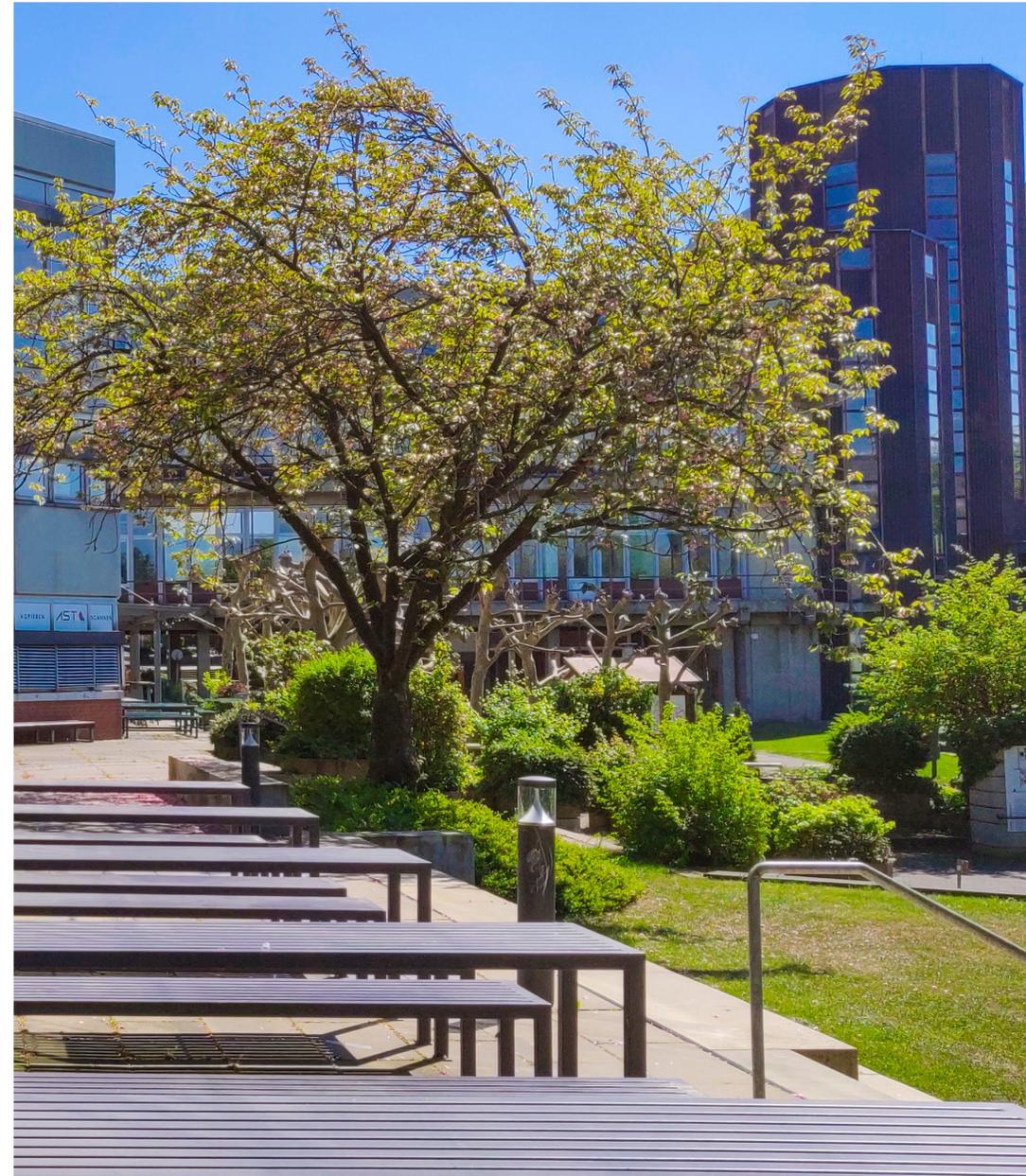




# Introduction to the Computer Engineering Master Program

Welcome Days Winter Semester 2025/26

Prof. Dr. Marco Platzner





# Agenda

- 1. Computer Engineering and Information Technology**
- 2. Prerequisites**
- 3. Master Computer Engineering**
  - Program structure
  - Study elements
  - Registration and exams
- 4. Getting Started and Getting Information**

