VRIJE UNIVERSITEIT AMSTERDAM

School of Business and Economics

provides a stimulating and inclusive academic environment for ambitious people who wish to positively impact the world and people’s lives. We believe in science with purpose, and see collaboration, openness, and social responsibility as the way forward – for science, business and humanity.
Arjen van Witteloostuijn, Dean: ‘Our goal is to produce very good research, very good education - and to have an impact.’

Introducing the SBE Research Office

VU Innovation Award winner Ines Linder: ‘We are heading towards blended learning.’

In the spotlight: Horizon 2020 grantee Svetlana Khapova
Van Witteloostuijn about his plans for SBE: ‘Our goal is to produce very good research, very good education—and to have an impact. We have to interact with society, to see where we can help and solve problems. In order to do so, we have to constantly reflect on: What is good education? What is good research? And what is good impact?’ In order to achieve this goal, Van Witteloostuijn considers it necessary to have ‘smoothly running primary processes, a pleasant working environment where people can do their work properly—and have fun—and, finally, sufficient funding to invest in promising activities and projects.’

The manager Arjen van Witteloostuijn views accessibility as key: ‘I want to make people feel comfortable, so that they tell me what is bothering them—and what is not. Second, shared leadership is very important; people should feel that they are co-managing and that they are in control. Finally, being open to other people’s ideas, and dealing with challenges and opportunities in a creative way are leading principles for me. This means putting myself in someone else’s shoes, thinking with other people and being creative together. I favour an open and constructive dialogue in which new ideas come up that are better than the original.’

As of 1 February 2018, Arjen van Witteloostuijn is dean of the School of Business and Economics. In addition, he is professor at the University of Antwerp and chair of the Behavioural Sciences, Social Sciences and Law Domain at the Royal Dutch Academy of Sciences (KNAW).

As of 1 February 2018, Arjen van Witteloostuijn is dean of the School of Business and Economics (SBE) is one of the largest faculties of VU Amsterdam. SBE accommodates approximately 4,200 undergraduate students, 2,300 postgraduate students and 500 employees. The academic staff consists of professors, lecturers, researchers and PhD candidates, who are connected to the various departments. The supporting staff is part of the Faculty Office. The Faculty Board leads the faculty.
Arjen van Witteloostuijn (1960) is professor of Business and Economics and Dean of the School of Business and Economics at VU Amsterdam. In addition, he is research professor in Business, Economics and Governance at the University of Antwerp and Antwerp Management School. In the 1980s, 1990s, 2000s, and 2010s, he was affiliated with the University of Groningen, Maastricht University, Tilburg University, Utrecht University, Cardiff University and Durham University [the latter two in the UK], and he visited New York University and Warwick Business School (UK). He holds degrees in Business, Economics and Psychology. From 1996—1998, he was Dean of the Maastricht Faculty of Economics and Business Administration. He was one of the founders of Maastricht University’s Netherlands Institute of Business Organization and Strategy Research (NIBOR), Groningen’s research institute for International Economics and Business (SNL Research), the Antwerp Centre of Evolutionary Demography (ACEDE), and the Tilburg Institute of Public Governance (TIG). He has also been a member of the editorial boards of many national and international journals. In addition, he has acted or still acts as: a member of the Executive Committee of the European Association for Research in Industrial Economics (EARIE), president of the Dutch-Flemish Academy of Management (NVAM), chairman of the Board of the Council for Economic, Social and Regional Sciences (ESR) of the Netherlands Organisation for Scientific Research (NWO), a member of the Economic Advisory Council of the Dutch Parliament (REA), and a member of the Royal Netherlands Academy of Arts and Sciences (KNAW).
RESEARCH

The School of Business and Economics (SBE) of VU Amsterdam is research driven and aims to impact society and academia through the quality of its research findings. All research groups within the School publish in the top journals in their field worldwide and are driven to push boundaries further. The School offers an international, open and inspiring environment, where knowledge exchange and research cooperation are highly stimulated in an informal and friendly atmosphere.

HIGHLIGHTS

DEPARTMENT OF MARKETING: PUBLICATION IN THE JOURNAL OF CONSUMER RESEARCH

Copycats are brands that imitate elements of other brands, such as their brand name, logo or packaging design. They typically operate in the core product category of the imitated brand. Earlier research by Marketing department member Femke van Horen has explored the effects of different kinds of in-category imitations. But what happens when copycats imitate ‘out-of-category’ brands? In four experiments, Femke’s recent research \(^1\) (with Rik Pieters of Tilburg University) shows that copycats in a related but different category are perceived positively by consumers, because consumers appraise the similarity between the copycat and the imitated brand more positively than in the core category. This is due to a reduced salience of norms regarding imitation in the related category. Moreover, the results show a damaging backlash effect of out-of-category imitation on the general evaluation of the brand that is being imitated. This research demonstrates that out-of-category brand imitation helps copycat brands and hurts leading brands much more than what has previously been considered, which has important managerial and public policy implications.

