Welcome to Paderborn
October 2022

Department of Computer Science

Introduction to the Master Program in Computer Science

Dr. Rita Hartel
Paderborn University Campus

- Main campus in the southern part of the city
- Central institutions like
  - International Office (building I, 4th floor)
  - Central Examination Office (building C, 2nd floor)
  - Notebook Cafe (building I, ground floor)
- Lecture halls, class rooms, work spaces
- Part of the CS Department (building O)

- Smaller campus at Fürstenallee
- Part of the CS Department (building F) – and me
Outline

- Semester Start
- Elements of the Master Degree Program
- Structure of the Program
- Scope and Schedule
- Examinations

How to contact us

- Email: study-cs@mail.uni-paderborn.de
- Web: https://cs.uni-paderborn.de/en/studies/advice-and-support/academic-advising/
- Twitter: @Study_CS_UPB
- YouTube: https://www.youtube.com/user/FakultaetEIM
- Office: F2.119 in Fuerstenallee building
Semester start

- Lectures start on October 10th.

- As of now, courses will be “in real life“, not online.


- Information from our student’s council: https://fsmi.uni-paderborn.de
Getting into the right mindset

- Check your knowledge with our self-assessment.
  - If you experience difficulties in a certain area, try to find a good book to improve your knowledge.

- Get acquainted with the standards of good scientific practice.
  - In particular, make sure you are aware of the problem of plagiarism.

- Be aware of the fact that you will have to organize yourself.
  - From planning your master studies to visiting lectures and tutorials to finding a master’s thesis.

- Don’t be afraid to talk to us!
  - When something is not clear or there is a problem, talk to your lecturer, us, the examination office – whoever might be able to help. And don’t wait too long!
What every lecturer will expect from you

Ability to apply foundations of Computer Science

- usage of formal methods to specify problems, structures, systems, languages, …
- formal methods to analyze algorithms
- formal methods to check solutions
- proving properties of algorithms (correctness, performance, …)

Experience in doing practical work

- application of methods and tools for software design and implementation
- solid background in object-oriented concepts
- substantial experience in at least one programming language
- ability to switch to a new programming language within a short time
There’s more to it!

Ability to do scientific work
- searching for and investigating scientific publications
- writing scientific documents
  - adequate structure, clear descriptions and explanations, citations and references, correct English
- developing and giving presentations
- avoid plagiarism https://cs.uni-paderborn.de/en/studies/formalities/notes-on-plagiarism
Planning for your first semester

- Check the course catalog for the next semester at https://paul.uni-paderborn.de
- "Faculty of Computer Science, Electrical Engineering and Mathematics" – "Computer Science" – "Computer Science Studies" – "Master Studies"

- Browse through the courses from the first seven entries, the focus areas, to identify courses you might wish to take.
- Check if there is a self-assessment for the course for prior knowledge.

- You can’t take a seminar or a project group in your first semester here.
Planning for your first semester

- The recommended workload for each semester is 30 credits, i.e. 5 courses in the first semester of 6 credits each.

- Self-assessment tests are available for many courses: https://cs.uni-paderborn.de/en/studies/getting-started/information-for-international-students/self-assessment-tests-for-master-lectures

- Keep in mind that this workload may be too high:
  - Language courses (optional)
  - Getting used to living in Germany
  - Getting used to the German university system

- You need to register for the modules as well as the courses – until October 28.
Program structure

Seven Focus Areas

- Algorithm Design
- Computer Systems
- Data Science
- Intelligence and Data
- Networks and Communication
- Security
- Software Engineering

You have to choose one of these areas as specialization area when applying for a master’s thesis.

- No need to decide now, but it’s good to have an idea.
- Yet: Plan ahead and ideally try to have three modules in the focus area you wish to write your Master’s thesis in after three semesters.
- You can’t start your Master’s thesis without meeting this requirement!
Modules

Every student has to

- study three modules in the area of specialization,
- study one module in some other focus area,
- study four more modules in whatever area they like.