# Computer Engineering and Information Technology





# Information Technology



... timely and entertaining  
infotainment



... modern and energy-efficient  
mobility



... networked and secure business



... progress in  
medicine

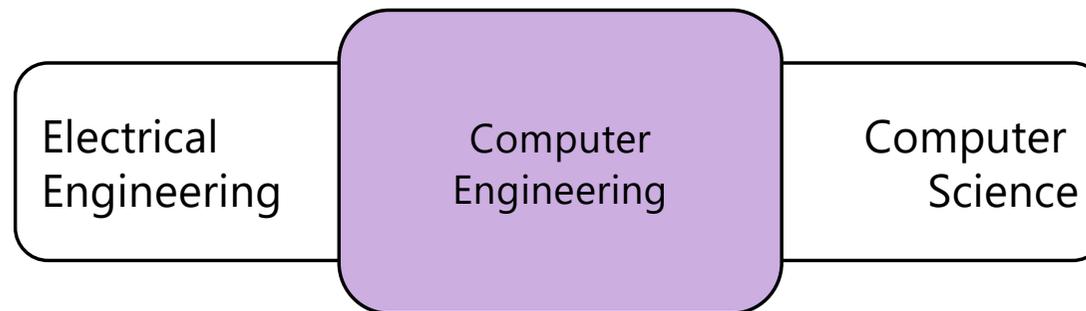
... and many more!





## What is Computer Engineering?

- Construction, analysis and evaluation of computers and computer-controlled systems
  - Such systems consist of **hardware AND software**
  - Knowledge and skills from **Electrical Engineering AND Computer Science** required
  - Key discipline of information technology with great demand for graduates





## Where Do We Find Computer Engineers?





## Computer Engineering at Paderborn University

- Internationally accepted profile (IEEE/ACM curriculum guidelines)
- Jointly developed and operated by the
  - Department of Computer Science and the
  - Department of Electrical Engineering & Information Technology

Computer Science | **Computer Engineering** | Electrical Engineering

Bachelor   
Master 

**Bachelor**   
**Master**  

Bachelor   
Master  



## Prerequisites





## Compatibility of Bachelor Programs

- Bachelor and Master Computer Engineering at UPB are consecutive study programs
- What you have learned in your preceding Bachelor program must roughly match what students have learned in the UPB Bachelor program
- This has been checked before admission but in case you realize deficits in individual courses
  - Ask lecturers about suitable materials for self-study
  - Discuss contents of CE Bachelor courses with local students
  - Work on your own to compensate deficits





## What we Expect

- Ability to apply foundations of CS and EE
- Experience with practical work in hardware/software systems
- Initial training in scientific work (seminar, thesis project)
  - searching for and analyzing scientific publications
  - writing scientific documents: adequate structure, clear descriptions and explanations, citations and references, correct use of the English language
  - creating and giving presentations
  - avoiding plagiarism



