



University of
Zurich^{UZH}

Personal Branding and Digital Marketing

Syllabus 2024
Each Fall Semester

Fast-paced, practical, interactive

Chair for Marketing and Market Research
University Research Priority Program on Social Networks
Department of Business Administration
University of Zurich, Switzerland

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PREAMBLE

Welcome to our “Personal Branding and Digital Marketing” syllabus!

***«Personal branding is not about you.
It's about putting your stamp on the value you deliver to others»***

William Arruda

Today, the Internet and a plethora of social media applications offer various possibilities to build brands and market their value. These tools help **differentiate** a brand from its competitors, communicate its **unique selling proposition (USP)**, and position it to **target audiences**. Therefore, understanding digital marketing mechanisms is core to today's brand management discipline. This course should thus be seen as an essential course not only for every marketing student but probably for every student in management.

This course will focus on **personal branding** through the Internet and social media tools. Personal branding is an essential enabler for individuals, job seekers, and young startup companies to define, communicate, and sell their most vital attributes to a target audience. Becoming a brand seems to be an important first step today to becoming a thought leader in one specific field.

In this course, we:

- Discuss **personal brands** as an essential professional asset.
- Review different **branding strategies** and how to align them to professional career objectives.
- Emphasize how **digital marketing** theories and frameworks support the brand-building process.
- Set up a **social media ecosystem** consisting of several platforms to self-organize and promote a brand in the digital environment and beyond.
- Introduce **AI-based software** and other tools for digital marketing management to feed, grow, analyze, and automate your performance.
- Lay your **hands on brands** to gain practical experience through regular interactive exercises.

This course develops **digital abilities** in students pursuing careers in any industry as managers or entrepreneurs, regardless of their functional expertise and company size.

The ideal target audience for this course is young students who have always wanted to turn their own ideas and visions into a personal brand and their own company, but who have not yet been able to muster the right mindset, confidence, or the appropriate tools. Students who have already successfully established their own brand can also benefit from the course, but the course does not provide a detailed introduction to specific tools, such as Google Analytics or similar.

This introductory course is less suitable for students working in a corporate context with a corporate brand.

The course content is designed to be maximally practical and help students acquire **highly demanded digital skills** in the marketplace. Each session represents a “building block” connected, which enables students to **apply all learned principles**, week after week, to their branding project.

This course will always take place in the fall semesters. Basic knowledge is not required. A **hands-on and can-do attitude** is highly recommended. Ongoing exercise is needed next to the class. Respective material will be given in class.

We are pleased to welcome you to this course. Let's go digital!

QUICK OVERVIEW

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Andreasstrasse 15, CH-8050 Zurich, Oerlikon

Type:

Lectures and exercises.

Target Audience:

Bachelor students assigned to the “Wahlpflichtbereich” BWL 4.

Frequency:

Each fall semester.

APS (ECTS):

6

Workload Statement:

Part	Workload	ECTS
Course preparation and exercises	20h + 35h	
Class attendance (lectures)	25h	
Individual work and assignments	20h + 65h	
Final Exam	15h	
Total	180h	6

Maximum Number of Students:

Limited only by room/zoom size.

Prerequisites:

This course does not have entry requirements.

Language:

English

Course Number:

03SM22BO0051

Registration:

Officially register using the **booking tool** at the University of Zurich. An individual application for this class is NOT necessary.

Grading:

The multiple-choice exam in Jan. accounts for **100%** of the final grade (see “4. Evaluation”).

Important Dates:

Course: from **23.09.2024** to **28.10.2024**; Each Monday from **14:15** to **18:00h**. Deadline to submit presentation: **11.11.2024**, 23:59h (not negotiable)

Deadline to submit optional certificates: **11.11.2024**, 23:59h (not negotiable)

All submissions must be sent to *luca.lazzaro@business.uzh.ch*

Final exam: takes place in person in January. The exact date is announced in the VVZ.

Location:

Please see the respective information posted on our website and in the VVZ.

Note:

The syllabus supports the official information in the electronic university calendar (VVZ - Vorlesungsverzeichnis). In cases of doubt, the official announcement at the VVZ is valid.

1. INTRODUCTION AND DETAILED OBJECTIVES

1.1 Course Purpose

The course is a hands-on introduction to the **best practices of brand management and digital marketing** proven to build and foster a personal brand. Branding is one of the core marketing disciplines. It describes the process of creating a **unique name and image** for a product or a service in the consumer's mind through **consistent communication** themes. Branding aims to establish a significant and **differentiated presence** in the market to attract and retain customers.