KIN CENTER FOR DIGITAL INNOVATION: CONNECTING TOP-TIER RESEARCH WITH PRACTICE

This year, Marleen Huysman of the KIN Center for Digital Innovation wrote the agenda for the Work & Organisation theme of the VSNU Digital Society programme. The agenda has been accepted and forms part of the VSNU programme that expresses the ambition of all 14 Dutch universities that within 10 years the Netherlands will be the leader in the digital society. Together with Tanja van der Lippe (professor of Sociology, University of Utrecht), Marleen Huysman will spearhead the programme’s theme. One of their ambitions is to create an interdisciplinary network of researchers, companies and governments in the area of work and organisation within the digital society, to generate research opportunities and to create opportunities to translate research into impactful improvements to our society.

This appointment will give an extra boost to the activities of the KIN Center for Digital Innovation, which was launched on 1 October 2017. The KIN Center for Digital Innovation was established to create more societal impact with academic research by contributing to a society that creates not only economic but also social value from digitalisation in work and organisation. The KIN Center faculty members, together with a network of international fellows, are building on research consortium activities, extending their outreach activities and developing a series of professional learning programmes, master classes and a full executive programme. At the same time, KIN’s research activities have resulted in a great number of high-impact publications, such as: Sascha Friesike’s research on innovation in 3D printing communities in the Journal of Information Technology, Wendy Günther’s review paper on big data in The Journal of Strategic Information Systems, Anastasia Sergeeva’s study on the role of onlookers for technology use in MISQ, and Amanda Porter’s exploration of how authority is organised around climate change in the Netherlands in Organization Studies. All in all, the year 2017 brought a promising start to fulfilling KIN’s ambition to connect their top-tier research with practice and thereby contribute to a responsible and effective digital society.

DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMETRICS: PUBLICATION IN NATURE NANOTECHNOLOGY
article" in which they argue that a societal cost-benefit analysis addressing the sustainability of nanotechnology requires multiple methods. Although technological and environmental benefits are important stimuli for nanotechnology development, these technologies have been contested from an environmental point of view. The steady growth in applications of engineered nanomaterials has heated up the debate on quantifying the environmental repercussions. The two main scientific methods used to address these environmental repercussions are risk assessment and life-cycle assessment. The strengths and weaknesses of each of these methods, and the relation between them, have been a topic of debate in the world of traditional chemistry for over two decades. The authors review recent developments in this debate, both in general and for the emerging field of nanomaterials specifically, and discuss the pros and cons of four schools of thought for combining and integrating risk assessment and life-cycle assessment. They conclude with a plea for action.

DEPARTMENT OF FINANCE: PAPER IN TOP 10 MOST DOWNLOADED ARTICLES OF ALL TIMES

Siem Jan Koopman and André Lucas of the Department of Finance, together with Drew Creal, saw their paper appear in the top 10 most downloaded articles of all times. The abstract of the paper on “Generalized autoregressive score models with applications” is given below:

We propose a class of observation-driven time series models referred to as generalized autoregressive score (GAS) models. The mechanism to update the parameters over time is the scaled score of the likelihood function. This new approach provides a unified and consistent framework for introducing time-varying parameters in a wide class of nonlinear models. The GAS model encompasses other well-known models such as the generalized autoregressive conditional heteroscedasticity, autoregressive conditional duration, autoregressive conditional intensity, and Poisson count models with time-varying mean. In addition, our approach can lead to new formulations of observation-driven models. We illustrate our framework by introducing new model specifications for time-varying copula functions and for multivariate point processes with time-varying parameters. We study the models in detail and provide simulation and empirical evidence.

DEPARTMENT OF MANAGEMENT & ORGANIZATION: VISITING RESEARCHER AT HARVARD BUSINESS SCHOOL

Inge Brokerhof of the Department of Management and Organization is visiting Harvard Business School (HBS) to investigate the impact of a narrative intervention method on moral awareness in current and future leaders and business students.

To contents
managers enrolled in the MBA programme at HBS.

She is investigating a narrative approach to stimulate moral awareness through the use of fictional narratives in a business education context. Narratives can help students grasp the real-life complexities of morality and can give them the opportunity to get involved on an emotional level with story characters and the predicaments they face. Through putting themselves in the shoes of different story characters and by engaging in class discussions, students experience different personal perspectives on moral decision-making and moral leadership, increasing moral awareness and offering new perspectives on what it means to be a moral leader.

Narratives can help students grasp the real-life complexities of morality.