# Master Computer Engineering



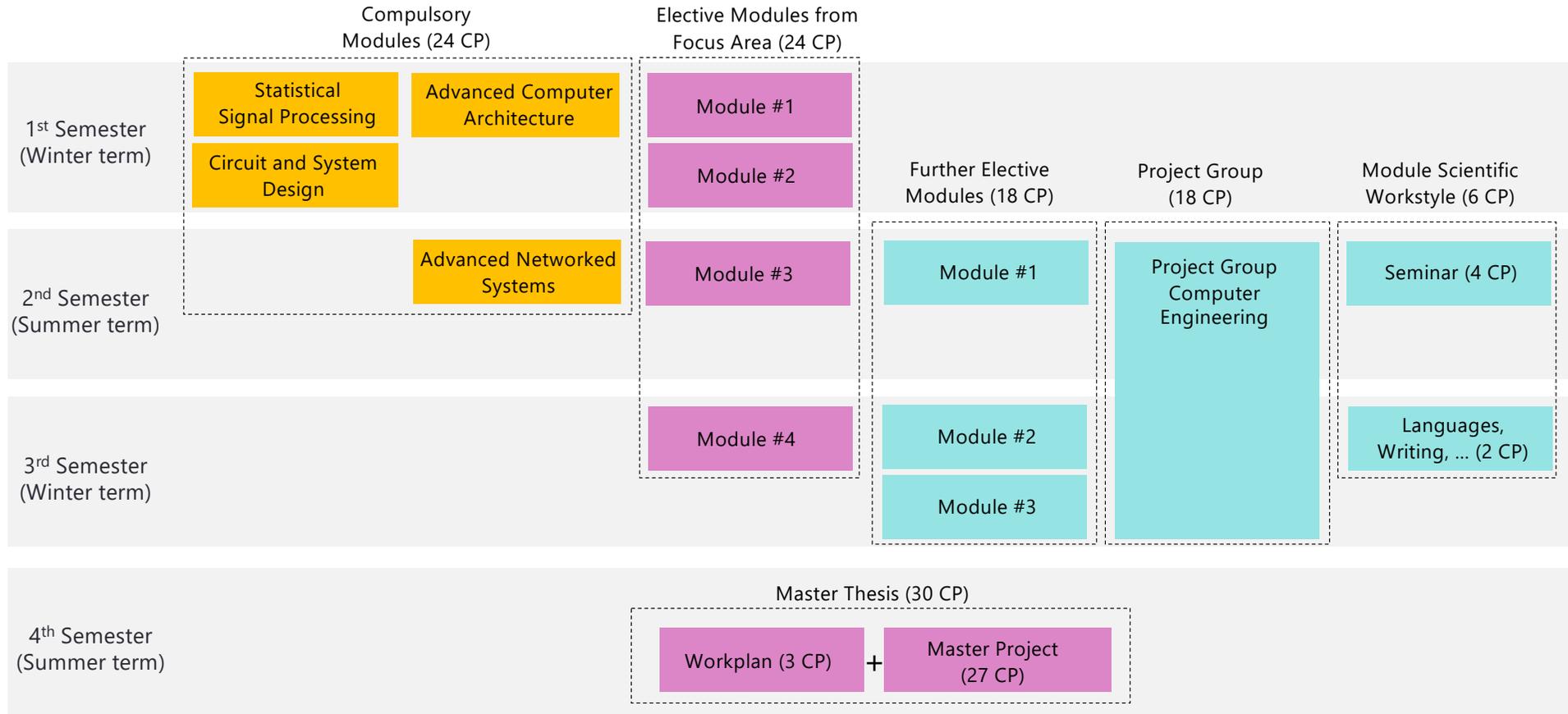


## Master Computer Engineering – Key Facts

- (Nominal) duration of 4 semesters including the Master's thesis
- Degree "Master of Science (M.Sc.)" awarded
- Provides expert knowledge and methods
- Qualifies for advanced jobs in industry and academia (e.g., PhD studies)



# Study Plan – Example





## Focus Areas of the Computer Engineering (CE) Master

- Embedded Systems
- Nano/Microelectronics
- Computer Systems
- Communication and Networks
- Signal Processing
- Control and Automation

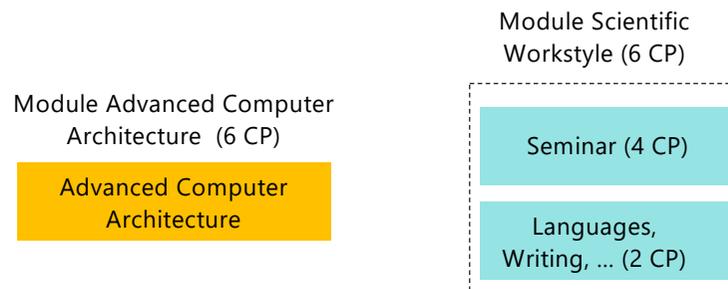




## Modules

- Modules are basic building blocks of the study program
- Modules may combine several courses, but in CE mostly one module = one course
- There are compulsory and elective modules
- Modules have an assigned workload, measured in ECTS credits or credit points (CP)
- Details are described in the Module Handbook (published every semester on the web)