Hence every student has to take 8 modules overall.

Most modules are offered once per year.

Every module has 6 ECTS points

- belongs to one or more focus areas (of the seven).
- consists of exactly one class (from that focus area).
- is described in the module handbook (Modulhandbuch).
- If a module belongs to more than one focus area, you can move it later to meet the specialization area requirement.
# Master Degree Program in Paderborn (Example)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1</th>
<th>Module I</th>
<th>Module II</th>
<th>Module III</th>
<th>Module IV</th>
<th>Module V</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Project Group</td>
<td>Module VI</td>
<td>Seminar I</td>
<td>Extracurricular Studies</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Module VII</td>
<td>Module VIII</td>
<td>Seminar II</td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Master's Thesis</td>
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</table>
# Master Degree Program in Paderborn (Example I)

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</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td>Game Theory (Algorithm Design)</td>
<td></td>
<td>Seminar I</td>
<td>Extracurricular Studies</td>
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<td>4</td>
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<td>Master’s Thesis</td>
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# Master Degree Program in Paderborn (Example II)

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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Project Group</td>
<td>Game Theory (Algorithm Design)</td>
<td></td>
<td>Seminar I</td>
<td>Extracurricular Studies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td>Foundations of Cryptography (Algorithm Design)</td>
<td>Routing and Data Management in Networks (Algorithm Design)</td>
<td>Seminar II</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Master’s Thesis</td>
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</table>
# Master Degree Program in Paderborn (Example III)

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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Project Group</td>
<td>Game Theory (Algorithm Design)</td>
<td>Seminar I</td>
<td>Extracurricular Studies</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td>Foundations of Cryptography (Algorithm Design)</td>
<td>VLSI Testing (Computer Systems)</td>
<td>Seminar II</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>Master's Thesis</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Module Handbook

Contains detailed descriptions of all courses

- Content
- Type of exam
- Language of instruction (> 90% are in English)
- When to expect: winter or summer semester

- Also contains lists which module is in which focus areas.

- Updated each semester, see https://cs.uni-paderborn.de/en/studies/advice-and-support/academic-advising/
Recommendations for the first semester

- Pick five modules that you believe to be the most interesting for you.
- If you already have an idea which focus area you might wish to specialize in, pick at least two in that area.
- If you don’t have an idea which focus area you might wish to specialize in, don’t worry! Just pick modules according to your interests.
- Check whether there is a self-assessment for the module (https://cs.uni-paderborn.de/en/studies/getting-started/information-for-international-students/self-assessment-tests-for-master-lectures) and take it.
- Register for the module as well as the course – and mind the deadlines!
- Also register for the course achievement and the exam during the registration phase – again, mind the deadlines!
- If you struggle with a course or your total workload proves to be too high, concentrate on those modules that you are confident to pass.
- Deregister from the course achievement and the exam in those courses that you wish to drop – mind the deadlines!
Modules in Algorithm Design

- Advanced Algorithms
- Advanced Complexity Theory
- Advanced Distributed Algorithms and Data Structures
- Algorithms for Highly Complex Virtual Scenes
- Clustering Algorithms
- Combinatorial Optimization
- Efficiency in Games

- Foundations of Cryptography
- Game Theory
- Introduction to Quantum Computation
- Quantum Algorithms
- Quantum Complexity Theory
- Real World Crypto Engineering
- Routing and Data Management in Networks
Modules in Computer Systems

- Advanced Computer Architecture
- Algorithms for Synthesis and Optimization of Integrated Circuits
- Approximate Computing
- Architektur paralleler Rechnersysteme
- High-Performance Computing
- Reconfigurable Computing
- VLSI Testing
Modules in Data Science

- Advanced Algorithms
- Advanced Distributed Algorithms and Data Structures
- Data Science for Physics and Engineering
- Data Science in Industrial Applications
- Digitale Sprachsignalverarbeitung
- Foundations of Knowledge Graphs
- High-Performance Computing