DEPARTMENT OF SPATIAL ECONOMICS: SPECIAL ISSUES OF THE EUROPEAN ECONOMIC REVIEW AND ENVIRONMENTAL AND RESOURCE ECONOMICS

In October 2017, a special issue of the European Economic Review was published, edited by Cees Withagen and Rick van der Ploeg (Department of Spatial Economics), entitled “Combating climate change: Lessons from macroeconomics, political economy and public finance.” Another special issue of Environmental and Resource Economics, with the editorial team supplemented by Spatial Economics’ Gerard van der Meijden, was published under the title “Frontiers of climate change economics” in September 2017. The special issues are a direct outcome of the Advanced ERC Grant that Withagen and Van der Ploeg received earlier, on the theme of the ‘Green Paradox’. The special issues deal with the apparent cleavages that exist between the clearness of economic prescriptions to deal with environmental challenges through corrective (Pigouvian) pricing on the one hand, and the slow and disappointing international policy process when dealing with climate change policies on the other. The special issues together contain 19 contributions by top international scholars from the field, incidentally one of whom is SBE’s new full professor of Environmental Economics, Carolyn Fischer. The issues are a must-read for any economist with an interest in environmental issues, for any environmental scientist with an interest in the economics of policy, and for any policy maker with a responsibility in both.

Book of the year nomination

Where do management ideas come from? Who develops them? What determines the success of the gurus and consultants distributing these ideas? These topics are discussed in Dr managementideeënfabriek (‘The Management Ideas Factory’), written by Stefan Heusinkveld of the Department of Management and Organization. The book has been nominated by the Order of Organisational Experts and Advisers (OoA) as the 2017 Book of the Year. It provides a look behind the scenes of the emergence of influential ideas such as the BCG matrix, the 7S model, Total Quality Management (TQM), the Balanced Scorecard (BSC), Customer Relationship Management (CRM), Lean Management, Agile Entrepreneurship and Corporate Social Responsibility. The OoA is a Dutch professional organisation for management consultants, founded in 1940. In addition to advocacy, the OoA is involved in facilitating professional practice, with improving quality assurance, drawing up codes of conduct, organising events and publishing publications, among other things.

DEPARTMENT OF ACCOUNTING: PUBLICATION IN THE JOURNAL OF ACCOUNTING RESEARCH

For the 2017 annual conference, the Journal of Accounting Research introduced the so-called ‘registration-based editorial process’. Researchers were invited to submit a detailed research proposal. If their peer-reviewed proposal was accepted, the journal agreed to publish the final resulting paper. Sanne van Duin, Henri Dekker, Jacco Wielhouwer and Juan Mendoza of the Department of Accounting had their research proposal “The tone from above: The effect of communicating a supportive regulatory strategy on reporting quality” accepted. The final paper is now available online and will appear in the conference issue of the Journal of Accounting Research in 2018.

In the study10, the authors, in collaboration with the Dutch Authority for the Financial Markets (AFM), manipulate the content of official letters that instruct financial intermediaries to submit a mandatory self-assessment, in order to study the effects of this communication on the reporting quality of the responding firms. They found...
**End of year 2013**

- **Number of Employees (Academic):** 511
- **Number of Employees (Support):** 94
- **Externally Contracted and Guests:** 275
- **Total:** 859

**End of year 2014**

- **Number of Employees (Academic):** 488
- **Number of Employees (Support):** 72
- **Externally Contracted and Guests:** 365
- **Total:** 925

**End of year 2015**

- **Number of Employees (Academic):** 463
- **Number of Employees (Support):** 73
- **Externally Contracted and Guests:** 313
- **Total:** 849

**End of year 2016**

- **Number of Employees (Academic):** 442
- **Number of Employees (Support):** 84
- **Externally Contracted and Guests:** 181
- **Total:** 707

**End of year 2017**

- **Number of Employees (Academic):** 439
- **Number of Employees (Support):** 78
- **Externally Contracted and Guests:** 319
- **Total:** 836

**Age Distribution of SBE’s Academic Staff on 31 December 2017**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Role</th>
<th>&lt;30</th>
<th>31-40</th>
<th>41-50</th>
<th>51-60</th>
<th>61 or older</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Professor</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>35</td>
<td></td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Associate professor</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td>17</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>14</td>
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<tr>
<td>Assistant professor</td>
<td>9</td>
<td></td>
<td>55</td>
<td></td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PhD researcher</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>6</td>
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<tr>
<td>Researcher</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lecturer</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td>12</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Total:**

- **Professor:** 81
- **Associate professor:** 65
- **Assistant professor:** 91
- **PhD researcher:** 74
- **Researcher:** 29
- **Lecturer:** 69

**Total:** 361
that a letter with a more supportive attitude results in a lower reporting quality, unless the firms have a long-term orientation. This indicates that regulators can benefit from tailoring their regulatory and communication strategy depending on the time horizon of the firms; that the way they present themselves is important but that, despite the general positive stance towards supportive regulatory strategies, such a supportive strategy does not come without risk.

DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMICS: PUBLICATION IN THE QUARTERLY JOURNAL OF ECONOMICS

Joppe de Ree, Karthik Muralidharan, Menno Pradhan (Department of Economics) and Halsey Rogers had their article "Double for nothing? Experimental evidence on an unconditional teacher salary increase in Indonesia" published in the Quarterly Journal of Economics, a top ranked journal in economics. Increasing teacher salaries is a cost-effective policy to improve the education quality? This is the question—which is currently much debated in the Netherlands—that the paper addresses. Two arguments are often presented. The first is that higher salaries make the teaching profession more attractive, which will attract brighter people into the workforce. The second is that higher salaries will motivate existing teachers, who will then put more effort into their jobs. This paper empirically tests the latter argument, using the Indonesian teacher certification programme, doubling the salaries of teachers when they passed the test. The researchers worked in close cooperation with the Indonesian Ministry of Education to evaluate the policy. To this end, the programme was implemented immediately in a random treatment sample of 120 schools. Whereas teachers in the treatment group could immediately enter the certification programme, teachers in the control school had to wait until it was their turn. The authors tested for impact one and a half year and two and a half years after the start of the experiment. Relative to control schools, teachers in treatment schools reduced work hours in their second jobs and were more satisfied with their income. However, there is no evidence that they increased their efforts for their main teaching job. Also, student test scores were not affected. These findings indicate that the second argument—that the quality of education will improve because higher salaries will motivate teachers—does not hold in Indonesia. The paper provides no evidence for the first argument that through teacher selection the quality of education will improve. But if it does eventually prove to be true, it will probably not be cost effective, as there is very little turnover of civil servant teachers in Indonesia so, for the coming decades, most children will be taught by existing teachers.

PHD DISSERTATIONS


5. Denekamp, Rein (2017). The role of interpersonal conflict between top and middle managers in top-down and bottom-up initiatives. Amsterdam: Vrije Universiteit


20. Snoekers, Florian (2017). Do the functioning of markets with frictions. Amsterdam: Tinbergen Institute


The SBE Research Office invites talented researchers to submit a research proposal on one of the School’s research themes, and supports, amongst others, Marie Sklodowska-Curie Action (individual) applicants within the School of Business and Economics. One successful (joint) MSCA proposal in 2017 was the international research project on ‘Global mobility of employees’ (GLOMO), submitted by Svetlana Khapova, Niki Konijn, Jos Akkermans, and Evgenia Lysova, together with an international consortium of leading European universities and business partners. For more information on this project, see the interview with Svetlana Khapova on page 40 of this annual report.

CHINA SCHOLARSHIP COUNCIL (CSC) – PHD APPLICATIONS

The SBE Research Office invites CSC PhD candidates to apply for a PhD trajectory at the School of Business and Economics. In order to arouse the interest of potential Chinese PhD candidates, several workshops were organised in Beijing and Shanghai. The efforts resulted in 21 applications. In the end, 8 applicants received the scholarship and will do their PhD at SBE (partly or completely), starting in September 2018.

INTRODUCING THE SBE RESEARCH OFFICE

In order to better coordinate and facilitate the many research activities within SBE, the SBE Research Office was formed in 2017. The SBE Research Office is the place to go for questions on research-related activities of the School. For its researchers, the office offers advice on and support for funding, contracts, budgets, research data management, valorisation and project management. For external contacts, the office is the first point of contact when it comes to collaboration opportunities with one of SBE’s scientific experts. And finally, for SBE, the office coordinates all internal research-related policies, output administration (Pure) and the school’s annual output assessment and research time allocation. So far, the actions of the SBE Research Office team have yielded some important results. Examples of these are the successful coordination and monitoring of the Marie Sklodowska-Curie Fellowship and the China Scholarship Council applications.

Research Data Management

Promoting sound research data management (RDM) practices is one of the key priorities of the Research Office at the School of Business and Economics. As part of this effort, the Research Office developed some practical tools to assist researchers at SBE in handling research data throughout the entire data lifecycle, and to increase awareness of this important aspect of the research process. These include a research data management road map poster and a pre-privacy impact assessment tool, which can both be found on the dedicated webpage: www.sbe.vu.nl/rdm.

In view of the fast developments in the field of research data management and the implications of the EU General Data Protection Regulation (in effect from 25 May 2018) for our research practice, the Research Office will continue to improve existing procedures and services for SBE researchers.