→ <https://go.upb.de/mhb-ce>



### CP or ECTS Credits

- 1 CP = 30 hours workload
- 30 CP per semester
- Master program has 120 CP in total





## Module Handbook – Example “Advanced Computer Architecture”

- 6 CP module = 180 hours workload
- 15 weeks teaching period in each term
- Workload splits into
  - contact time (lecture, exercise, lab)
  - self-study time (during the teaching period and also outside the teaching period for exam preparation)

Advanced Computer Architecture						
Modulnummer / Module number:	Workload (h):	Leistungspunkte / Credits:	Turnus / Regular Cycle:			
M.079.4005	180	6	Wintersemester winter term			
Sprache / Language:	Studiensemester / Semester number:	Dauer (in Sem.) / Duration (in sem.):	Modulstatus (P/WP) Module status (C/CE)			
en	1-3	1	P			
1	Modulstruktur / Module structure:					
	Lehrveranstaltung	Lehr- form	Kontakt- zeit (h)	Selbst- studium (h)	Status (P/WP)	Gruppen- größe (TN)
a)	2024.7031 Advanced Computer Archi- tecture	V3 Ü2	75	105	P	70/35
	Course	form of teachin	contact- time (h)	self- study (h)	status (C/CE)	group size (TN)
a)	2024.7031 Advanced Computer Archi- tecture	L3 Ex2	75	105	C	70/35

5 h contact time / week (3 h lecture + 2 h exercise) x 15 weeks = 75 h contact time  
75 h contact time + 105 h self-study = 180 h = 6 CP





## Course (6 CP)

- Comprise typically lecture + exercise and/or lab
  - Exercises can be paper & pencil exercises or programming assignments
  - Sometimes lab work
  - May require to pass a course achievement (*Studienleistung*) – e.g., a programming assignment, short report, ... to be able to proceed to the exam
- Special case: Course “Languages, Writing and Presentation Techniques” (2 CP)
  - You can choose any course offer from Paderborn University in above topics
  - Use it to individually strengthen your professional skills





## Seminar (4 CP)

- Seminars train scientific work style
  - Be aware and learn about good practices and, importantly, avoid the problem of plagiarism (!)
- What is done in a seminar?
  - Lecturers propose a set of topics
  - Students select or are assigned a topic
  - Perform literature search
  - Read, analyze and compare selected literature
  - Prepare and give a presentation with slides
  - Submit a written report
- Seminars do not belong to specific focus areas





## Project Group (18 CP)

- What is done in a project group?
  - A team of typically 6-10 students works on a larger project over two semesters
  - Concept and implementation of a hardware/software system
  - Project management (including documentation) is part of the task
  - Work there is highly self-organized, requires your active contribution
  - Usually requires to be present at least two days per week in Paderborn
- Project groups do not belong to specific focus areas
- A technicality
  - Project groups offered in the CS department run over two semesters (18 CP)
  - Project groups offered in the EE department may consist of two consecutive smaller project groups with 9 CP each





## Master Thesis (30 CP)

- The Master thesis has 30 CP = one semester full-time (!)
  - Duration of 6 months is formally checked
- Master's thesis (advisor) must be from chosen focus area
- Tasks typically included
  - Study of literature on the assigned topic, familiarize with tools
  - Write work plan (proposal), including a time plan
  - Give an initial presentation that covers the topic and the work plan
  - Conceptual work and/or formal work and/or hardware and software development
  - Experiments and evaluation
  - Write a report with max. 120 pages on a scientific level
  - Give a final presentation that covers the thesis work (defend your decisions and solutions/results)





