

# Regulations governing the studies and assessments at the Faculty of Science (Philosophisch-naturwissenschaftliche Fakultät) (study regulations Phil.-nat. Fakultät [RSL Phil.-nat.]

of 14<sup>th</sup> April 2005 (status: 1<sup>st</sup> August 2016)

*The Faculty of Science,*

on the basis of Article 44 paragraph 1 litera c of the University Act of 5 September, 1996 (UniG)<sup>1</sup>, Article 33 of the University Ordinance of 12 September 2012 (UniV)<sup>2</sup> and Article 43 of the Statute of the University of Bern of 7 June, 2011 (Universitätsstatut, UniSt)<sup>3</sup>,

*resolves the following:*

## **I. General Provisions**

SCOPE	<p><b>Art. 1</b> <sup>1</sup> These regulations are valid for all students pursuing bachelor, master or PhD degree courses at the Faculty of Science (Faculty).</p> <p><sup>2</sup> The regulations are also valid for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>a students of other faculties, universities and university institutions pursuing a minor or optional courses at the Faculty,</li><li>b exchange students earning ECTS points at the Faculty.</li></ul>
OBJECT	<p><b>Art. 2</b> <sup>1</sup> These regulations stipulate the policies of the bachelor and master as well as the PhD courses of study and the associated assessments at the Faculty.</p> <p><sup>2</sup> Excepted are cooperation agreements and corresponding joint regulations as well as general accords.</p>
AIM OF STUDIES	<p><b>Art. 3</b> <sup>1</sup> The courses of study at the Faculty strive to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>a convey in-depth specialised knowledge to the students in mathematical and natural science oriented subjects,</li></ul>

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<sup>1</sup> BSG 436.11

<sup>2</sup> BSG 436.111.1

<sup>3</sup> BSG 436.111.2

- b enable students to explore faculty-external scientific fields,
- c encourage teamwork as well as interdisciplinary thinking and acting and
- d deepen the students' understanding of the meaning and responsibility of natural sciences in our society.

<sup>2</sup> The aim thereby is to enable the students to conduct independent scientific investigation into research questions, in order to develop new knowledge through active engagement in research.

#### ADMISSION TO STUDIES

**Art. 4** <sup>1</sup> The admission guidelines for studying at the Faculty are in accordance with Article 10 to 14 of the University Ordinance of 12 September, 2012 (Universitätsverordnung, UniV)<sup>4</sup> and the registration process as set forth in Article 70 to 76 UniSt. [Version of 06/03/2014]

<sup>2</sup> The admission of exchange students, auditors and doctoral candidates may be subject to special provisions.

<sup>3</sup> Individuals, whose admission to a degree course at the Faculty or other university institution has been definitively denied due to unsatisfactory attainments, shall not be admitted to a degree course of equivalent content of the Faculty. The decision resides with the competent body as set forth in the Fakultätsreglement (Faculty Rules).

#### STRUCTURE OF STUDIES

**Art. 5** The studies encompass a bachelor degree course leading to a Bachelor of Science degree, as the case may be, a master degree course leading to a Master of Science degree, and possibly a PhD degree course leading to a PhD of Science.

#### COMMENCEMENT OF STUDIES

**Art. 6** <sup>1</sup> As a general rule, commencing students shall begin their studies in the autumn semester. [Version of 31/07/2008]

<sup>2</sup> Entry into the bachelor and master degree course may also be accorded for the spring semester if a change of the field of study within the Faculty or the continuation of the same field of study through transfer to the Faculty occurs after the first semester. The details are set forth in the plans of studies. [Version of 31/07/2008]

#### STANDARD DURATION OF STUDIES, EXTENSION OPTIONS, EXCLUSION FROM STUDIES

**Art. 7** <sup>1</sup> The standard duration of studies for full-time students is:

- a 6 semesters for the bachelor degree course,
- b 3 semesters for the master degree course to the value of 90 ECTS points or, as the case may be, 4 semesters for the master degree course to the value of 12 ECTS points.

<sup>2</sup> Students who for no valid reasons (Art. 35 UniV) exceed a total of 8 semesters in the bachelor degree course or 5 semesters in the master degree course (value of 90 ECTS points) or,

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<sup>4</sup> BSG 436.111.1

as the case may be, 6 semesters in the master degree course (value of 120 ECTS points) shall be excluded from the respective degree course. *[Version of 06/03/2014]*

<sup>3</sup> Students who do not complete any assessments over a period of one year can be excluded from further study. Caveat: valid reasons pursuant to Article 35 UniV. The decision resides with the competent body pursuant to the Faculty Rules. *[Version of 06/03/2014]*

<sup>4</sup> In the event of valid reasons (Art. 35 UniV), the duration of studies can be extended before expiry of the standard duration of studies (para. 2) for coming semesters. Permission for extension of the standard duration of studies shall be granted at the most for two semesters. Thereafter, as the case may be, a new request for extension at the most for two semesters is to be submitted. The responsibility for managing extension requests resides with the competent body pursuant to the Faculty Rules. In the event that an extension request is granted, said body shall also set an individual timetable. Denied requests are issued in the form of an announcement open to appeal. *[Version of 06/03/2014]*

<sup>5</sup> In the event of a repetition of bachelor or master theses a respective extension shall be granted by the competent body pursuant to the Faculty Rules upon written request, if the duration of studies has been exceeded as set forth in paragraph 2.

