network to manage people across borders and within multinational teams, tackling real business issues across a range of fields,” he says.

Producing excellence in a tough operating environment

As the first business school in sub-Saharan Africa to join this network, Shrand believes the UCT GSB has a particularly relevant contribution to make – especially at this time. “The UCT GSB’s recognised expertise in teaching students how to produce excellence in tough operating environments, characterised by high inequality and uncertainty, has made its programmes internationally sought-after qualifications,” she comments.

“In South Africa, we have had to deal with VUCA factors on a magnitude and scale far beyond what business schools in developed contexts have had to grapple with before now. For example, in Cape Town we are operating in a city that nearly became the first in the world to run out of water. This unlocked a flowering of innovation and resilience strategies from government, businesses and citizens alike. VUCA factors are part of our lived reality, and that gives us an edge in infusing our teaching with experiential and practical learning to equip graduates to find solutions for business and societal challenges.”

For more information on how to apply go to <https://www.gsb.uct.ac.za/cems>.

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UCT Graduate School of Business



The University of Cape Town Graduate School of Business (GSB) is recognised as one of the best business schools in the world. Its innovative approaches to teaching and learning and commitment to relevance and social impact set it apart from most.

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