

THE INTERNATIONAL EDUCATION INITIATIVE (IEI)

Presents



Hessel Oosterbeek

Professor of Economics at the University of Amsterdam

**“The Effect of Ability Grouping in University
on Student Outcomes”**

WHEN: Wednesday, January 21, 2015
3:30 PM – 5:00 PM

WHERE: Encina Hall (2nd floor), Central Conference Room
Refreshments will be served.

Open to the public

About the Topic: This paper reports on a randomized evaluation in which we manipulated the ability composition of tutorial groups of university students to be able to assess the impact of different peer configurations. We find that students from the lower part of the ability distribution gain on average 0.2 SD units of achievement from switching from ability mixing to three-way tracking. High-ability students are unaffected. Survey data point to two mechanisms. In tracked groups, low-ability students i) have more positive interaction with other students, and ii) are more involved. Teachers appear not to adjust their teaching to the composition of groups.

About the Speaker: Hessel Oosterbeek is a professor of economics at the University of Amsterdam (the Netherlands) and fellow of the Tinbergen Institute (Amsterdam) and CESifo (Munich). He is also affiliated with FLACSO in Ecuador. His primary fields of interest are economics of education, impact evaluation and development economics. His current research focuses on school assignment mechanisms and ability peer effects. In recent work, he has examined the long-term effects of class size, behavioral responses to class size, gender differences in education choices, and the returns to medical school. He received his PhD from the University of Amsterdam.

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