

# Mikhail S. Spektor

Assistant professor, Department of Economics and Business, Universitat Pompeu Fabra

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## METRICS

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- 7 peer-reviewed publications
- 80 citations
- h-index: 5
- i10-index: 4

## RESEARCH INTERESTS

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- Decisions under risk and uncertainty
- Learning and decision making
- Context-dependent preferences
- Cognitive modeling

## EDUCATION

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### Dr. phil.

Faculty of Psychology, University of Basel

📅 Basel, Switzerland

📍 Oct 2014–Apr 2018

- Ph.D. program “Social, Economic, and Decision Psychology”.
- Thesis: *Determinants of the context dependency of choices*
- Thesis supervisors: Jörg Rieskamp and Sebastian Gluth
- Thesis committee: Sebastian Gluth, David Kellen, and Jörg Rieskamp (Chair)
- Final grade: *Summa cum laude* (corresponds to a 6 on a 1–6 scale; 6 = best)

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### M.Sc. Psychology

Heidelberg University

📅 Heidelberg, Germany

📍 Aug 2012–Sep 2014

- Thesis: *The effect of credibility on donation behavior*
- Thesis supervisors: Andreas Voss and Israel Waichman
- Final grade: 1.0 (on a 1–6 scale; 1 = best)

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### B.Sc. Psychology

Heidelberg University

📅 Heidelberg, Germany

📍 Aug 2009–Jul 2012

- Thesis: *Measuring intelligence and its components using stochastic diffusion models*
- Thesis supervisors: Andreas Voss and Dirk Hagemann
- Final grade: 1.1 (on a 1–6 scale; 1 = best)

# PROFESSIONAL POSITIONS

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## Assistant professor

Department of Economics and Business, Universitat Pompeu Fabra

📅 Barcelona, Spain

📍 since Sep 2019

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## Affiliated professor

Barcelona Graduate School of Economics

📅 Barcelona, Spain

📍 since Sep 2019

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## Research fellow

Department of Psychology, University of Freiburg

📅 Freiburg, Germany

📍 Jan 2018–Sep 2019

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## Visiting lecturer

Faculty of Psychology, University of Basel

📅 Basel, Switzerland

📍 Aug 2018–Jan 2019

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## Research assistant

Faculty of Psychology, University of Basel

📅 Basel, Switzerland

📍 Oct 2014–Dec 2017

# TEACHING

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## Microeconomics II

Universitat Pompeu Fabra

📅 Barcelona, Spain

📍 Mar 2020–Jun 2020

Lecture for undergraduate students (5 ECTS)

Learning objectives: thinking like an economist and application of theoretical concepts

Topics covered: general equilibrium, welfare economics, monopoly, oligopoly, externalities and public goods

[Click here for the syllabus](#)

## Behavioral decision making I: Attention, experience, and influence

Universitat Pompeu Fabra

📅 Barcelona, Spain

📍 Jan 2020–Mar 2020

Seminar for graduate students (6 ECTS; Taught 50/50 with Gaël Le Mens)

Learning objectives: basic understanding and application of behavioral decision-making theories and models

Topics covered: information search in decisions under uncertainty, experience-based decisions in changing environments, multi-attribute multi-alternative context effects, decision making as a sequential-sampling process, attentional processes involved in decision making

[Click here for the syllabus](#)

## Data collection, evaluation, and modeling

### University of Freiburg

📅 Freiburg, Germany

📍 Apr 2019–Aug 2019

Seminar for graduate students (4 ECTS)

Learning objectives: basic understanding and application of statistical and cognitive modeling

Topics covered: probability theory, likelihood principle, parameter estimation, model comparison, evidence-accumulation models, signal detection theory, multinomial processing trees, decision-making models, reinforcement learning, Bayesian hypothesis testing and parameter estimation, basics of Stan

[Click here for more information on the course-description website](#)

## Cognitive modeling: Concepts and applications

### University of Basel

📅 Basel, Switzerland

📍 Aug 2018–Jan 2019

Seminar for graduate students (2 ECTS)

Learning objectives: basic understanding and application of cognitive modeling

Topics covered: probability theory, statistical vs. cognitive models, model development, parameter estimation, model comparison, decision-making models, reinforcement learning, Bayesian parameter estimation

[Click here for more information on the course-description website](#)

## Experimental project seminar

### University of Basel

📅 Basel, Switzerland

📍 Feb 2015–Jan 2017

Supervision of small, one-year long research projects in groups of four undergraduate students (8 ECTS)

Learning objectives: conducting literature research, developing hypotheses, collecting and analyzing data, writing research papers, and presenting the results as a scientific talk or poster

Topics covered: emotions and decision making, learning and decision making, domain-specific risk taking, context-dependent preferences, social learning

[Click here for more information on the course-description website](#)