<sup>6</sup> The tuition fee is in accordance with Article 39 UniV. *[Version of 06/03/2014]*

#### STUDENT ADVICE

**Art. 8** The students are entitled to regular study advice, which is assured by the directorates of studies of the degree courses.

#### ISSUING OF PLANS OF STUDIES, INDIVIDUAL PLANS OF STUDIES, APPENDICES

**Art. 9** <sup>1</sup> Upon request of the competent body pursuant to the Faculty Rules, the Fakultätskollegium (Faculty Council) issues the plans of studies to be approved by the University Board of Directors.

<sup>2</sup> The plans of studies are in keeping with the structures stipulated in the directives of the University Board of Directors for the subject-specific and technical implementation of the Bologna Declaration at the University of Bern of 16 November, 2004 (Bologna Directives).

<sup>3</sup> The plans of studies and their appendices are devised by the Faculty staff involved.

<sup>4</sup> Individual plans of studies can be approved by the competent body pursuant to the Faculty Rules.

#### RECOGNITION FOR EXCHANGE STUDENTS (OUTGOING)

**Art. 9a** *[Inserted on 31/07/2008]*

<sup>1</sup> Exchange students (outgoing) who complete academic attainments at another university may only have a maximum of 60 ECTS points earned externally credited to their bachelor

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degree course.

<sup>2</sup> Exchange students who complete academic attainments at another university may only have a maximum of 30 ECTS points credited to their master degree course. The master thesis may not be done externally.

<sup>3</sup> The competent body pursuant to the Faculty Rules may delegate the recognition of external academic attainments to the directorate of studies up to an upper limit of ECTS points. That limit shall be defined by the said competent body. If the limit is exceeded, a Learning Agreement is to be approved by the competent body pursuant to the Faculty Rules prior to the exchange visit.

RECOGNITION OF EXTERNAL  
ACADEMIC ATTAINMENTS  
(INCOMING)

**Art. 9b** *[Inserted on 31/07/2008]*

<sup>1</sup> The competent body pursuant to the Faculty Rules is responsible for the recognition of external academic attainments (incoming).

<sup>2</sup> The competent body pursuant to the Faculty Rules may delegate the recognition of external academic attainments to the directorate of studies up to an upper limit of ECTS points. That limit shall be defined by the said competent body.

## ***II. Core elements of the degree courses***

DEGREE COURSES

**Art. 10** The Faculty offers bachelor and master degree courses. It may also offer PhD degree courses.

ASSESSING OF ACADEMIC  
ATTAINMENTS, LAPSE OF TIME

**Art. 11** <sup>1</sup> Academic attainments are assessed according to the European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS). The weighting of individual academic attainments is expressed in ECTS points.

<sup>2</sup> One ECTS-point corresponds to an academic attainment involving an academic workload of between 25 to 30 hours.

<sup>3</sup> The number of ECTS points allocated to the individual units of assessment is defined in the plans of studies. It is not permissible to allocate a different number of ECTS points to the same units of assessment in other plans of studies.

<sup>4</sup> ECTS points can be accredited to the course of studies up to a maximum period of ten years after earning the ECTS points.

MODULES OF UNITS OF  
ASSESSMENT

**Art. 12** <sup>1</sup> Several units of assessment can be integrated into modules within the framework of degree courses.

<sup>2</sup> A module is allocated the sum of ECTS points of the constituting units of assessment.

<sup>3</sup> A module that is assessed based on one single assessment may not exceed the value of 20 ECTS points.

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<sup>4</sup> The plans of studies define how the units of assessment integrated into one module are to be assessed.

<sup>5</sup> The grade of the module, consisting of several or one assessment, must, in due consideration of the compensation rule for failed assessments as set forth in Article 22, be sufficient.

#### MINORS

##### OPTIONAL COURSES FOR OTHER DEGREE COURSES

**Art. 13** <sup>1</sup> Fields of study that offer bachelor and master degree courses can also offer minors in accordance with the structures defined in the Bologna Directives.

<sup>2</sup> The scope, content and type of assessments of a minor are in accordance with the plan of studies of the respective major. In this respect, note is to be taken of Article 40.

<sup>3</sup> Select units of assessment can be offered as optional courses with one assessment each.

<sup>4</sup> Units of assessment from modules which are assessed by way of an assessment can also be offered as optional courses.

#### ADDITIONAL ATTAINMENTS

**Art. 14** <sup>1</sup> The choice of additional units of assessment not stipulated in the plans of studies is permissible. Such shall be stated in the Diploma Supplement.

<sup>2</sup> If additional attainments or additional modules are completed with the respective assessments, this can lead to a commensurate extension of the duration of studies, which is to be treated as a valid reason pursuant to Article 7 paragraph 4.

#### SCOPE OF STUDIES

**Art. 15** <sup>1</sup> The bachelor degree course amounts to 180 ECTS points, the master degree course to 90 or 120 ECTS points.