The SBE Research Office is the place to go for questions on research-related activities of the School.
The School has made significant steps to strengthen its position in the international playing field. For a start, the portfolio of programmes taught in English has been extended considerably. In addition to the English-taught bachelor’s programme in International Business Administration and the broad bachelor’s programme in Philosophy, Politics and Economics, we have added a track in Econometrics and Data Science as part of the bachelor’s programme in Econometrics and Operations Research. And from the next academic year, the bachelor’s programmes in Economics and Business Economics as well as Econometrics and Operations Research will be offered in English, too. Furthermore, the recruitment of international students and staff has been intensified. Currently, 31% of the students in English-taught programmes have an international background, and students with 92 different nationalities have enrolled at SBE over the past three years. On top of this, the School has made good progress in obtaining the international business and accounting accreditation of the Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business, or AACSB for short. This is an internationally recognised, specialised accreditation for business education, which we believe will increase the value of the diploma and have a positive effect on the intake of international students.
INTERNATIONAL EXCHANGE

The School encourages second-year bachelor’s students to study abroad for a semester. VU Amsterdam has exchange agreements with more than 250 universities around the world. Students have the opportunity to get to know another culture, people with other nationalities, another educational system and to take courses that are not offered at VU Amsterdam. In 2017, more than half of our second-year bachelor’s students took advantage of this opportunity and had an unforgettable experience.

REVISION OF MASTER’S PROGRAMMES

After the successful renewal of the bachelor’s programme, a similar process for the master’s portfolio took place. This resulted in a completely revised and coherent set of master’s programmes starting in 2017. This new portfolio is the end result of a co-creation project, during which numerous interviews were conducted to provide insights into the wishes of employees, alumni, current students, teachers and management. These insights were translated into common principles from which each master’s programme derived its own profile and curriculum. Two strengths of the new portfolio are the continuous link between education and research, and increased attention toward opportunities for graduates to join the labour market.

BACHELOR’S AND MASTER’S STUDENT NUMBERS 2017–2018

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Programme</th>
<th>First-year students</th>
<th>Enrollments</th>
<th>Honours programmes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>B Business Administration</td>
<td>281</td>
<td>798</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B Econometrics &amp; Operations Research</td>
<td>124</td>
<td>271</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B Economics &amp; Business Economics</td>
<td>171</td>
<td>518</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B International Business Administration</td>
<td>190</td>
<td>495</td>
<td>151</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M Accounting &amp; Control fulltime</td>
<td>98</td>
<td>91</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M Accounting &amp; Control parttime</td>
<td>93</td>
<td>322</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M Business Administration</td>
<td>583</td>
<td>752</td>
<td>275</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M Business in Society (joint degree)</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M Econometrics &amp; Operations Research</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>135</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>M Economics</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M Entrepreneurship (joint degree)</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>23</td>
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<tr>
<td>M Finance</td>
<td>134</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>60</td>
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<tr>
<td>M Marketing</td>
<td>147</td>
<td>170</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M Spatial, Transport &amp; Environmental Economics</td>
<td>32</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>M Tinbergen Institute Master of Philosophy in Economics (research)</td>
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<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>1990</td>
<td>3963</td>
<td>639</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*B=Bachelor of Science, M=Master of Science

SUCCESSFUL ACCREDITATION OF ECONOMICS PROGRAMMES

The re-accreditation of the economics programmes was successful. The NVAO re-accredited ten programmes. The parttime master’s programme Marketing acquired an initial accreditation. The large majority was assessed with ‘good’ on their realisation of the teaching and learning environment. The peer review committee was particularly impressed by the quality, dedication and commitment that they saw in the teaching and learning environment. Three programmes even received the overall score of ‘good’: the master’s programme in Accounting and the bachelor’s and master’s programmes in Econometrics and Operations Research. Accreditation is required for receiving official recognition as an academic programme and – even more importantly – allows the School to give out official BSc and MSc titles to its graduates. The year 2017 also marked the start of preparations for the re-accreditation of the business programmes scheduled for late 2018. The specialisations in Digital Business and Innovation, Financial Management, and Transport and Supply Chain Management, now still part of the Business Administration programme, will attempt to gain independent accreditation.

MINORS SUCCESSFUL, MORE THAN 50% FROM OUTSIDE SBE

The School offers eleven minors for students in the third year of their bachelor’s programme to deepen or broaden their knowledge. This is an excellent opportunity for students to take courses at another faculty or university, in the Netherlands or abroad. Our minors attracted many students from outside the School: more than half of the students enrolled were from outside the School or university.