# SUPERVISION AND ADVISING

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## Ph.D. supervision

Evangelia Spantidaki Kyriazi (2020–ongoing; together with Larbi Aloui)

## Doctoral dissertation defense committee

Daniel Sánchez Moscona (2020)

“Essays on behavioral economics”

Thomas Woiczuk (2020)

“Categories and levels of aggregation: Essays on judgment and decision making”

## Doctoral dissertation proposal committee

Sergio Pirla Lopez (2020)

“Emotions and decision making”

## Master's and bachelor's theses

Hannah Seidler (2019)

“Does information search affect the decision process?  
An investigation of the accentuation effect”

Vanessa Kaiser (2019)

“Learning strategies in multi-stage decisions”

Ulrich Lösener (2019)

“Do purely spatial, non-visual relations exist?”

# ADMINISTRATION, SERVICE TO PROFESSION, AND OTHER

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## Conference and workshop organization

**EADM Summer School: “Learning and decision making”** (*postponed to 2021 due to Covid-19*)

📍 Barcelona, Spain

📅 08–15 Jul 2020

**JDMx meeting for early-career researchers**

📍 Basel, Switzerland

📅 08–11 Jun 2016

## Invited symposia

**Cognitive modeling in computer science and psychology: Bridging the gap**

📍 Symposium conducted at the KogWis2018, Darmstadt, Germany

📅 05 Sep 2018

## Ad-hoc reviewer

**Journal of Experimental Psychology: Learning, Memory, and Cognition**

**Transportation Research Part B**

**Computational Brain & Behavior**

**Frontiers in Psychology**

**PeerJ**

**PLOS One**

## Other

Liaison lecturer for the **Friedrich Naumann Foundation for Freedom**

Scientific head of the **Digital Study**

Counsel at legal tech start-up **LEX superior GmbH**

Data analyst of the interactive web documentary **51 Sprints**

# GRANTS, AWARDS, AND FELLOWSHIPS

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*Consortium for Advanced Studies Abroad fellowship*

📅 2021

*Fernandes fellowship*

📅 2021

*Co-applicant of Fundación BBVA 2019: Economía y Sociedad digital grant*

💰 73'988 €

📅 2020–2021

*Co-applicant of Ministry of Science, Innovation and Universities: Proyectos I+D+i 2019 grant*

💰 84'700 €

📅 2020–2022

*Steven Karger prize (award of the Faculty of Psychology, University of Basel)*

📅 2019

*Conference travel award of the Society for NeuroEconomics*

📅 2019

*Conference travel grant of the Swiss Academy of Humanities and Social Sciences*

📅 2017

*Conference participation award (MathPsych/ICCM)*

📅 2017

*Conference participation award (International Meeting of the Psychonomic Society)*

📅 2016

*Conference travel grant of the Swiss Academy of Humanities and Social Sciences*

📅 2015

*Scholarship for pre-doctoral studies (Friedrich Naumann Foundation for Freedom)*

📅 2009–2014

# PUBLICATIONS AND TALKS

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## Peer-reviewed articles

- In press      7   Kraemer, P., Fontanesi, L., **Spektor, M. S.**, & Gluth, S. Response time models separate single- and dual-process accounts of memory-based decisions. *Psychonomic Bulletin & Review*. Preprint available on PsyArXiv: doi:10.31234/osf.io/4pqyx
- 6   Voormann, A., **Spektor, M. S.**, & Klauer, K. C. The simultaneous recognition of multiple words: A process analysis. *Memory & Cognition*.
- 2019      5   Fontanesi, L., Gluth, S., **Spektor, M. S.**, & Rieskamp, J. A reinforcement learning diffusion decision model for value-based decisions. *Psychonomic Bulletin & Review*, 26(4), 1099–1121. doi:10.3758/s13423-018-1554-2
- 4   **Spektor, M. S.**, Gluth, S., Fontanesi, L., & Rieskamp, J. How similarity between choice options affects decisions from experience: The accentuation of differences model. *Psychological Review*, 126(1), 52–88. doi:10.1037/rev0000122
- 2018      3   Gluth, S.\*, **Spektor, M. S.\***, & Rieskamp, J. Value-based attentional capture affects multi-alternative decision making. *eLife*, 7, 1–36. doi:10.7554/eLife.39659
- 2   **Spektor, M. S.**, Kellen, D., & Hotaling, J. M. When the good looks bad: An experimental exploration of the repulsion effect. *Psychological Science*, 29(8), 1309–1320. doi:10.1177/0956797618779041
- 1   **Spektor, M. S.**, & Kellen, D. The relative merit of empirical priors in non-identifiable and sloppy models: Applications to models of learning and decision making. *Psychonomic Bulletin & Review*, 25(6), 2047–2068. doi:10.3758/s13423-018-1446-5