<sup>2</sup> The plan of studies defines whether a bachelor or a master degree course is designated as a mono degree course or as a degree course with a major and with one or more minors. *[Version of 31/7/2008]*

<sup>3</sup> The plans of studies can also recognise optional courses (15 ECTS points) or faculty-external minors. The study regulations and plans of studies of the offering faculty or organisational unit are authoritative in this regard. *[Version of 31/07/2008]*

<sup>4</sup> An academic year (full-time study) in the bachelor and master degree course corresponds to an academic workload of 60 ECTS points.

#### PERSONS EMPOWERED TO CARRY OUT ASSESSMENTS

**Art. 16** <sup>1</sup> The persons empowered to carry out assessments and to supervise bachelor theses are lecturers of the Faculty in accordance with Article 49 litera a to g UniV; the persons empowered to supervise master and doctoral theses are lecturers of the Faculty in accordance with Article 49 litera a to e UniV. *[Version of 06/03/2014]*

<sup>2</sup> The competent body pursuant to the Faculty Rules can designate additional persons (admitted persons) from other faculties within the meaning of paragraph 1 to carry out assessments

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and supervise bachelor, master and doctoral theses. Furthermore, members of the Faculty can be granted permission to supervise bachelor, master and doctoral theses who do not pertain to the categories set forth in paragraph 1, provided the responsibility is exercised by an empowered person in accordance with paragraph 1.

<sup>3</sup> On request of the competent directorate of studies, the dean can permit additional persons to perform one-time, specific assessments. [Version of 31/07/2008]

### **III. Assessments**

#### GENERAL

**Art. 17** As a general rule, the awarding of ECTS points within the framework of bachelor, master and PhD degree courses as well as of minors and optional courses of the Faculty occurs on the basis of controlled academic attainments (exceptions Art. 19 para. 4).

#### FINAL EXAMINATIONS

**Art. 18** No ECTS points shall be awarded for assessments classified as final examinations of a bachelor, master or PhD degree course. They are, then, part of the bachelor, master or doctoral thesis.

#### EVALUATION OF ATTAINMENTS AND GRADING SCALE

**Art. 19** <sup>1</sup> As a rule, assessments are graded on a grading scale of 1 to 6. Assessments for which no grades are awarded are assessed as “fulfilled” (“erfüllt”) for sufficient or as “not fulfilled” (“nicht erfüllt”) for insufficient attainments. Not more than one quarter of the total sum of ECTS points of a study programme may be earned through assessments for which no grades are awarded. [Version of 06/03/2014]

<sup>2</sup> Sufficient attainments are graded as follows:

6	:	excellent,
5.5	:	very good,
5	:	good,
4.5	:	satisfactory,
4	:	sufficient/pass.

<sup>3</sup> When the grading scale is applied, the grades for insufficient attainments are 1, 1.5, 2, 2.5, 3 or 3.5.

<sup>4</sup> Units of assessment such as exercises, field courses, etc. can be accredited without examination if their completion is a prerequisite for the admission to an assessment. Their accreditation is contingent upon successfully passing the assessments.

<sup>5</sup> ECTS points of units of assessment that are integrated into one module (Art. 12) can be earned with one single module examination. [Version of 31/07/2008]

<sup>6</sup> The average of the grades from the individual assessments is calculated as the mean of these grades weighted accord-

ing to ECTS points. Details are set forth in the plans of studies.

<sup>7</sup> Grades resulting from a weighted average are subject to the following rounding policy:

Grade to be rounded in the range of			Rounded grade
5.75	...	6	6
5.25	...	< 5.75	5.5
4.75	...	< 5.25	5
4.25	...	< 4.75	4.5
4	...	< 4.25	4
<b>3.25</b>	...	<b>&lt; 4</b>	<b>3.5</b>
2.75	...	< 3.25	3
2.25	...	< 2.75	2.5
1.75	...	< 2.25	2
1.25	...	< 1.75	1.5
1	...	< 1.25	1

<sup>8</sup> Paragraph 7 applies to the overall grade (Art. 42, 52 and 63) of bachelor, master and PhD degrees.

#### CONDUCTING ASSESSMENTS

**Art. 20** <sup>1</sup> Assessments relating to units of assessment or modules must be carried out for exchange students at the latest at the end of the semester in which the corresponding unit of assessment or the corresponding module is offered. For the other students, the assessments must be offered at the latest in the following semester.

<sup>2</sup> The transition from bachelor to master must be warranted without interruption. The entitlement is lost if possible dates for assessments (including retakes) were missed. [Version 31/07/2008]

#### RETAKEING OF ASSESSMENTS

**Art. 21** <sup>1</sup> Insufficient assessments, incl. bachelor and master theses, may be retaken once. The plans of studies may provide that non-compensatable compulsory courses can be retaken twice. Sufficient assessments cannot be retaken. [Version 10/03/2016]

<sup>2</sup> The plans of studies define the modalities of the repetition of insufficient assessments.

<sup>3</sup> In the event of a retaking of an insufficient oral assessment, the candidate is entitled to request to be assessed by other examiners.