The course, conceived as an “**interactive, ongoing workshop**,” introduces bachelor students to the cultural terrain of brand-building and digital marketing. Students will become accustomed to, understand, and **apply branding techniques** typically used in digital channels. The program is designed to motivate and encourage participants to practice these concepts in hands-on exercises, develop a spirit of problem-solving, and enhance their ability to think in business terms. The course presents **best-in-class examples** offering both **strategic and operational perspectives** of marketing management.

This course should (a) support students in creating an understanding of personal brands and branding strategies, (b) demonstrate the advantages and disadvantages of using different digital marketing techniques, (c) develop strategic thinking needed to create and feedback on a digital marketing plan, (d) build up an ecosystem of social media platforms supporting the launch of a new brand in the digital environment, and (e) help students to feed, grow and analyze the digital performance of brands.

1.2 Course Contribution towards Marketing Management

The course includes a comprehensive presentation of the main tools typically used in digital marketing management and branding. These elements are discussed in class and supported by examples. The approach encourages students to evaluate given marketing situations critically, discuss their applicability, and solve given marketing decision problems.

1.3 Course Contribution towards Analytical Competence

The course presents the main analytical tools in social media marketing necessary to obtain and use data that are applied in the professional world, and which help marketing managers use data appropriately, analyze marketing situations, to formulate marketing strategies and plans, and evaluate their impact on the personal brand building process. The student's understanding of these analytical instruments is realized through theoretical discussions, examples, exercises, and practical assignments.

1.4 Course Contribution towards Understanding and Applying Marketing Instruments

One course objective is to show how digital marketing instruments can support a personal brand-building process. The tools presented and discussed in class give students an idea of the complexity and pitfalls of typical digital marketing problems.

1.5 Course Contribution towards Critical Thinking and Problem-Solving Skills

As all digital tools are directly applied to realistic situations in the brand-building process of each student. Course participants must conceptualize the related marketing problems and formulate marketing questions for these situations. Problem-solving skills are developed by applying these digital tools and discussing alternatives. The whole brand-building process is accompanied, interpreted, and critically analyzed to foster critical thinking.

1.6 Course Contribution towards Ethical and Social Responsibility

The cases presented in class integrate ethical questions to develop a sense of moral and social responsibility and actively generate an understanding of different cultural perspectives. An open-minded, tolerant, and respectful atmosphere within the class must maintain this. The pedagogical approach adopted in this course encourages students to contribute their opinions, experience, and comments to the discussions developed around the presented marketing methods and seriously consider and discuss each other's views.

1.7 Course Contribution towards the Development of Communication Skills

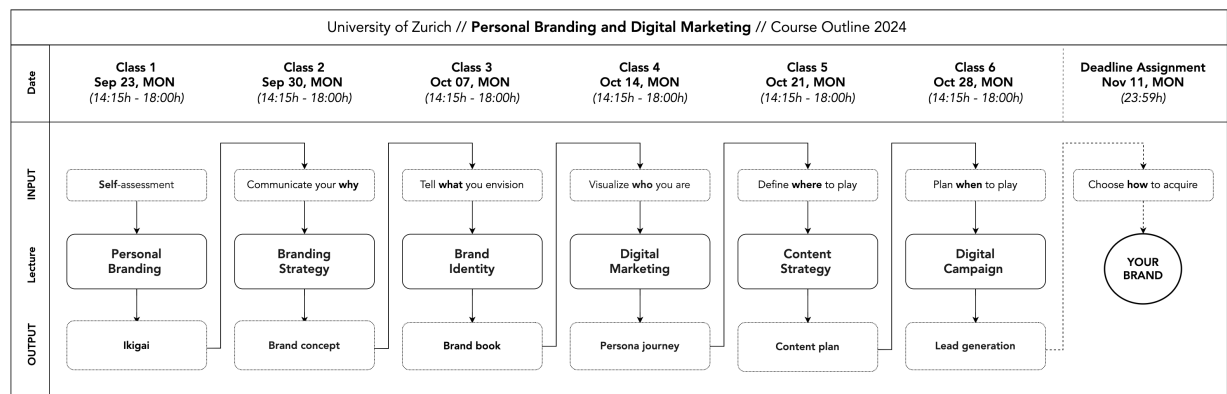
The capability to effectively work in teams and communicate during the working process is an essential skill for marketing managers. The pedagogical approach adopted in this course encourages students to participate in class, forwarding their opinions, experiences, and comments to the discussions developed around the presented marketing methods. Finally, students are asked to use verbal and written communication during their coursework, reinforcing these skills.