- Information Retrieval
- Machine Learning I
- Machine Learning II
- Statistical Natural Language Processing
- Topics in Pattern Recognition and Machine Learning
- Topics in Signal Processing
Modules in Intelligence and Data

- Clustering Algorithms
- Computational Argumentation
- Data Science for Physics and Engineering
- Foundations of Knowledge Graphs
- Information Retrieval
- Logic Programming for Artificial Intelligence

- Machine Learning I
- Machine Learning II
- Optimization Methods for Machine Learning
- Planning and Heuristic Search
- Statistical Natural Language Processing
- Statistical Signal Processing
Modules in Networks and Communication

- Advanced Distributed Algorithms and Data Structures
- Mobile Communication
- Networked Embedded Systems
- Routing and Data Management in Networks
Modules in Security

- Advanced Distributed Algorithms and Data Structures
- Designing code analyses for large-scale software systems 1
- Designing code analyses for large-scale software systems 2
- Foundations of Cryptography
- Introduction to Quantum Computation
- Privacy and Technology
- Quantum Complexity Theory
- Real World Crypto Engineering
- Usable Security and Privacy
- Web Security
Modules in Software Engineering

- Build It, Break It, Fix It
- **Data-Driven Innovation and Engineering**
- Data Science in Industrial Applications
- **Designing code analyses for large-scale software systems 1**
- Designing code analyses for large-scale software systems 2
- High-Performance Computing
- **Kontextuelle Informatik (in German)**
- Logic Programming for Artificial Intelligence
- Model-Based Systems Engineering
- Privacy Enhancing Technologies
- Software Quality Assurance
Seminars are special

- Count for 5 ECTS points
- 2 meeting hours per week or compact on two to three days
- Teacher proposes topics (Seminarthemen)
- Every student selects or is assigned one topic to work on and then
  - prepares a talk with slides (Seminarvortrag)
  - submits a seminar paper (Ausarbeitung)

- You need to work scientifically and be aware of good practices and the problem of plagiarizing in particular!
- Seminars do not belong to specific focus areas. You are free to choose.
- See https://cs.uni-paderborn.de/en/studies/study-elements/seminars-of-computer-science/ for information on how to apply for a seminar.
Project Groups are even more special

- Workload: 20 ECTS points in one year – including semester breaks

- Presentation of all project groups in a public event (Projektgruppenvorstellung) in the last week of teaching season – you should participate to find a group that suits you.

- Interested students apply for a project group and 8 to 16 students are accepted.
  - Ranking by you as well as by the lecturers.

- Working for two semesters on a project (often: concept and implementation of some software)
Project Groups are even more special

- Highly self-organized
- You have to contribute actively!
- You will be evaluated continuously.
- Usually requires at least two days per week being present in Paderborn.

- All our project groups are in English!
- Project groups do not belong to specific focus areas. You can apply to any one.

- All details at https://cs.uni-paderborn.de/en/studies/study-elements/project-groups/
Master’s Thesis (Masterarbeit)

Workload: Full-time for one semester (30 ECTS)

What has to be done?

- Literature review
- Research: develop new results!
- Obey rules of good scientific practice!
- Often: implementation of some software
- Writing a thesis (~ 80-120 pages) on scientific level

All of this: within 6 months (formally checked!)

- First a planning phase (typically 1 month)
- Then the real work (5 months)
Master’s Thesis (Masterarbeit)

Finding an advisor (Betreuer)

- talk to professors working in an area that interests you
- talk to the organizer of your project group
- ask friends

Finding a topic (Thema) is an interactive process between student and advisor

- own ideas?
- project group topic?
- discussion with the (potential) advisor!