## Registration

- For a module/course
  - Register in PAUL for the module, the course, the course achievement, and for the exam (!)
  - Periods for the registrations are displayed in PAUL
  - De-register if you don't want to take an exam. Otherwise, you might get stuck with that course/module.
- For a seminar and for a project group
  - Different seminars and project groups are offered each semester
  - An assignment process is in place that starts at the end of the teaching period for offers in the following semester; all upcoming project groups are presented in a public event in the last week of the teaching period
  - Exam registration in PAUL is required also for seminars and project groups
- Finding a topic for a Master thesis
  - Address professors/lecturers/research associates working in the areas of your interest
  - Often, Master theses result from project groups
  - Defining a topic is often an interactive process between the student and the potential advisor
  - Often, you can also bring your own ideas for discussion





## Exams

- Exams for courses can be in oral or in written form
  - The form has to be announced in class within the first three weeks of the teaching period
- Written exams are usually offered twice a year
  - Either two exams in the semester break following the teaching period, or one exam in each of the two following semester breaks
- Oral exams require individual appointments with the lecturer
- Exams can be repeated twice (three attempts)
- Passed exams cannot be repeated (!)

### Grading scheme

– 1.0, 1.3	very good
– 1.7, 2.0, 2.3	good
– 2.7, 3.0, 3.3	satisfactory
– 3.7, 4.0	sufficient
– 5.0	failed





## More on Exams

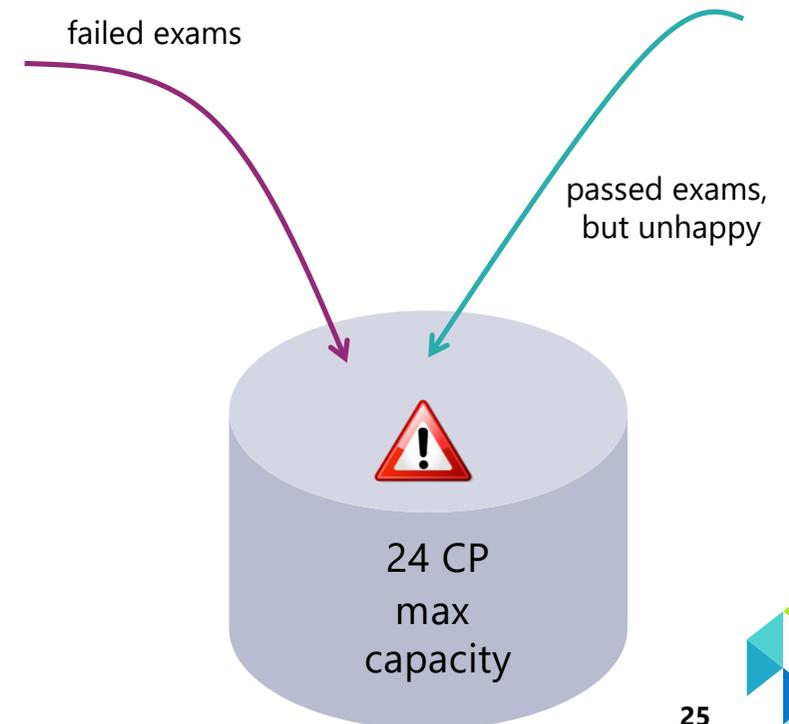
- Seminars can also be repeated twice
  - Evaluation of the presentation, seminar report, active participation in discussions
- Project groups can also be repeated twice – but you do not want to do that ...
  - Quality of result and reports / presentations as team contributions, individual contribution
- The Master's thesis can only be repeated once, but you really do not want to do that ...
  - Evaluation by the advisor and a co-advisor





## Even More on Exams

- For elective modules, compensation is possible: The container “Zusatzleistungen”
- Shifting (“compensating”) failed exams
  - A failed exam (failed in 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> or 3<sup>rd</sup> attempt) can be moved into the container and another module can be completed instead
- Improving the overall grade
  - If you pass an exam but have an unsatisfactory result, you can move the module into the container and complete a different module instead
- All passed modules in the container are listed in the Transcript of Records as “extra achievements”
- BUT the container size is limited to 24 CP (!), 12 CP for modules in the focus area, 12 CP for further modules





## Final Failure in the Master Program is Possible, If ...

- You can't pass a compulsory course (or the seminar, or the project group) in 3 attempts
- You can't pass the Master thesis in 2 attempts
- You have no more options to compensate elective courses
  
- Be careful and serious about exams, do not waste examination attempts (!)