2. COURSE CONTENTS

2.1 Overview of Lectures and Exercise

The course is **fast-paced, practical, and interactive**. It will include lectures, case studies, group exercises, and self-reflecting tasks.

The following chart provides the **outline for HS 2024***.



* Please note that this is subject to change, and additional information might be given in class.

The course is composed of a total of **six frontal classes**, each covering one of the foundational topics of the study program. Every class consists of **three primary activities** that build on each other and lead to the creation of a **professionally designed personal brand**.

a. Homework (INPUT)

Every class starts with the homework required for the previous week. This short **self-reflection exercise** requires around 1-hour of preparation. Students must arrive at each class well-prepared to take full advantage of the interactions with classmates and instructors.

b. Lecture and Guest Lecture

During the lecture, lasting an average of 1.5 hours, the course teacher explicates the essential **theories and frameworks** related to the weekly topic while discussing best practices and Personal Branding and Digital Marketing - Syllabus

popular examples. Students are invited to interact and provide their critical perspectives. Selected special guests from the industry (corporation, startup, independent influencer) are invited to share a **practical and managerially relevant perspective** on the topic covered during the main lecture. During the 45-minute session, students can challenge the speaker's ideas and **gather deeper insights** from the open discussion. Students will further reflect on one key practical aspect related to **their individual project implementation** and work in small group exercises to solve a task while gathering feedback from classmates. At the end of each weekly class, the student should have acquired the **needed knowledge to progress** in the individual project (final assignment).

c. Exercise (OUTPUT)

Exercises during the class are meant to be discussed and **solved in small groups**. The course instructor explains the group task during the related session. The document is uploaded before each class on OLAT under "Exercise."

2.2 Details of Lectures

L1: Personal Branding

Outline:

This unit builds upon the fundamentals of brand management and applies them to personal branding. In this class, you learn what personal brands are, why they are important, and how to gain the right mindset to build one. Among the other elements that define your unique life motive, "why," we will look at your passions, strengths, values, and skills. You will learn that the personal brand-building process begins with "self-awareness," i.e., understanding how your actions, thoughts, or emotions do or don't align with your internal standards. In the following step, students are guided in the idea generation and brainstorming process where the individual's personality and essence find space in a concrete project.

Objectives:

1. Understand what a personal brand is.
2. Reflect on the importance of creating a personal brand.
3. Identify the core elements that form a personal brand.
4. Understand the personal brand-building process.
5. Explore how to gain the right mindset to develop your personal brand.
6. Learn what constitutes self-awareness and how to find your "why."
7. Practice communicating your reason for being.
8. Generate concrete ideas that build on your human essence (Ikigai).

L2: Branding Strategy

Outline:

This unit will introduce you to some fundamental ideas about branding. Thus, you will become familiar with the definition of a brand, what distinguishes it from other communication elements, the critical elements of successful brands, and the steps of building successful brand concepts. In particular, this module focuses on the strategic process of creating a brand name (naming), brand essence (mission statement), brand promise and values (unique selling proposition), personality and tone of voice, etc. This session helps express in simple words what the brand you envision stands for and why it differs from others (positioning). In doing so, you will learn how to communicate your brand effectively through the vehicle of brand storytelling (e.g., life experience story, tagline, elevator pitch).

Objectives:

1. Understand what brand management is.
2. Identify the core elements that form a brand.
3. Learn the sequential steps to develop a brand concept.
4. Create a branding strategy including naming, promise, value, essence, etc.
5. Learn how to differentiate your brand from competitors (targeting & positioning).
6. Practice the process of brand storytelling for effective communication.
7. Define how to market your idea to your audience (niche).

L3: Brand Identity**Outline:**

This unit will introduce you to a toolbox required for developing your brand, including the brand logo and identity system. Thus, we'll talk about design principles to be able to (i) design logos and other visual elements, (ii) define the optimal color palette, (iii) choose appropriate typography, and (iv) explore other key assets such as audio branding, illustrations, patterns, and photography. In this module, we will briefly review the creative process that leads to creating a brand identity and describe some techniques (e.g., mood board) that enable it. Equipped with background theories and examples of modern visual identity, you are ready to develop your own professional "brand book" containing all the critical graphical assets representing the foundational communication elements of your brand.