31% PERCENTAGE OF INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS IN ENGLISH TAUGHT PROGRAMMES

INTERNATIONAL:

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<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>1990</td>
<td>3963</td>
<td>639</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*B=Bachelor of Science, M=Master of Science

SUCCESSFUL ACCREDITATION OF ECONOMICS PROGRAMMES

The re-accreditation of the economics programmes was successful. The NVAO re-accredited ten programmes. The parttime master’s programme Marketing acquired an initial accreditation. The large majority was assessed with ‘good’ on their realisation of the teaching and learning environment. The peer review committee was particularly impressed by the quality, dedication and commitment that they saw in the teaching and learning environment. Three programmes even received the overall score of ‘good’: the master’s programme in Accounting and the bachelor’s and master’s programmes in Econometrics and Operations Research. Accreditation is required for receiving official recognition as an academic programme and – even more importantly – allows the School to give out official BSc and MSc titles to its graduates. The year 2017 also marked the start of preparations for the re-accreditation of the business programmes scheduled for late 2018. The specialisations in Digital Business and Innovation, Financial Management, and Transport and Supply Chain Management, now still part of the Business Administration programme, will attempt to gain independent accreditation.

MINORS SUCCESSFUL, MORE THAN 50% FROM OUTSIDE SBE

The School offers eleven minors for students in the third year of their bachelor’s programme to deepen or broaden their knowledge. This is an excellent opportunity for students to take courses at another faculty or university, in the Netherlands or abroad. Our minors attracted many students from outside the School: more than half of the students enrolled were from outside the School or university.

31% PERCENTAGE OF INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS IN ENGLISH TAUGHT PROGRAMMES

INTERNATIONAL:
EXECUTIVE EDUCATION

The year 2017 was a good year, says Frans Roozen, Head of Executive Education. ‘Revenues increased by 8 per cent, while returns remained strong. We have observed a change in the types of programmes that students choose. There has been a shift from the longer, postgraduate programmes towards the shorter, professional programmes. Furthermore, the programmes in Business Analytics/Data Science are particularly booming. Another booming area is digital auditing. The digitalisation of organisations, of society as a whole, is a fact. In order to master the contemporary competencies, this requires additional education for those who were traditionally trained in auditing. They need to be taught, for instance, the risks when it comes to cyber security.’

Frans Roozen on future developments within executive education: ‘We are constantly exploring new opportunities. At this point, we are developing two to three executive MBAs. In addition, we aim to introduce new programmes in Digitalisation and Data Analytics. Another new development is in-company trainings. Little by little, we have already made a start in 2017. The advantages are obvious: educational facilities are in-company, which means no travel costs. Furthermore, we are able to address the specific issues relevant to the organisation; we can offer tailor-made education. In addition, we help to bring together the knowledge that is present all over the organisation, and to share it. Finally, the fact that cooperation between our different programmes increases provides extra advantages for companies—we offer education in different packages, adjusted to the clients’ needs.’

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Ines Lindner (1971) is associate professor of Mathematical Economics at the Department of Econometrics and Operations Research, and is a fellow at the Tinbergen Institute. She graduated from the University of Hamburg as Diplom-Mathematikerin in 1998 and completed her PhD in Mathematical Economics in 2003. Before joining VU Amsterdam in 2007, she held positions at CORE (a global community of learners, teachers and researchers), Université Catholique de Louvain (BE), Naval Postgraduate School, Monterey (USA) and the Utrecht School of Economics. Her research interests cover social and economic networks and game theory. She combines research with projects on teaching innovation and is a member of several VU committees on ICT and learning.

Together with her team, Ines Lindner, associate professor at the Department of Econometrics and Operations Research, won the VU Innovation Award for the project ‘Online Summer Prep-Campus’ in October 2017. The aim of the project is to organise an online summer course for prospective bachelor’s students, so that they can start their studies well-prepared in September. The social goal of the project is to create an inclusive culture through social media so that students get to know each other and feel like members of the VU community as quickly as possible. According to the jury, chaired by Rector Magnificus Vinod Subramaniam, the proposal fits in very well with the educational vision of VU Amsterdam. It is very innovative, professionally evaluated, widely applicable and potentially has a large return for the VU and its students.

‘The project is successful’, says project leader Ines Lindner. ‘The online summer course has yielded remarkable results. Students’ mean final mark for the Business Mathematics course has increased from 4.7 to 5.9. In addition, we are experimenting with social networks. This year, we are building online teams. Together with the Amsterdam Center for Learning Analytics, we want to answer the question, ‘What is the effect of these online teams on the existing social networks at VU Amsterdam?’ If there is an effect, we might have found a way to stimulate diversity. Diversity is important because, from research, we know that a diverse team functions better: its diverse members complement each other.’