The Master’s thesis defines your area of specialization – where you need to have three modules completed before you can register the thesis.
German Language Course (Deutschkurs)

- Language courses are optional!
- Language Courses hosted by the International Office
- Typically covers the „General Studies“ part (12 ECTS)
- Check https://www.uni-paderborn.de/en/studium/international-office/deutschkurse/
What you need to do to get your degree

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Requirement</th>
<th>ECTS credits</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>… take three modules from the area of specialization</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>… take one module in one other area</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>… take four modules in whatever area</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>… take two seminar modules</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>… take part in a project group</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>… write a Master’s thesis (must be from your specialization area)</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>… take minor subject, do general studies or take the German language courses</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Adding up to 120

It is your own responsibility to meet these criteria!
Examinations: Normal modules

Oral or written exam about the class

- Oral exams: individual date with the lecturer
- Written exams: usually two dates offered in the semester breaks

Class may include written homework or project work as prerequisite ("course achievement").

You need to register for the exams!

- All with PAUL
- Registration for first exam period:
  October 24 to November 24
- Registration for second exam period:
  February 27 to March 10

De-register if you don’t want to take an exam!
Otherwise you might be stuck with that module.
Examinations: Other types

**Seminar:** Evaluation of presentation and seminar paper

**Project group:** Permanent evaluation throughout the project

**Master’s Thesis:** Evaluation by the advisor and a co-advisor
Examinations: Repetition

**Module** exams can be repeated twice.

**Seminars** can be repeated twice.

**Project group** can be repeated twice (you really don’t want that!).

**Master’s Thesis** can be repeated once.
Examinations: Compensation

There are (limited) ways

- to shift aside („compensate“) exam failures
  - e.g. failure in one module
  - give up on that one and try another one instead

- to improve exam results
  - e.g. you succeeded in a module exam but with an unsatisfactory result, you can try a different module additionally.
  - You can’t retake a module that you have passed.
Final failure is possible! If …

… you have no more options to use compensation and you are no more able to fulfill the requirements:

- 3 modules in the specialization area
- 5 more modules with at least one of them in another area

OR

- three attempts for a project group failed

OR

- one seminar failed three times

OR

- two attempts for a Master’s thesis failed
Common pitfalls

- Deadlines are important. Some things can be amended if you miss a deadline, some can’t or may result in delays of up to a year!

- You need to register for all sorts of things. Do it – and mind the deadlines!

- If you don’t want to finish a course, de-register it and everything associated with it – and mind the deadlines. Otherwise you may be blocked from taking other courses as there is an upper limit of courses you can take.

- Pay your semester fees as early as possible. Otherwise you might not be able to participate in the seminar or project group distribution – which will result in a delay of one semester at least.

- Never miss the first meeting of a course.

- Always – ALWAYS! – visit the first lecture in a semester where all necessary information about the course will be given!
Important deadlines in this semester

Until October 28
Registration for modules and courses

Between October 24 and November 24
Registration for course achievement
Registration for qualified participation (if applicable)
Registration for exams

January 20
De-registration from course achievement
De-registration from qualified participation

One week before exam
De-registration from exam

Between February 27 and March 10
Registration for 2nd exam phase, also late registration for course achievement

If you missed this registration phase, you will most likely have to wait for almost one year to take your exam in that course!

Add those dates to your favourite calendar tool with a reminder!
Some more important things

- PAUL is your friend
  - Most important information is sent via the PAUL system or is shown there when you log in.
  - Check your university email address regularly!
  - Check out the PAUL introduction playlist at YouTube

- Many courses use the PANDA system for information and course material.

- Watch out for the project group presentation and attend it!
Stay up to date

- Follow us on Twitter (or at least bookmark us in your browser and check regularly) – we will remind you of important deadlines: @CompScience_UPB, @Study_CS_UPB

- Join in on our monthly live stream on the Faculty’s YouTube channel at https://www.youtube.com/user/FakultaetEIM

  usually third Thursday each month (except March and September) at 6 pm local time

- Q&A for the Master program

- next dates always posted at https://cs.uni-paderborn.de/en/studies/advice-and-support/academic-advising
Welcome to Paderborn!