

TEACHING STATEMENT

Teaching is an essential part of academic life. For me, teaching and research are highly complementary activities. Teaching benefits my research, because the need to explain difficult concepts to students in an intuitive way helps me to gain a deeper understanding of the material myself and to develop new insights. I take teaching very seriously, and want to create an engaging environment for students.

To create an engaging environment, I always try to place what I teach in a narrative, rather than confronting students directly with abstract concepts. In some cases, I start by telling students about the person who came up with a particular concept or idea and what motivated them to do so. In other cases, I use concrete thought examples that help illustrate the concept or idea in a more direct way. For example, consider the concept of money illusion, the cognitive bias of people to think of money in nominal rather than real terms. When I teach this topic, I do not simply drop the concept out of thin air. Instead, I start by telling the students about Irving Fisher, who coined the term, and provide the students with some anecdotes from Irvin Fisher's 1928 book on the topic. Fisher describes particularly striking instances of money illusion that he observed when he visited Germany after the first world war. This was a time when the Deutsche Mark had considerably depreciated in value, and Fisher observed that many of the regular people experiencing this depreciation did not fully grasp what it meant. These anecdotes naturally lead to the concept itself and its definition. I believe that this narrative-based way of teaching not only makes students more likely to pay attention, but that it also helps them to remember the concepts that I teach.

Furthermore, I aim to make my classes interactive. In some cases, this simply comes down to actively posing questions to the students to keep them active. When teaching topics related to game theory, I go a step further and have students play economic games themselves. To do so, I use software such as [mentimeter.com](https://www.mentimeter.com) that allows students to answer questions on their smartphone. These answers can be directly presented back to them in an intuitive graph on the presentation screen. Such interaction triggers the students to think about the problem independently and enhances their attention during the remainder of the lecture.

To improve and keep my course materials up-to-date, I critically evaluate my lectures every year, both before and after teaching. Before I teach, I go over the lectures with a fresh perspective. This often leads to small improvements, but also allows me to see whether there are recent economic and political events that I can incorporate in my lecture to make the topics more relevant to students. After a lecture, I evaluate how students responded to particular parts and consider whether improvements can be made on the basis of these impressions.

My teaching is very much research based. I obtained my sociology degrees at a research-intensive department. From the first class that I attended in the Bachelor program, we were expected to read academic articles. When I made the switch to economics, I noticed that teaching there is much more textbook-based. This is understandable, as economics has a stronger set of core ideas and theories that can be coherently presented in a textbook. However, I too often encounter students at the end of their bachelor or even in their master, who are unable to correctly pose a research question or formulate testable hypotheses. To overcome such deficits, I ask students to read academic papers and discuss academic papers in class. I also try to stimulate students to actively think about how particular hypotheses can be tested (what data would one need?) and about alternative explanations that need to be considered. I believe that such skills are crucial for the student's academic development.

In addition to generally striving for research-based teaching, I use my own research in class whenever possible. I have studied a broad range of questions regarding human judgment and decision making. This portfolio of research connects to a broad range of topics in management. Given that much of my research uses data from interesting field settings such as game shows, casinos, lotteries, and sports matches, students always respond very positively when I talk about my research in class. A prisoner's dilemma is much more compelling to students when they see two people play it for a potential sum of 100,000 GBP in a British TV show, than when it is presented as a payoff matrix on a PowerPoint slide.

WHAT I WOULD LIKE TO TEACH

My education, teaching, and research history enables me to teach courses in a variety of areas, but especially in applied microeconomics and applied econometrics. I would particularly be open to teach courses in microeconomics, micro-econometrics, causal inference, behavioral economics in theory and practice, and experimental economics in the lab and the field.

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

Behavioral Finance and Real Estate (VU Amsterdam)

Third year BSc course, academic years 2017, 2018, 2019 (100 students per year)

*Teaching evaluation: 4.5/5 (2017-2018); 4.4/5 (2018-2019); 4.6/5 (2019-2020)**

Role: lecturer, co-designing and grading exam, grading assignment (research proposal)

This course provides a behavioral perspective on real estate decision making and markets. In particular, students learn how behavioral biases affect the decisions of participants in real estate markets, and how the bounded rationality of market participants can explain real estate market dynamics. I co-developed this course together with Martijn J. van den Assem and Leonard Wolk. In my part of the course, I provide students with a psychological perspective on negotiation, property valuation, and mortgage choices.

Psychologie van financiële besluitvorming (Amsterdam School of Real Estate)

Master of Real Estate, academic years 2018, 2019 (40 students per year)

Role: lecturer, co-designing exam

I provide students with a psychological perspective on negotiation, property valuation, and mortgage choices (an abbreviated version of what I do in the similarly titled course at VU Amsterdam).

Behavioral Finance (VU Amsterdam)

MSc course, academic years 2018, 2019 (100 students per year)

Teaching evaluation: 4.4/5 (2018-2019),***

Role: lecturer, co-designing and grading exam, grading assignment (research proposal)

This course uses insights from psychology and behavioral economics, to illustrate how people actually make financial decisions. It repeatedly contrasts decision making behavior with rational norms and explains why people deviate systematically from these norms. This was a pre-existing course, taught by Martijn J. van den Assem. I developed additional lectures in which I provide students with an introduction to negotiation and behavioral ethics.

Behavioral Ethics (VU Amsterdam)

Executive education program Compliance and Integrity Management, academic years 2018, 2019 (30 students per year)

*Teaching evaluation: 4.5/5 (2018-2019); 4.3/5 (2019-2020)**

Role: lecturer

For this executive education program, I developed a six-hour lecture on fairness concerns, bounded ethicality, and how to improve behavior with simple nudges.

Finance 1 (VU Amsterdam)

BSc second year, academic years 2017, 2018, 2019 (180 students per year in my tutorial groups)

*Teaching evaluation: 4.2/5 (2017-2018); 4.3/5 (2018-2019); 4.3/5 (2019-2020)**

Role: tutorial teacher

In this course, students of the BSc program International Business Administration are introduced to core principles of capital budgeting, asset pricing and financial investments. I hold weekly tutorials during the semester, covering extended lecture materials and problem sets.

Behavioral Economics (Erasmus University Rotterdam)

BSc second year, academic years 2010, 2011, 2012 (90 students per year in my tutorial groups)

Role: tutorial teacher

This was an introductory course discussing core topics in behavioral economics. I co-developed and taught tutorials in which students participated in a classroom decision-making experiment, after which I informally analyzed the results together with the students.

PhD thesis supervision

2017-2020 (Expected) – Bouke Klein Teeselink (joint with Martijn J. van den Assem)

First placement: Yale School of Management (postdoc)

MSc thesis supervision

Academic years 2010, 2011, 2012 (Erasmus University Rotterdam), 2017, 2018, 2019 (VU Amsterdam)

Supervision of various master students. At Erasmus University Rotterdam, theses were mostly on topics in Behavioral Economics. At VU Amsterdam, they were mostly on topics in Finance.

BSc thesis supervision

Academic years 2011, 2012 (Erasmus University Rotterdam)

Supervision of various bachelor students, mostly on topics in Behavioral Economics.

** Average teaching evaluation at the VU Amsterdam is 4.0.*

*** No teaching evaluations available for 2019-2020 due to the Covid-19 pandemic. Course was provided, but no teaching evaluations performed.*