<sup>4</sup> If an insufficient assessment is retaken and failed anew, the retaken assessment shall count.

#### COMPENSATION OF INSUFFICIENT ASSESSMENTS

**Art. 22** <sup>1</sup> Insufficient assessments can be compensated if:

- a the assessments are components of a module,
- b the module grade is determined cumulatively.

<sup>2</sup> The plans of studies can

- a stipulate a maximum number of insufficient assessments

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within a module.

*b* define non-compensatable compulsory assessments,

*c* stipulate that insufficient assessments lower than a grade 3 may not be compensated [*Version 10.03.2016*]

<sup>3</sup> The plans of studies can stipulate that compensation is possible only after all of the insufficient assessments have been retaken.

ASSESSMENT  
REGISTRATION AND WITH-  
DRAWAL

**Art. 23** <sup>1</sup> The students are to register for the respective assessment within the deadline stipulated by the directorate of studies.

<sup>2</sup> Registrations can be withdrawn at the latest up to 14 days prior to the assessment without any justification. Withdrawals less than 14 days before the assessment can only be asserted with valid reasons such as namely: pregnancy, illness, an accident, student's military service or the death of a close individual. Otherwise, the assessment is considered failed with the grade 1.

<sup>3</sup> Students who, without any valid reason, remain absent from an assessment or discontinue an assessment receive the grade 1. Valid reasons for remaining absent from or discontinuing an assessment are namely: pregnancy, illness, an accident or death of a close individual. Illness and accident must be substantiated with a medical certificate; an independent medical examiner may be consulted. [*Version of 31/07/2008*]

<sup>4</sup> If need be, the persons responsible for the assessments shall take the provisional measures and inform the dean, who shall then decide on the admissibility of the absence or discontinuation.

LANGUAGE

**Art. 24** <sup>1</sup> The language of the assessment corresponds to the language of instruction: German, French or English. Caveat: Article 11 UniG.

<sup>2</sup> Should the students wish to express themselves in a language other than the language of instruction, they must state this at the time of registration for the oral assessment.

ORAL ASSESSMENTS

**Art. 25** <sup>1</sup> Oral assessments are, for instance, oral course examinations, oral module examinations and presentations as well as the doctoral examination.

<sup>2</sup> If an oral assessment is conducted by only one empowered person (Art. 16), an assessor must be present.

<sup>3</sup> For each oral assessment, it shall be assured that the course of the examination can be reconstructed retroactively.

<sup>4</sup> The duration of oral assessments in the bachelor and master degree courses is 15 to 60 minutes.

<sup>5</sup> The examiners shall inform the candidates of the result of an oral examination immediately after the examination.

## WRITTEN ASSESSMENTS

**Art. 26** <sup>1</sup> Written assessments are, for instance, written papers, multiple-choice examinations as well as written assignments.

<sup>2</sup> The duration of written assessments is 30 to 180 minutes.

<sup>3</sup> The persons responsible for the examination shall inform the Dean's Office of the results of the written assessment within the time limit of one month. [Version of 31/07/2008]

<sup>4</sup> Students who have taken a written assessment can view their own work up until, at the latest, one month after the announcement of the results at the person or, as the case may be, persons responsible for conducting the assessment.

## OTHER ASSESSMENTS

**Art. 27** Other graded assessments result in particular from internships, field courses, seminar and pro-seminar work as well as project work.

## ACADEMIC DISHONESTY AND DECLARATION

**Art. 28** <sup>1</sup> If the result of an assessment is influenced or an attempt is made to influence it through academic dishonesty, namely through the use of unauthorised auxiliary material, the assessment is considered as failed and graded with the grade 1.

<sup>2</sup> Bachelor theses, master theses and doctoral theses must contain the following declaration at the end, including the date and a handwritten signature:

*"I declare herewith that this thesis is my own work and that I have not used any sources other than those stated. I have indicated the adoption of quotations as well as thoughts taken from other authors as such in the thesis. I am aware that the Senate pursuant to Article 36 paragraph 1 litera r of the University Act of 5 September, 1996 is authorised to revoke the title awarded on the basis of this thesis."*

## FEES FOR ASSESSMENTS, DIPLOMAS AND CERTIFICATES

**Art. 29** <sup>1</sup> The fees for all assessments in the bachelor degree course amount to a total of 300 Swiss francs. Of this amount, 150 Swiss francs are to be paid at the time of entry into the degree course and 150 Swiss francs prior to receipt of the bachelor degree certificate.

<sup>2</sup> The fees for all assessments in the master degree course amount to a total of 300 Swiss francs. Of this amount, 150 Swiss francs are to be paid at the time of entry into the degree course and 150 Swiss francs prior to receipt of the master degree certificate.

<sup>3</sup> The fees for the conferral of a doctorate amount to a total of 300 Swiss francs. Of this amount, 150 Swiss francs are to be paid at the time of entry into the degree course and 150 Swiss francs prior to receipt of the doctoral certificate.

<sup>4</sup> The fee shall not be refunded in the event of a discontinuation of the studies.