## Manuscripts in preparation or submitted for publication

- Submitted      6   **Spektor, M. S.**, Kellen, D., & Klauer, K. C. The repulsion effect in preferential choice and its relation to perceptual choice. Preprint available on PsyArXiv: doi:10.31234/osf.io/hmzxsx
- 5   **Spektor, M. S.**, & Wulff, D. U. Myopia drives reckless behavior in the face of over-taxation. Preprint available on PsyArXiv: doi:10.31234/osf.io/34gzp
- 4   **Spektor, M. S.**, & Seidler, H. Irrelevant outcomes lead to violations of economic rationality.
- In preparation      3   **Spektor, M. S.\***, Gluth, S.\*, & Rieskamp, J. Saliency distorts reward processing during reinforcement learning.
- 2   **Spektor, M. S.**, & Wulff, D. U. Strategic search in decisions from experience.
- 1   Kellen, D.\*, **Spektor, M. S.\***, Rieskamp, J., & Klauer, K. C. Context dependency of loss aversion.

## Other publications

- 2020      1   **Spektor, M. S.**, & Yuan, T. Digitalisierung in der Juristenausbildung. *Neue Juristische Wochenschrift*, 15, 52–88.

## Invited talks

- 2020      6    **Spektor, M. S. & Wulff, D. U.** (2020, July). *Strategic information search in decisions from experience*. Virtual lab meeting at the Department of Psychology, University of Warwick, UK.
  
- 2019      5    **Spektor, M. S.** (2019, June). *Determinants of the context dependency of choices*. Dissertation competition of the Cognitive Psychology Division of the German Society for Psychology. Willebadessen, Germany.
  
- 2018      4    **Spektor, M. S.** (2018, December). *Violations of normative decision theory in experience-based decisions*. Research seminar at the Department of Economics.
  
- 3    **Spektor, M. S.\***, Gluth, S.\* & Rieskamp, J. (2018, September). Implementing value-based attentional capture in a computational process model of cognition. In R. Albrecht & M. S. Spektor (Chairs), *Cognitive Modeling in Computer Science and Psychology: Bridging the Gap*. Symposium conducted at the KogWis 2018. Darmstadt, Germany.
  
- 2    **Spektor, M. S. & Wulff, D. U.** (2018, March). Information search in decisions from experience. In H. Singmann & T. Pachur (Chairs), *Cognitive Models in Judgment and Decision Making*. Symposium conducted at the Tagung experimentell arbeitender Psychologen. Marburg, Germany.
  
- 2016      1    **Spektor, M. S.**, Gluth, S., Fontanesi, L. & Rieskamp, J. (2016, March). Independence of Irrelevant Alternatives in Decisions from Experience: A Challenge for Reinforcement Learning Models. In D. Kellen, H. Singmann & T. Pachur (Chairs), *Cognitive Modeling in Memory and Decision Making*. Symposium conducted at the Tagung experimentell arbeitender Psychologen. Heidelberg, Germany.

## Conference talks

- 2020      7    **Spektor, M. S.**, Kellen, D. & Klauer, K. C. (2020, October). *The repulsion effect in preferential choice*. Virtual Process Tracing Conference 2020.
  
- 2019      6    **Spektor, M. S.\***, Gluth, S.\* & Rieskamp, J. (2019, October). *Violations of economic rationality in reinforcement learning are driven by a saliency-dependent reward-prediction-error signal in the ventral striatum*. Poster spotlight at the Annual Meeting of the Society for NeuroEconomics. Dublin, Ireland.
  
- 2017      5    **Spektor, M. S.**, Kellen, D. & Hotaling, J. M. (2017, August). *When the Good Looks Bad: First Experimental Evidence for the Repulsion Effect*. Subjective Probability, Utility,
- 4    **Spektor, M. S. & Kellen, D.** (2017, July). *You Can't Make a Silk Purse of a Sow's Ear: On the Relative Merit of Empirical Priors in Reinforcement Learning Models*. Annual Meeting of the Society for Mathematical Psychology. Coventry, U.K.
- 3    **Spektor, M. S.\***, Gluth, S.\* & Rieskamp, J. (2017, March). *Value-based Attentional Capture Impairs Trinary Choice*. Tagung experimentell arbeitender Psychologen. Dresden, Germany.
  
- 2016      2    **Spektor, M. S.**, Gluth, S., Fontanesi, L. & Rieskamp, J. (2016, August). *Independence of Irrelevant Alternatives in Decisions from Experience: A Challenge for Reinforcement Learning Models*. Poster spotlight at the Annual Meeting of the Society for NeuroEconomics. Berlin, Germany.
- 1    **Spektor, M. S.\***, Kellen, D.\* & Rieskamp, J. (2016, April). *Context Dependency of Loss Aversion in Choice*. The Nature of Preferences and their Relation to Choice. Potsdam, Germany.

\*Equal contribution