# Getting Started and Getting Information





## Plan Your First Semester!

- Check the course catalogue at <https://paul.upb.de>
- Navigate to [Overview](#) > [Faculty of Computer Science, Electrical Engineering and Mathematics](#) > [Computer Science](#) > [Computer Engineering Studies \(from WiSe24/25\)](#) > [Master-Studiengang Computer Engineering](#)
- Browse through the courses in the compulsory area and areas of specialisation to identify courses you might wish to take in this winter term
- If you don't have an idea yet which focus area to select, don't worry! Just pick modules according to your interests.
- Register for the module as well as the course in it. Also, register for the course achievement (if available) and the exam in the corresponding registration periods – and mind the deadlines (!)
- You can't take a seminar or a project group in your first semester





## Tips

- You are responsible for planning and organizing your study program
  - Selecting courses, visiting lectures, all the registrations, finding seminars / project group / Master thesis
- Form learning groups
  - Query each other, explain subjects to each other; learn for understanding, not just for repetition of materials
  - Team up with other international students, they are faced with the same situation
  - Team up with local students, they likely have done their Bachelor studies here and know the ropes
- Approach professors and research associates if you have questions
  - That is totally fine and usual here (!)
- Learn some German or at least pick it up on the go
  - This will strongly increase your later job prospects in Germany
- When something is not clear or there is a problem, talk to the lecturer, the study advisors, whoever might be able to help. Don't wait too long!





## Common Pitfalls

- Deadlines are indeed important!
  - Some things can be amended if you miss a deadline, others can't and can result in delays of up to one year
  - You are faced with the same situation
- You need to register for all sorts of things!
  - Do it – and mind the deadlines
- If you decide to not go on with a course, de-register from it!
  - And from everything associated with the course – and mind the deadlines





## Finally: What You Need to Get the Master's Degree

You have to ...	ECTS CP
... complete the four compulsory modules	24
... complete four modules in your chosen focus area	24
... complete three modules in whatever area	18
... complete a seminar and a course in Languages, Writing, ...	6
... complete a project group	18
... complete a Master's thesis (must be from your focus area)	30
Adding up to	120

**It is your own responsibility to meet these criteria!**





## Getting Information

- CE information: <https://cs.uni-paderborn.de/en/studies/audit-matters>
  - Links to module handbook and examination regulations
- Advisory services
  - Department of Electrical Engineering and Information Technology: <https://go.upb.de/study-ce>
  - Department of Computer Science: [study-service-ce@uni-paderborn.de](mailto:study-service-ce@uni-paderborn.de)
- Websites of the departments and their research groups:
  - Department of Computer Science: [cs.uni-paderborn.de/en/](https://cs.uni-paderborn.de/en/)
  - Department of Electrical Engineering and Information Technology: [ei.uni-paderborn.de/en/](https://ei.uni-paderborn.de/en/)
- Campus management system: [paul.upb.de](https://paul.upb.de)
- E-Learning platform Panda for individual modules/courses: <https://panda.uni-paderborn.de>
- International office: [www.uni-paderborn.de/en/studies/international-office](https://www.uni-paderborn.de/en/studies/international-office)
- Central study advice center: [zsb.uni-paderborn.de/en/](https://zsb.uni-paderborn.de/en/)





## Contact

- Lennart Clausing  
Study advisor Computer Engineering  
[study-service-ce@uni-paderborn.de](mailto:study-service-ce@uni-paderborn.de)



- Prof. Dr. Marco Platzner  
Responsible for the development of  
the Computer Engineering Program  
(CS Department)  
[platzner@upb.de](mailto:platzner@upb.de)



Prof. Dr. Sybille Hellebrand  
Responsible for the development of  
the Computer Engineering Program  
(EE Department)  
[sybille.hellebrand@uni-paderborn.de](mailto:sybille.hellebrand@uni-paderborn.de)



**Please use your official mail-account (“ZIM-account”) for communication**



**We wish you a successful & enriching study  
experience at Paderborn University!**