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INFORMATION ABOUT  
ASSESSMENT RESULTS

**Art. 30** <sup>1</sup> The students shall be notified of the result of each assessment. [Version of 31/07/2008]

<sup>2</sup> The students shall be informed to the effect that, within a specified time limit as of receipt of that notification, an announcement of grades open to appeal of the competent body pursuant to the Faculty Rules may be requested at the Dean's Office. [Version of 31/07/2008]

<sup>3</sup> The students shall report to the Dean's Office for receipt of the degree. The Dean's Office shall check if all degree requirements have been met, shall issue the relevant certificates as well as the bachelor degree certificate, master degree certificate or the doctoral certificate and shall present them upon receipt of the fee payment. [Version of 31/07/2008]

ACCESS TO FILES, ARCHIVING  
AND DESTRUCTION OF DATA

**Art. 31** The corresponding directives of the University Board of Directors are valid for the accessing of files, archiving and destruction of data.

#### **IV. Plans of studies, directorate of studies**

CONTENT

**Art. 32** <sup>1</sup> The plans of studies define the structure of the two-tiered bachelor and master degree courses as well as potentially of the PhD degree course. Furthermore, the offered minors and optional courses for other degree courses are defined in the plans of studies.

<sup>2</sup> The plans of studies stipulate the assessments.

<sup>3</sup> The plans of studies define the prerequisites for the students' admission to assessments (incl. final examinations).

<sup>4</sup> The plans of studies define how the students are to be informed about assessments and results.

<sup>5</sup> The plans of studies can stipulate that the assessment is to relate to the courses integrated into one module.

<sup>6</sup> The plans of studies of the Faculty can provide for a final examination at the level of the bachelor, master or PhD degree course.

DIRECTORATE OF STUDIES

**Art. 33** <sup>1</sup> The directorate of studies of the respective bachelor, master and PhD degree course is approved by the Faculty Council.

<sup>2</sup> The directorate of studies is responsible for the organisation of assessments and final examinations.

<sup>3</sup> The directorate of studies can delegate the competence for the organisation of assessments to the examiners, but remains responsible.

#### **V. Bachelor degree courses**

ACCREDITATION OF

**Art. 34** <sup>1</sup> A maximum of two bachelor degrees of the *Faculty*

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COMPLETED UNITS OF ASSESSMENT

of Science can be earned with accreditation of ECTS points of an earlier equivalent degree. [Version of 31/07/2008]

<sup>2</sup> The units of assessment which are equivalent in content in the two bachelor degree courses may be credited towards the second degree at bachelor level. All units of assessment that were not part of the first bachelor degree course as well as the bachelor thesis must be newly carried out. [Version of 31/07/2008]

<sup>3</sup> The decision regarding accreditation resides with the competent body pursuant to the Faculty Rules. [Version of 31/07/2008]

FIELDS OF STUDY

**Art. 35** <sup>1</sup> The Faculty offers bachelor degree courses in the following fields of study:

- a biochemistry,
- b biology,
- c chemistry,
- d earth sciences,
- e geography,
- f computer science,
- g mathematics (incl. statistics),
- h [repealed on 06/03/2014],
- i physics (incl. astronomy).

BACHELOR THESES

**Art. 36** <sup>1</sup> Bachelor degree courses entail the writing of a bachelor thesis worth 10 ECTS points. The bachelor thesis can consist of several components. The grade is then the ECTS-weighted average of the grades of the assessments.

<sup>2</sup> The bachelor thesis is only accredited if the grade achieved is sufficient. Otherwise, a new topic is to be worked on. In such case, a request can be submitted to the competent body pursuant to the Faculty Rules for an extension of the duration of the bachelor thesis.

<sup>3</sup> The plans of studies define the nature and time frame of the bachelor thesis.

<sup>4</sup> If for valid reasons (Art. 35 UniV) the bachelor thesis cannot be completed in due time, the duration can be extended once by the supervisor or supervisors upon consultation with the competent directorate of studies. The competent body pursuant to the Faculty Rules is empowered to decide on every additional extension. [Version of 06/03/2014]

<sup>5</sup> If a candidate fails to meet the set time limit for handing in the bachelor thesis, the thesis is graded with the grade 1.

SUPERVISION

**Art. 37** The bachelor thesis shall be written under the supervision of one or more persons as defined in Article 16.

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## EVALUATION

**Art. 38** <sup>1</sup> A bachelor thesis shall be graded by the supervisor or the supervisors within four weeks after submission to the attention of the competent directorate of studies.

<sup>2</sup> Concurrently, the student shall be informed by the supervisor or the supervisors of the grade.

<sup>3</sup> Bachelor theses can be written in a group. However, the part of each participant must be clearly indicated.

<sup>4</sup> In the event that a bachelor thesis is written in a group, the part of each participant shall be graded independently.

## RETURNING, COPYRIGHT

**Art. 39** <sup>1</sup> Upon presentation of the bachelor degree certificates the associated written work shall be returned to the authors by the directorate of studies.

<sup>2</sup> The author of the bachelor thesis is the originator or, as the case may be, the co-originator in accordance with copyright law.

## FACULTY-EXTERNAL COURSE UNITS

**Art. 40** In bachelor degree courses, the plans of studies may not provide for more than 60 ECTS points to be earned through assessments at other faculties or university institutions.