Objectives:

1. Reflect on the steps leading to the development of a brand identity system.
2. Familiarize yourself with elementary design principles and learn how to break them.
3. Review the main theories of the logo, color, and typography design.
4. Learn the fundamentals of logo design and how to create an outstanding one.
5. Learn the fundamentals of the color palette and how to make one.
6. Learn the fundamentals of typography and how to choose your fonts.
7. Create a professional brand book with all critical visual assets.

L4: Digital Marketing**Outline:**

In this unit, you will learn the fundamentals of digital marketing. We start by discussing the evolution and characteristics of ranking algorithms on Google and the most popular social media platforms. Afterward, we explore web and social media presence at the heart of your future brand-building process and how to analyze web trends, traffic, and audience. In doing so, we will review the best practices for search engine optimization (SEO) as well as both functional and technical requirements for appealing sites. We continue talking about the phases of a digital marketing plan (analysis, strategy, execution) while reviewing owned, earned, and paid types of media and how to develop strategies for each of them. We will conclude by learning the process of consumer journey mapping, "persona" development, and stakeholder management on social media.

Objectives:

1. Understand the characteristics of ranking algorithms on Google and social media.
2. Learn how to analyze web trends, traffic, and audience.
3. Reflect on the best practices for search engine optimization (SEO).
4. Understand both functional and technical requirements for successful websites.
5. Analyze the phases of a digital marketing plan from analysis to execution.
6. Differentiate between owned, earned, and paid media and develop strategies.

7. Practice customer journey mapping and development of personas.
8. Familiarize yourself with the concept of stakeholder management on social media.

L5: Content Strategy

Outline:

In this unit, you'll be first introduced to content strategy fundamentals. We talk about the content management process in all its phases: ideation, creation, curation, distribution, and automation. This module starts with understanding your "brand territories" and defining which themes/topics offer the highest returns for your brand. We will review the most popular features for the critical social media platforms: TikTok, Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, YouTube, and LinkedIn. While doing so, we get in touch with the principles of SEO-optimized and social media-specific content and learn how to apply them to gain the highest visibility across channels. Afterward, we explore together how to distribute and curate content to maximize your development effort. In particular, we examine the principles of a conversational (or editorial) calendar for organizing content and planning its optimal distribution (when). Finally, we talk about routines connected to content automation, optimization and augmentation supported by AI-powered tools.

Objectives:

1. Understand the process of content strategy and management in all its phases.
2. Define your brand territories and the themes/topics with the highest potential.
3. Discover the most popular features for the key social media platforms.
4. Learn the concept of SEO-optimized content and social media-specific content.
5. Explore how to maximize content effect through optimal distribution and curation.
6. Familiarize with the principles of conversational (or editorial) calendar and routines
7. Review AI-powered tools for content automation, optimization, and augmentation.

L6: Digital Campaign

Outline:

In this unit, we explore how to develop outstanding digital marketing campaigns. We start from the basic principles of the "communication funnel" and discuss how to define success by looking at different key performance indicators (KPIs). Next, we review best-in-class examples of lead generation via the traditional website (landing page) and using social media advertising (Facebook and Instagram ads). Afterward, we will explore the principle of growth hacking while learning how "agile methodologies" can be successfully applied to digital campaigning. Then, we discuss how to test your paid campaigns using A/B techniques and create a testing plan to optimize your future investment. Lastly, we learn how to communicate your campaign concept's key aspects to your agency or business partner using a digital marketing campaign template.

Objectives:

1. Understand the basic principles of the communication funnel.
2. Familiarize yourself with popular metrics and key performance indicators (KPIs).
3. Explore the process of lead generation via landing pages and social media ads.
4. Learn how the principle of growth hacking is applied to digital campaigns.
5. Test your paid media campaigns using A/B techniques.
6. Discover how to create a testing plan to optimize future advertising investments.
7. Structure your campaign idea in all its essential aspects using a professional template.

3. COURSE MATERIAL

Students can access our web-based **e-learning platform** (OLAT) to download the slides presented in class and find other relevant material, such as literature and templates.

3.1 Homework

One week before each class, students are provided with some **inspirational material** to review and one **self-reflection task** to undertake. A folder containing six instructions (one per each respective lecture) can be found on OLAT under “Homework.”

