Dear PhD students,

In the wake of the significant increase COVID-19 recently, here are some GHS guidelines consistent with the government directives (https://www.bag.admin.ch) and the directives of the University of Bern.

- The GHS coordinator and GHS Administration team are again working from home offices. Please communicate with the GHS via Email only.
- Events with participation by external people are cancelled. Thesis Defenses and Examinations are held virtually since November 2, 2020 and until further notice.
  - Continue to send all relevant documents to the GHS electronically e.g. courses certificates
  - Hold exams via videoconferencing, e.g., Zoom and with at least one thesis committee member in the room together with the student for the exams.
  - For Thesis Defenses it is recommended that the members of the Thesis committee (Thesis advisor, co-referee and GHS representative) are present onsite with the student. Family and friends may join virtually only.
  - Verify the maximum capacity of the room you reserve – the physical presence within the room may not exceed maximum capacity and physical distancing guidelines must be adhered. Masks are mandatory.
- As the GHS is effective immediately, until further notice working from Home Offices, no in-person schedule appointments for dropping off three hard copies of your thesis or for consultation may be scheduled. Alternative options include:
  - Dropbox outside the door to office #234 in Mittelstrasse 43, where you can deposit your three copies of the thesis.
  - Mail per Swiss Post (address to the GHS, Room#234, Mittlestrasse 43, 3012 Bern.
  - Place copies in enveloped address (see above bullet) and deliver them to the Mittelstrasse 43 Postroom (located on the Level -1, East, behind the cafeteria).
- GHS Administration is organizing the diplomas from for thesis defenses that took place between September and December, 2020. However, due to current situation there are delays. We will inform you directly as soon as we have your diplomas.
- All classroom teaching will be replaced by distance learning. This also applies to further-education courses. Only practical training and laboratory courses will continue to be held in-person. The maximum number of participants remains fixed at 50 students.
- The study places in the libraries remain at the currently reduced number. This is intended to avoid hardship for students with regard to access to a sensible place for study.
- Masks are compulsory on the entire campus of the University of Bern. This applies to the entire perimeter of the institutions, i.e. not only inside the buildings but also their exterior spaces.
- Consult this link for further information https://www.unibe.ch/coronavirus/index_eng.html

Stay healthy and we wish you a good winter/ spring semester in spite of the current unpleasant situation!

Warm regards,

Dr. Tullia Padovani, GHS Coordinator, and the GHS Administration Team