## PASSING STANDARDS

**Art. 41** The bachelor degree course is passed if:

- a the weighted mean of the grades weighted according to ECTS points of the individual assessments of the bachelor degree course according to the plan of studies is at least 4.0, *[Version of 31/07/2008]*
- b the insufficient assessments have been compensated as set forth in Article 22,
- c the bachelor thesis has been awarded at least the grade 4.

## TITLE AND GRADING

**Art. 42** <sup>1</sup> Upon passing a bachelor degree course, the Faculty shall award the title of a "Bachelor of Science in ..., Universität Bern (B Sc)" as set forth in the plan of studies, with an overall grade as follows:

- |     |                   |
|-----|-------------------|
| 6   | summa cum laude   |
| 5.5 | insigni cum laude |
| 5   | magna cum laude   |
| 4.5 | cum laude         |
| 4   | rite              |

The rounding of grades shall be pursuant to Article 19 paragraph 7. *[Version of 31/07/2008]*

<sup>2</sup> A Diploma Supplement shall be issued concurrently with the bachelor degree. The Supplement lists the following elements:

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- a detailed information about the degree (such as title, mono, major, minor, name and status of the institution),
- b information about the content of the degree course,
- c further information, e.g. regarding exchange visits, additionally acquired qualifications.

## **VI. Master degree courses**

### ADMISSION

**Art. 43** <sup>1</sup> Admission to a master degree course is governed in Article 29 paragraphs 3 and 4 UniG. *[Version of 06/03/2014]*

<sup>2</sup> A prerequisite for admission to the master degree courses of the Faculty is a bachelor degree of a university institution in the relevant field of study that is no older than ten years.

<sup>3</sup> Candidates with a bachelor degree of a university institution can be admitted to the master degree course if they have earned at least 60 ECTS points in their bachelor degree course in the same field of study and if they can complete the master degree course successfully with, at the most, an additional 60 ECTS points (pre-conditions for the master degree). The competent body pursuant to the Faculty Rules can also mandate admission exams. A resulting prolongation of the duration of study shall be treated as set forth in Article 7 paragraph 4.

<sup>4</sup> As a rule, the admission to a minor worth 30 ECTS points at master level calls for a corresponding minor worth 60 ECTS points at bachelor level.

<sup>5</sup> Admission to specialised master degree courses is governed in the corresponding plans of studies. *[Version of 31/07/2008]*

### FIELDS OF STUDY

**Art. 44** *[Version of 31/07/2008]*

<sup>1</sup> The Faculty offers bachelor degree courses in the following fields of study:

- a biochemistry,
- b chemistry,
- c biology,
- d earth sciences,
- e geography,
- f computer science,
- g mathematics (incl. statistics),
- h *[repealed on 06/03/2014],*
- i physics (incl. astronomy).

<sup>2</sup> Specialised master degree courses may be offered.

### MINOR

**Art. 45** <sup>1</sup> Within the framework of a master degree course, the plans of studies can provide for a minor worth 30 ECTS points that can be earned at the Faculty or at other faculties or, as the

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case may be, at other organisational units.

<sup>2</sup> Minors at master level for other degree courses consist of academic attainments (30 ECTS points) from:

- a courses of the bachelor level or
- b courses of the master level or
- c courses from both the bachelor level and the master level.

<sup>3</sup> Admission is as set forth in Article 43 paragraph 4.

#### MASTER THESIS

**Art. 46** <sup>1</sup> A master thesis is to be written during the master degree course.

<sup>2</sup> A master thesis shall be supervised by one or more empowered persons as set forth in Article 16 and evaluated with a grade pursuant to the grading scale set forth in Article 19.

<sup>3</sup> The plans of studies define when and under which pre-conditions the master thesis can be started. The start of work is stipulated in writing by the competent directorate of studies.

<sup>4</sup> The plans of studies define the scope of the master thesis of 30, 45 or 60 ECTS points and the duration.

#### EXECUTION AND FORM OF THE MASTER THESIS

**Art. 47** <sup>1</sup> Master theses shall be written in German, French or English; exceptions can be authorised upon request of the competent body pursuant to the Faculty Rules.

<sup>2</sup> Master theses can consist of articles already submitted for publication or already published; in such cases, the articles must be summarised and annotated in an introductory text.

<sup>3</sup> Master theses can be implemented and written individually or in a group. The part of each participant must be clearly indicated.

<sup>4</sup> Master theses shall only be accredited if the achieved grade is sufficient. Otherwise a new topic is to be worked on. In such case, a request can be submitted to the competent body pursuant to the Faculty Rules for extension of the duration of the master thesis.

#### EXTENSION OF TIME LIMIT FOR THE MASTER THESIS

**Art. 48** <sup>1</sup> If for valid reasons (Art. 35 UniV) the master thesis cannot be completed within the set time limit, the duration can be extended once by the supervisor or supervisors upon consultation with the competent directorate of studies. The competent body pursuant to the Faculty Rules is empowered to decide on every additional extension. *[Version of 06/03/2014]*

<sup>2</sup> If a candidate fails to meet the time limit set for submitting the master thesis, the thesis shall be graded with the grade 1.

