

Holly M. Dykstra

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Employment

University of Konstanz, 2021–Present (Parental leave: 2024)
Assistant Professor (*W1-Juniorprofessur*), Department of Economics

Other Affiliations

Centre for Economic Policy Research (CEPR), Research Affiliate, 2025–Present
Harvard University STAR Lab, Faculty Affiliate, 2022–Present
Thurgauer Wirtschaftsinstitut (TWI), Faculty Affiliate, 2021–Present

Education

Harvard University, Ph.D. in Public Policy, 2021
Dissertation: “Essays in Behavioral and Experimental Economics”
Committee: Christine Exley, David Laibson, Brigitte Madrian (chair)
Columbia University, Columbia College, B.A. in Economics (*cum laude*), 2012
Study Abroad: Department of Economics, Boğaziçi University

Research Fields

Behavioral Economics, Public Economics, Experimental Economics, Household Finance

Research

Working Papers

“The Buy-In Effect: When Increasing Initial Effort Motivates Behavioral Follow-Through,” with Shibeal O’Flaherty and Ashley Whillans. R&R at *Management Science*.
“Income-Based Rent and Earnings in Public Housing,” with Sofía Fernández-Guerrico.
“When Decisions Require Consideration, People Give Up Control,” with Christine Exley, Muriel Niederle, and Heather Wong.

Publications

“Patience Across Payday: The Role of Scarcity in Commitment Decisions.” Forthcoming at *Journal of Political Economy Microeconomics*.
“Nudging the Commute: Using Behaviorally-Informed Interventions to Promote Sustainable Transportation,” with Michael Daly, Lyndsay Gavin, Shibeal O’Flaherty, Jessica Roberts, Joseph Sherlock, and Ashley Whillans. *Behavioral Science & Policy*, 2021, 7(2), 27–49.

Works in Progress

“Can’t Apply? Try Generative AI,” with Marie-Pascale Grimon.
“Financial Behavior Across the Payday Cycle: Evidence from Transaction-Level Bank Data,” with Arna Olafsson.
“Making Political Decisions about Future Public Policies,” with Christian Breunig and Wolfgang Gaissmaier.

Presentations

- 2024- Behavioral Workshop at Ulm University, Berlin Behavioral Economics Seminar (invited), Early-Career
2025 Behavioral Economics Conference (ECBE) of the IZA Institute of Labor Economics, iSEE Workshop at NYU Abu Dhabi (invited), Joachim Herz Stiftung, Munich Center for Mathematical Philosophy (MCMP) Workshop on Digital Nudging (invited), U.S. Office of Evaluation Sciences (OES) (invited), University of Hohenheim (invited)
- 2022- Bundesbank/Banque de France Spring Joint Conference, Max Planck Institute Workshop on Paternalism:
2023 Origins and Consequences (invited), Prague Conference on Behavioral Sciences, Thurgauer Wirtschaftsinstitut, Universities of Bonn and Cologne ECONtribute Workshop on Autonomy & Paternalism, University of Portsmouth Decision-Making for Others Conference (DMfO) (invited)

2020-2021 Boğaziçi University, ESA Global Around-the-Clock Conference, ESA Job Market Candidates Seminar, Harvard Kennedy School Applied Microeconomics Seminar, Harvard University Graduate Student Workshop in Behavioral Economics, IE University, Innsbruck Experimental Finance Conference, London Business School Trans-Atlantic Doctoral Conference (TADC), Maastricht Behavioral Economic Policy Symposium (M-BEPS), National University of Singapore, University of Exeter, University of Innsbruck, University of Konstanz

Academic Grants

- Cluster of Excellence, “Making Political Decisions about Future Public Policies” (with Christian Breunig and Wolfgang Gaissmaier), €800,000, University of Konstanz, 2026-2030
Add-On Fellowship for Interdisciplinary Economics, €15,000, Joachim Herz Stiftung, 2024
Teaching Innovation Fund, University of Konstanz, €4,100, 2023
Ph.D. Dissertation Fellowship, Taubman Center for State and Local Government, \$11,000, Harvard Kennedy School, 2017-2019
Pershing Square Foundations of Human Behavior Grant, \$5,000, Harvard University, 2018

Honors

- Nominated for the University of Konstanz Award for Teaching Excellence, 2025
Departmental Teaching Prize (Lehrpreis), University of Konstanz, 2022
Derek Bok Center Certificate of Distinction in Teaching, Harvard University, 2017, 2020
Graduate Student Fellowship, Harvard University, 2014-2016
Rhodes Scholarship National Finalist, District III - New York, 2012
Robert Berne Scholarship, Columbia University, 2010-2011
University Summer Course Grant, Deutscher Akademischer Austausch Dienst, 2010
Huayu Enrichment Scholarship, Ministry of Education of the Republic of China, 2009
Harold Brown Scholarship, Columbia University, 2009

Teaching

Graduate Courses

- Behavioral Public Economics, Lecture, University of Konstanz (Summer 2022, Summer 2023)
Behavioral Economics and Policy, Seminar, University of Konstanz (Winter 2022/23, Winter 2024/25)
Digital Economics and AI, Seminar, University of Konstanz (Summer 2025)
Economics of Poverty, Seminar, University of Konstanz (Winter 2021/22, Winter 2025/26)

Undergraduate Courses

- Development Microeconomics, Seminar, University of Konstanz (Winter 2021/22, Winter 2022/23, Winter 2023/24, Winter 2024/25)

As Teaching Assistant

- The Political Economy of Globalization, Harvard College, for Robert Lawrence and Lawrence Summers (Fall 2016, Fall 2017, Fall 2020)
Fundamentals of Program and Policy Evaluation, Harvard Kennedy School, for Janina Matuszeski (Spring 2017, Spring 2018, Spring 2019)
Quantitative Analysis and Empirical Methods, Harvard Kennedy School, for Dan Levy (Fall 2018)

Professional Service

Referee

- Behavioral Science and Policy, Experimental Economics, Review of Economics and Statistics*

Committees

- Admissions Committees: Master’s Degree (2022, 2023, 2025)
Conference Organization: Thurgau Experimental Economics Meeting (Theem) (2022, 2023, 2024, 2025)
Hiring Committees: Full Professorship in Applied Economics (2025), Junior Professorship in Labor Economics (2023), Junior Professorship in Applied Microeconomics (2022/2023), Junior Professorship in Accounting (2022)
Seminar Organization: Co-Organizer of University of Konstanz Microeconomics Seminar (2023-Present)

Theses

Bachelor's Theses: 12 (2025), 4 (2024), 10 (2023), 10 (2022)

Master's Theses: 2 (2025), 8 (2024), 11 (2023)

As Graduate Student

Co-Director, Petey Greene Program, Harvard University (education for incarcerated students), 2017-2021

GSAS Representative, Behavioral Insights Student Group, Harvard University, 2016-2018

At-Large Representative for the Social Sciences, Graduate Student Council, Harvard University, 2016-2017

Prior Employment

Senior Research Assistant, Federal Reserve Board of Governors, Washington, DC, 2012-2014

Summer Intern, Moore Capital Management, New York, NY, 2011

Intern, OrbiMed Advisors, New York, NY 2010-2011

Languages, Citizenship, and Children

English (native), German (C1)

U.S. Citizenship, EU Permanent Residency

One child, born 2024

Last updated in November 2025