What is SBE’s educational innovation expert’s view on future developments? ‘We are heading towards blended learning. Students prepare themselves at home with videos and online material. Contact hours will never disappear but will be used more efficiently. The role of teachers will be more and more that of a coach’. Lindner illustrates her view from her own experience, ‘I teach Mathematical Economics, in particular social and economic networks. Students watch online videos and online lectures, given by Matthew Jackson from Stanford University. In addition, I use a textbook by the same author. During my classes—or contact hours—I summarise the subject matter during the first part. During the second part, I train students. And it works. My students are enthusiastic. For example, I discuss the pitfalls that occur in exam papers. Students are curious to know about them and come to my classes well-prepared.’

The VU Innovation Award is an incentive prize for teachers and students that enables them to further develop projects that improve education at VU Amsterdam. The prize is awarded every two years and was created to emphasise the fact that the VU is visibly and structurally working on the quality and innovative character of education. The winning team receives an incentive premium of EUR 50,000 to work out, introduce, evaluate and share the idea with the university in two years’ time.
Aureus is the faculty association for all students in Economics and Business Economics, Business Administration, International Business Administration and the associated master’s specialisations at VU Amsterdam. Founded in 1948, it now has more than 4,000 members and is one of the largest and most active organisations of its kind in the Netherlands. Aureus’ mission is to provide SBE students with extra benefits in the form of a range of services and activities. Acting as an intermediary between students, the faculty and the business world, one of the main goals of Aureus is to connect students with the professional community.

A major event of Aureus in 2017 was its second Master Day, held on 1 September. Chair Marije Slump: ‘With Wouter Bos as one of the guest speakers, and twenty-eight companies represented, the second edition of the SBE Master Day was a great success. It is the perfect opportunity to welcome students to the School of Business and Economics and to get students acquainted with their field of specialisation.’

Throughout the year, Aureus organises a variety of events, from career-related events, to the development of necessary skills for the job market to social events. ‘In September, the Aureus Speaker Series welcomed Michael van Praag, the director of the Royal Dutch Football League (KNVB) and vice-president of UEFA, to talk about the laws governing football and the challenges faced because of corruption. The Business Experience Days and Aureus Business Month followed in November, allowing both bachelor’s and master’s students to get in touch with companies from many different sectors, such as Unilever, ING and Shell’, says Marije Slump.

‘With the growing trend of internationalisation, Aureus also focusses on international experiences’, she adds. ‘With events such as the European Study Trip to Rome this year, bachelor’s students can experience corporate culture abroad and establish lifelong friendships. For master’s students, there are two different international consultancy projects available: 1) the Amsterdam Research Project focused on commercial organisations (2018 in Vietnam), and 2) the Graduates Development Programme, focusing on non-profit organisations and local entrepreneurs (2018 in South-Africa). Led by a full-time board consisting of eight different positions, Aureus aims to maximise opportunities for students by offering various events and services that help them to get most out of their time as a student and prepare them for their next step after graduation.’
Founded in 1972, Kraket is the study association for Econometrics and Operations Research at VU Amsterdam. The name Kraket stands for ‘Kritische Aktuarissen en Econometrie’, meaning critical actuaries and econometricians. Kraket unites students and business life by organising Case Days, In-house Days and the annual National Econometricians Day (Landelijke Econometristsdag). In addition, Kraket organises study trips abroad. SECTOR is Kraket’s magazine, which is published twice a year and contains business interviews, columns and various articles written by companies, lecturers and other guest writers. Kraket has 637 members.

One of Kraket’s absolute highlights of 2017 was its Alumni Event, held on 16 November. ‘Professors, students and alumni participated in an interactive event. Organisers Kraket and Extrie (the econometricians alumni association), together with teachers of the master’s programme in Econometrics, put on an inspiring programme that attracted more than 50 attendees,’ says Demi de Kort, Kraket’s chair. ‘The three nominees for the Extrie Master’s Thesis Award gave lively presentations on their thesis research. Award winner Sander Lam excelled with his presentation about Braess’s Paradox in real-life networks. According to the jury, Sander’s thesis is of great social importance, and therefore deserves the title of best thesis of the year in the field of Econometrics.’

Two inspiring workshops were also held in 2017. Demi de Kort: ‘Alumnus Floris van Alkemade discussed startups and entrepreneurship. Since 1998, Floris has been actively involved in startups, inspiring the audience with his vast experience. Climate scientist Peter Siegmund discussed the math behind current climate modelling and captured the attention of both climate change skeptics and supporters in a lively debate. The event was concluded with catching up and re-connecting over food and drinks, which went on until the late hours. All in all, it was a very successful Alumni Event.’
Career Services supports SBE students and alumni in the preparation for their career after graduation. Career Services in its current form was established in 2013. Students’ perceptions of how SBE prepares them for their professional career, as measured in the National Student Survey (NSE), have steadily improved since the office was established. For the master’s programmes in Marketing and Finance, the ratings for this topic are now among the highest in the Netherlands.