#### EVALUATION

**Art. 49** <sup>1</sup> A master thesis is to be submitted to the supervisor or, as the case may be, supervisors within the stipulated time limit.

<sup>2</sup> The master thesis shall be evaluated and graded within four

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weeks. In this respect, the supervisors must agree on one grade.

<sup>3</sup> Once the evaluation and grade have been ratified by the competent body pursuant to the Faculty Rules, the candidate shall be notified of the grade by the supervisor or supervisors. [Version of 31/07/2008]

<sup>4</sup> In the event that a master thesis is written in a group, the part of each participant shall be graded independently

#### RETURNING, COPYRIGHT

**Art. 50** <sup>1</sup> Upon presentation of the bachelor degree certificates the associated written work shall be returned to the authors by the directorate of studies.

<sup>2</sup> The author of the bachelor thesis is the originator or, as the case may be, the co-originator in accordance with copyright law.

#### PASSING STANDARDS

**Art. 51** The master degree course is passed if:

- a weighted mean of the grades weighted according to ECTS points of the individual assessments of the master degree course according to the plan of studies is at least 4.0, [Version of 31/07/2008]
- b the insufficient assessments have been compensated as set forth in Article 22,
- c the master thesis has been graded with at least the grade 4.

#### TITLE AND GRADING

**Art. 52** <sup>1</sup> Upon successful completion of the master degree course, the Faculty shall award the title of a “Master of Science in ..., Universität Bern (M Sc)” as set forth in the plans of studies, with an overall grade as follows:

- 6 summa cum laude
- 5.5 insigni cum laude
- 5 magna cum laude
- 4.5 cum laude
- 4 rite

The rounding of grades shall be pursuant to Article 19 paragraph 7. [Version of 31/07/2008]

<sup>2</sup> Concurrent with obtaining the master degree, a Diploma Supplement shall be issued within the meaning of Article 42 paragraph 2.

#### SPECIALISED MASTERS

**Art. 53** Potential specialised master degree courses may be defined under separate regulations.

### **VII. PhD degree courses**

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## ADMISSION

**Art. 54**<sup>1</sup> A prerequisite for admission to a PhD degree course of the Faculty or for the submission of a doctoral thesis written independently of the Faculty is:

- a a master degree of the Faculty or
- b a different academic degree recognised as being of equivalent value.

The decision as regards recognition of an equivalent academic degree resides with the competent body pursuant to the Faculty Rules.

<sup>2</sup> The plans of studies may stipulate that the admission to the PhD degree courses requires a minimum grade of 5 in the master degree.

<sup>3</sup> Admission as PhD students is granted to persons pursuant to paragraph 1, who show that they have supervision as set forth in Article 56 paragraph 3.

## SCOPE OF STUDIES, COLLABORATION AND ASSESSMENTS

**Art. 55**<sup>1</sup> The scope and duration of the PhD degree courses are stipulated in the relevant plans of studies. As a rule, PhD studies last 3 to 4 years.

<sup>2</sup> PhD degree courses can stipulate the collaboration of PhD students in courses as part of their studies.

<sup>3</sup> The plans of studies can stipulate individual assessments in the PhD degree course. These assessments are prerequisites for the admission to the doctoral examination. All assessments must be rated as sufficient. Other than that, Article 17 et seq. applies.

## DOCTORAL THESIS

**Art. 56**<sup>1</sup> The writing of the doctoral thesis constitutes the main part of the respective PhD studies.

<sup>2</sup> The doctoral thesis should provide evidence that the PhD students are capable of conducting independent research investigations.

<sup>3</sup> A doctoral thesis shall be supervised by one or more empowered persons as set forth in Article 16. If a doctoral thesis is supervised by more than one person, a responsible supervisor is to be appointed.

<sup>4</sup> Upon consultation with the PhD student, and at least one year prior to PhD completion, the supervisor or, as the case may be, the supervisors shall appoint a co-referee and communicate this to the Dean's Office accordingly.

<sup>5</sup> The Dean's Office is to be notified of PhD students at the start of the doctoral thesis.

<sup>6</sup> Scientific research work carried out independently of the Faculty can be submitted to the Dean as a doctoral thesis. The Dean shall forward the research work for evaluation to the appropriate academic field. Upon consultation with that academic field, the competent body pursuant to the Faculty Rules shall

appoint the supervision of the doctoral examination, a further examiner as well as the co-referee.

#### EXECUTION, FORM

**Art. 57** <sup>1</sup> Doctoral theses shall be written in German, French or English; exceptions are subject to permission requested by the competent body pursuant to the Faculty Rules.

<sup>2</sup> Doctoral theses can also consist of articles already submitted for publication or already published; in such case, the articles must be summarised and annotated in an introductory text.

<sup>3</sup> Doctoral theses can be implemented and written individually or in a group.

#### EVALUATION

**Art. 58** <sup>1</sup> A doctoral thesis is to be submitted to the responsible supervisor and shall be forwarded by the responsible supervisor to the co-referee as well as the other examiner without any delay.