3.2 Slide

The slides presented and discussed in class are available on the e-learning platform OLAT before the lecture. **Slides can be downloaded** for each class. The slides do not entirely cover the entire syllabus and cannot certainly capture the richness of the class interactions.

Therefore, it is highly recommended that you attend the course and take notes.

Guest speakers may often share confidential content; Thus, slides are rarely shared with students. Although the content covered by the guest speaker is not directly part of the final examination, it is always recommended to take personal notes unless covered in the main lecture.

Note on recordings: classes **will not be recorded**, and **alternative learning methods** (e.g., flipped classroom) **are unavailable** for this course due to its unique and practical setting. Individuals unable to attend the lectures must review the .ppt presentations independently and catch up with the regular exercises.

3.3 Assignment and Canvas

The instructions for the individual assignment (deadline 11.11.2024) are provided during the first lecture and uploaded on OLAT under “Assignment.” These include the individual templates and the **PB&DM canvas** - a template created explicitly for this course that summarizes the characteristics of your project. In addition, a FAQ document addresses the popular questions concerning the scope and the structure of the two deliverables: the .ppt presentation and the canvas.

3.4 Other material: Workbook “Journal”

A workbook in the form of a personal journal was created to guide students in becoming increasingly self-aware and developing a project that reflects their inner motives. The digital document contains self-reflective exercises connected to each of the lectures. The entire workbook will be made available at the beginning of the semester via OLAT under “Workbook.”

3.5 Other material: Recommended Readings (Books)

The below list of recommended readings contains books that inspired the content of this course. Students are suggested to choose **at least one book** according to personal interest and read it during the semester.

Primary literature on self-development:

1. **The Mountain Is You:** Transforming Self-Sabotage Into Self-Mastery. *Wiest, Brianna (2020). Thought Catalog Books.*
2. **Atomic Habits:** An Easy & Proven Way to Build Good Habits & Break Bad Ones. *Clear, James (2018). Avery.*

3. **Think Like a Monk:** Train Your Mind for Peace and Purpose Every Day. *Shetty, Jay (2020). Simon & Schuster.*
4. **Find Your Why:** A Practical Guide for Discovering Purpose for You and Your Team. *Sinek, Simon et al. (2018) Portfolio.*
5. **Dare to Lead:** Brave Work. Tough Conversations. Whole Hearts. *Brown, Brené (2018). Random House.*
6. **How to Change:** The Science of Getting from Where You Are to Where You Want to Be. *Milkman, Katy (2021). Portfolio.*

Primary technical literature:

1. **Zero to One:** Notes on Startups, or How to Build the Future. *Thiel, Peter & Masters, Blake (2014). Currency.*
2. **This Is Marketing:** You Can't Be Seen Until You Learn to See. *Godin, Seth (2018). Portfolio.*
3. **Designing Brand Identity:** An Essential Guide for the Whole Branding Team. *Wheeler, Alina (2017). John Wiley & Sons Inc.*
4. **Traction:** How Startup Can Achieve Explosive Customer Growth. *Weinberg, Gabriel & Mares, Justin (2015). Penguin.*
5. **Save the Cat! Writes a Novel:** The Last Book On Novel Writing You'll Ever Need. *Brody, Jessica (2018). Ten Speed Press.*

Additional recommendations about literature, podcasts and videos related to the specific lecture's topic are presented at the end of each class.

3.6 Other material: Recommended Online Tutorials and Resources

Students wishing to improve specific operational skills should review the online tutorials and resources below. This process enables course participants to gain familiarity with the most common digital marketing management practices.

1. **Google Digital Garage** - Online courses on the fundamentals of digital marketing
<https://learndigital.withgoogle.com/digitalgarage/course/digital-marketing>
2. **Google Analytics Academy** - Online courses and certifications for web analytics
<https://analytics.google.com/analytics/academy/>
3. **Facebook Blueprint** - Step-by-step tutorials for Facebook and Instagram marketing
<https://www.facebookblueprint.com/student/catalog>
4. **HubSpot Academy** - Practical online training for digital marketing, sales, and service
<https://academy.hubspot.com>
5. **Moz** - The beginner's guide to Search Engine Optimization (SEO)
<https://moz.com/beginners-guide-to-seo>
6. **X for Business** - Resources for digital marketing managers
<https://business.twitter.com/en/resources.html>
7. **TikTok for Business** - Resources for digital marketing managers
<https://www.tiktokforbusinesseurope.com>

3.7 Other material: Recommended Digital Marketing and AI-based Tools

An always-updated list of Digital Marketing and AI-based Tools is provided via OLAT under "Tool." As this software can significantly **increase productivity** and improve brand performance, students are highly recommend taking some time to explore available services.

