

SYLLABUS: PEOPLE ANALYTICS ACHIEVING SUSTAINABILITY GOALS

ORGANIZATION

Date:	Thursday 12:15 – 16:00 on an irregular basis: 25.09.2025; 16.10.2025, 30.10.2025, 04.12.2025, 11.12.2025, 18.12.2025
Format:	Seminar, in presence mode ¹
Room:	Check the course catalogue: https://portal.unilu.ch/details?code=HS251042
Lecturer:	Dr. Marina Pletscher (marina.pletscher@unilu.ch)
Language:	English
OLAT:	https://lms.uzh.ch/auth/RepositoryEntry/17745707051/CourseNode/70448659388630

CONTENT

In this seminar, we will explore how to use people analytics to improve decision-making in business. This year, we focus on how people analytics can help **foster sustainability**.

Many organizations strive to foster sustainability with the aim to respond to diverse stakeholder interests in alleviating inequalities and reducing organizations' contribution to resource depletion. HRM scholarship and companies identified that HRM can contribute to achieving these goals and experiment with different approaches. People analytics generates relevant evidence by combining technical knowledge of analytics with a sound understanding of the people side of business, and can help organizations to identify effective solutions that foster sustainability.

Please note: In this course, you do **NOT** need to personally collaborate with a specific organisation. Instead, you will be asked to develop a conceptual people analytics project for an organisation that interests you, based on information you can gather online or through other means.

We will follow a problem-based learning approach and combine lectures, guest speakers' contributions, in-class discussions, and practical project work. Guest speakers include:

- 1) 25.09.2025, **Marisa Hürlimann**, Sustainability Manager at Sunrise GmbH.
- 2) 04.12.2025, **Dr. Alexandra Arnold**, People Analytics Expert at Sika Services AG.

¹ Due to organizational reasons, you need to inform the lecturers one day in advance if you cannot join the lecture.

LEARNING GOALS

Upon successful completion of this seminar, you will know how to set up a people analytics project. Specifically, you will:

- (1) gain expertise in this year's focal area of fostering sustainability;
- (2) know how to create a business case for your people analytics project and address stakeholder interests;
- (3) be able to select useful methods from the methodological toolkit of people analytics (e.g., interviews, surveys, interventions, and experiments);
- (4) be able to translate evidence into actionable and relevant recommendations.

LITERATURE AND MATERIAL

Literature and additional materials are available in OLAT.

ECT CREDITS AND PREREQUISITES

This is a Master's course, and no prerequisites are required. Upon successful completion of this course, students receive three (3) credits. Students are responsible for checking whether credits from this course will be accepted.

ENROLLMENT

In order to acquire credits, resp. to take the examination, registration via the **Uni Portal within 1 – 14 September 2025** is ESSENTIALLY REQUIRED. Furthermore, registration via e-learning platform OLAT is required to access the course materials. Registration via OLAT is possible from 1 – 14 September 2025. Further information on registration: www.unilu.ch/wf/pruefungen. Students are responsible for checking the creditability of the course to their course of study.

GRADING

Students need to complete mid-term-assignments to be eligible to complete the final individual assignment. The mid-term assignments build on each other, are discussed in peer-groups and can be used as basis for the final assignment.

Mid-term assignments will be evaluated on a pass/fail basis. Participants have one week to revise their work if they do not pass the mid-term assignment. The final individual assignment is graded from 1.0 to 6.0 and, if mid-term assignments are passed, serves as the final grade.

LECTURER

Dr. Marina Pletscher holds a PhD in Economics and Management from the University of Lucerne. Her research and teaching focus on leadership, international HRM, organizational communication, talent management, and research methodology. With over 15 years of practical experience, including corporate leadership roles, entrepreneurship, and self-employed consulting services, she bridges theory and practice with the aim to develop evidence-based and solution-oriented approaches. She represents Switzerland in the international HRM network CRANET, is a member of Swiss Psychological Society (SPS), as well as a reviewer and a published author in international journals.

SEMESTER SCHEDULE

Block 1 – Intro PA & Sustainability	
25.09.2025 in class	<p>Introduction:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How do we work together in the course? • What is people analytics and how can it help the business? <p>Guest speaker Marisa Hürlimann: Introduction in Sustainability</p>
Block 2 – Creating the business case	
Self-study - mid-term-assignment: Due on 14.10.2025	Individual assignment - First idea: Which research question/topic will I use? Which company do I want to use for my assignment? Why does the research question fit the company? (pass/fail; send per email to the lecturer). Prepare to present your idea in class (1-2 PowerPoint slides).
16.10.2025 in class	<p>Selecting a focus:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How are key performance indicators selected? • How are hypotheses developed? • How to go about a literature review efficiently and effectively? <p>Feedback and discussion of an individual assignment.</p>
Block 3 – Generating evidence	
Self-study: until 27.10.2025	<p>Video (self-study):</p> <p>Generating evidence:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What methods for data collection do exist (e.g., surveys, experiments, system data)? • How to select a useful method for data collection? • How is evidence interpreted and assessed for quality?
Mid-term-assignment: Due on 27.10.2025	Individual assignment - Assignment booklet: Creating a business case and developing hypotheses, Selected methods and their justification (pass/fail; send to the lecturer). Prepare to present your idea in class.
Block 4 – Stakeholder management and ethics	
30.10.2025 in class	<p>Group feedback and discussion of individual assignment (Focus on the concept, research question, and methods)</p> <p>Managing your stakeholders and addressing ethics</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How are stakeholder interests identified and addressed? • What are potential ethical pitfalls and risks?
Self-study - mid-term-assignment: Due on 01.12.2025	Individual assignment - Assignment booklet: Selected methods and their justification, data analysis and presentation, stakeholder management, risk management & ethical considerations, actionable recommendations (pass/fail; send to the lecturer). Prepare to present your idea in class.

Self-study - mid-term-assignment: Due on 01.12.2025	Two questions regarding people analytics that you would like to discuss in class with Alexandra Arnold (pass/fail; send to the lecturer)
Block 5 – Designing a project for practical impact	
04.12.2025 in class	Guest speaker Dr. Alexandra Arnold: Use of People Analytics in practice Group feedback and discussion of individual assignment (Focus on selected methods and their justification, stakeholder management, ethical considerations, and actionable recommendations)
11.12.2025 in class	Communicating findings & showcasing evidence Time to further develop your own assignment
Block 6 – Reflecting on your work and getting individual feedback	
18.12.2025 in class	Reflecting on the course and learning from others: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are your learnings, challenges and key insights? • Q&A regarding the assignment project • Possibility for individual feedback session (send email till 16.12.2025 if you request an individual session)
Final individual assignment: Due on 11.01.2026	Individual Assignment - assignment booklet (full document; send to the lecturer per email). This document is the basis for your final grade.

Wishing you much success in the people analytics course!