The Career Services team provides training and counselling to help students determine their career goals and to develop the skills required for a successful transition from student to professional. The counselling services include internship advice, career coaching, practice interviews and providing feedback on CVs and motivation letters. The workshops offered range from ‘Define your ideal job’ and ‘Ace the interview’ to ‘Sealing the deal’. Career Services are free of charge for SBE students and alumni for up to a year after graduation. For employers, Career Services is a first point of contact to discuss events, workshops, business cases, guest lectures and vacancies.

Increasingly, career activities are organised in cooperation with the master’s programme directors and are tailored to the specific needs and requirements of the discipline. Examples of these are Careers in Marketing and Careers in Finance events, network events that aim to connect students with a representative range of employers in their field, and a ‘Crack the case’ training for Management Consulting.

Several new Career Services initiatives were introduced in 2017. Career coaching and workshops are now also available to SBE PhD candidates. In September, a new online career centre was launched: the SBE Career Platform, which includes a vacancy board, an events calendar, career information and an online appointment system for career coaching. By December, the platform had more than 1000 users, indicating students’ strong interest in Career Services. On average, employers post about 50 vacancies per month on the Career Platform.

To engage employers more actively in the process of career preparation, Career Services introduced the CareerLab. This is a monthly career session, hosted by or with an employer, about a career-related topic. The CareerLab can be a training, a case, speed-dating event or an information session. Examples of this are the speed-dating event with Business Process Consultants from Deloitte and a workshop about Design Thinking by IceMobile. In addition to providing more opportunities for interaction between students and employers, these sessions complement the expertise of the Career Services trainers by highlighting specific skills and industries or new developments.
In November 2017, Svetlana Khapova, professor of Careers and Organization Studies, together with an international consortium of leading European universities and business partners, received a €4 million Horizon 2020 Innovative Training Network (ITN) grant for an international research project titled ‘Global mobility of employees’ (GLOMO).

As coordinator of SBE’s part of the GLOMO project, Svetlana Khapova discusses the background of this prestigious grant, ‘Today, moving internationally often means accepting a job below your qualification level. That is not right. Understanding how various individual, organisational and national factors influence international employment mobility is the goal of our EU-funded GLOMO project.’

‘Central to our project is the ambition of the European Union (EU) to increase labour mobility, both coming into and within Europe’, she adds. ‘Despite having a favourable legal framework for mobility, the EU is still far from attaining its employment mobility goals. One of the reasons underlying this problem is the challenges associated with a person getting their first job outside of their home country. Furthermore, if a candidate finds a job abroad, it is usually below the candidate’s knowledge and qualification level. Conducting a fair assessment of candidates on the international job market remains a big challenge for many employers.’

The project is a collaboration between SBE and seven other European partner institutions: Bamberg University (Germany), Copenhagen Business School (Denmark), Cranfield University (UK), the Institute for Employment Research (Germany), Toulouse Business School (France), Vaasa University (Finland), and Airbus SAS (France). ‘We aim to address these and many other topics related to international employment mobility. Together with 15 Early Stage Researchers (PhD candidates), we will develop knowledge about mobility and its implications, namely success factors, effects and added value. Second, we will train a new generation of scholars and equip them with theoretical and methodological tools to study global mobility in the future. Finally, we will generate knowledge that will help policy makers and business institutions to create a better future for European expatriates.’

Within the consortium, SBE will address two research topics: 1) the motivation behind employees’ global mobility and 2) a cross-cultural perspective on the function and value of expatriates’ social capital. Currently, SBE is recruiting the Early Stage Researchers who will begin working on these topics in September 2018.

Khapova considers the grant as an important recognition of the work of career researchers at the School of Business and Economics. Next to Svetlana Khapova, the SBE team consists of Jos Akkermans and Evgenia Lysova, supervisors, and Niki Konijn, who will be in charge of organising doctoral training for the Early Stage Researchers.

In the spotlight:

HORIZON 2020 GRANTEE
Svetlana Khapova

Svetlana N. Khapova is professor of Careers and Organization Studies and Head of the Department of Management and Organization. She is chair of the VU School of Management and visiting professor at ESMT, the European School of Management and Technology, Berlin. She is former division chair of the Careers Division of the Academy of Management. Her research concerns contemporary issues in work and careers. Khapova is founding director of ABRI and has developed all of its doctoral education programmes related to management and organisation studies. She has received numerous awards for her work, including the Leadership Award from the Academy of Management, as well as best paper and best reviewer awards from Emerald.