Please note that several tools are available as a **freemium version**; thus, users might be asked to pay for advanced features. Students are responsible for reading the usage terms and payment conditions before subscribing.

3.8 Other material: Other Sources of Inspiration

Students can also use academic and professional papers published online or in marketing

journals to obtain additional information about digital marketing and branding concepts, theories, and methods.

Marketing journals:

Journal of Marketing, Marketing Science, Journal of Marketing Research, Journal of Consumer Research, International Journal of Research in Marketing, Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science, Journal of Interactive Marketing, Journal of Business Research, Journal of Service Research, Journal of Product and Innovation Management.

Practitioner-oriented magazines:

Harvard Business Review, Sloan Management Review, McKinsey Quarterly.

4. EVALUATION

Given the class size, this course consists of just **one formal exam**. However, access to the final exam is exclusive to students who deliver the individual «Personal Brand» assessment within the deadline and according to the defined requirements.

4.1 Final Exam (100%)

In January, we will have an **in-person final exam**. The Multiple-Choice Test covers the content of the lectures and exercises. For each lecture, we will create 5-10 multiple-choice questions.

4.2 Presentation and Canvas of Personal Brand (pass/no pass criteria)

A PowerPoint presentation and standard templates (canvas) documenting the personal brand development will be evaluated as a «pass» when fulfilling the evaluation criteria illustrated during the class.

The deadline for submitting the documents is 11.11.2024, 23:59h. These documents are **essential and required** elements of the class. **You have to pass the presentation to pass the class!**

Note: We define a “personal brand” as branding yourself or a business idea representing your values and beliefs.

4.3 Online Assessment (uplift)

We may offer you voluntary options during the class to gain a 0.25 **uplift** in your final grade. Examples might include an additional tutorial, e.g., Google certificates, or tasks such as book reviews and workbook journal completion. Available extra assignments will be communicated via email in due time.

4.4 Certificate Personal Branding Course

On 20.11.2024, the list of best projects is announced publicly. This symbolic recognition is given to the best 10% of individual assignments as judged by the teaching team following the communicated evaluation criteria. A personalized certificate in digital form is shared with each selected student.

The “top 10%” certificate recipients have the priority to attend the closed number follow-up seminar “Personal Branding Applications” in the subsequent semester (spring).

5. ACADEMIC FRAUD AND ADMINISTRATIVE COMMENTS

5.1 Academic Fraud

Academic fraud is an act by a student that may result in a false academic evaluation of that student or another student. The Honor Code of the University of Zurich applies to all work in this course and will be strictly enforced. The intent of the Honor Code in this course is to ensure that each student claims and receives credits for his/her own efforts. Violations of this are considered academic fraud.

5.2 Students with Disabilities

Any student with a documented disability needing academic adjustment or accommodations is requested to speak with the instructor during the first day of the course. All discussions will remain confidential. Students with disabilities will also need to contact the school directors.

5.3 Registration Cards

Registration cards will be handed out at the beginning of the course. Students will be asked to add a recent profile picture and some personal information. The information is kept confidential and is only accessible to our team.

5.4 Name Plates

Nameplates should be used regularly in class to learn the students' names. Name plates will be handed out on the first day of the course.

5.5 Getting in Contact

Emails should be short and to the point. Before sending an email, please check if an answer has already been provided on the public OLAT forum. Questions can also be asked at the beginning or during lectures and exercises.

5.6 Class Dismissal

Students are asked to remain seated and attentive until the lecturer or teaching assistant dismisses the class.

5.7 Sound-emitting Devices

Everybody is expected to turn off/mute all devices that emit sounds and noises that may interrupt the class (e.g., mobile phones, pagers, and watch alarms). If an occasion arises in which a student may need to receive a phone call, they have to inform the lecturer or teaching assistant before class.

5.8 Laptops and Calculators

Laptops, tablets, mobile phones, and programmable calculators are allowed in class if indicated by the lecturer or teaching assistant and as far as their usage supports the individual learning process. Otherwise, they are not permitted.

5.9 Important Deadlines and Class Schedule

Important deadlines and the class schedule are communicated in the first lecture. If a student cannot participate in this lecture, they must obtain any relevant information.

We are excited to meet you in class!