<sup>2</sup> The responsible supervisor (in consultation with the other supervisors) and the co-referee shall evaluate the doctoral thesis within six weeks independently of one another. The grade for the doctoral thesis is set as the non-rounded arithmetic mean of the two single grades. In the event of an insufficient grade, the candidate can revise the thesis once. The evaluation and the grade shall be sent to the competent body pursuant to the Faculty Rules for ratification. *[Version of 10/03/2016]*

<sup>3</sup> In the event of a repeated insufficient grade as set forth in paragraph 2, the PhD degree studies must be discontinued.

<sup>4</sup> Upon ratification of the evaluation and grade by the competent body pursuant to the Faculty Rules, the responsible supervisor shall communicate the grade to the candidate. *[Version of 31/07/2008]*

<sup>5</sup> In the event that doctoral theses are written in a group, the part of each participant must be clearly indicated.

<sup>6</sup> In the event that a doctoral thesis consists of group work, the part of each participant shall be graded independently.

#### DOCTORAL EXAMINATION

**Art. 59** <sup>1</sup> Admission to the doctoral examination requires the following:

- a registration as a doctoral student,
- b sufficient evaluated assessments as set forth in the plan of studies,
- c a doctoral thesis evaluated as at least sufficient (ratified evaluation and grade pursuant to Art. 58 para. 4),
- d submission of the depository copies of the doctoral thesis. *[Version of 31/07/2008]*

Provided the foregoing points are met, the Dean's Office shall summon the candidate to the examination.

<sup>2</sup> As a rule, the doctoral examination consists of an open lec-

ture with a question and discussion part, which lasts between 60 to 180 minutes. Alternatively, an oral examination lasting between 60 to 180 minutes can be conducted.

EXAMINERS AND EVALUATION

**Art. 60** <sup>1</sup> The doctoral examination shall be conducted by a least two examiners as set forth in Article 16.

<sup>2</sup> One examiner shall chair the examination. She or he must be a full professor or, as the case may be, a professor of the Faculty. She or he may not concurrently be the supervisor of the doctoral thesis.

<sup>3</sup> In the event that the recruitment of a chairperson from the candidate's own faculty is not possible, a person from another faculty may be recruited to serve as chairperson pursuant to paragraph 2.

<sup>4</sup> The grade for the doctoral examination shall be the non-rounded arithmetic mean of the grades awarded by all of the examiners. *[Version of 10/03/2016]*

PASSING STANDARDS

**Art. 61** <sup>1</sup> The PhD degree course is passed if the doctoral thesis and the doctoral examination have been evaluated with a minimum grade of 4.

<sup>2</sup> The overall grade is calculated from the non-rounded grades of the doctoral thesis and the doctoral examination in accordance with the weighting stipulated in the plan of studies. The rounding mechanism is pursuant to Article 19 paragraph 7. *[Version of 10/03/2016]*

RETURNING, COPYRIGHT

**Art. 62** <sup>1</sup> Upon presentation of the doctoral certificates, the associated written work shall be returned to the authors.

<sup>2</sup> The author of a doctoral thesis is the originator or, as the case may be, the co-originator pursuant to copyright law.

TITLE AND OVERALL GRADE

**Art. 63** <sup>1</sup> Upon the successful completion of PhD studies, the Faculty shall confer the title of "PhD of Science in ..., Universität Bern" as set forth in the plans of studies.

<sup>2</sup> The doctoral certificate states the conferred doctorate degree and the title of the doctoral thesis with the overall grade as follows: *[Version of 31/07/2008]*

6 summa cum laude

5.5 insigni cum laude

5 magna cum laude

4.5 cum laude

4 rite

<sup>3</sup> The doctoral certificate shall be signed by the Rector and by the Dean.

INTERNATIONAL AGREEMENTS

**Art. 64** Special agreements at university level apply for bi-nationally supervised doctoral theses.

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### **VIII. Judicature**

PROCEEDINGS

**Art. 65** The University Act of 5 September, 1996 (UniG) and Administrative Judicature Act (Verwaltungsrechtspflege, VRPG) of 23 May, 1989 are applicable for proceedings.

APPEAL PROCEEDINGS

**Art. 66** <sup>1</sup> Appeals may be filed against announcements issued by the Faculty bodies within 30 days at the Appeal Committee (Rekurskommission).

<sup>2</sup> In the case of appeals against examination results, the plea of inadequacy is inadmissible.

### **IX. Transitional and final provisions**

**Art. 67** <sup>1</sup> Students commencing their studies at the Faculty in the winter semester of 2005/06 are subject to these regulations.

<sup>2</sup> Students who on 1 October, 2005 are at the beginning of the second academic year pursuant to the regulations governing the studies and examinations at the Faculty of Science of the University of Bern of 10 June, 1999, shall continue their studies with recognition of hitherto earned ECTS points in the major as set forth in the present regulations (bachelor degree course). Completed minors and supplementary subjects shall be credited within the framework of the bachelor degree course; should this not be possible, they shall at least be included in the Diploma Supplement as additional ECTS points.

<sup>3</sup> Students studying pursuant to the plans of studies of biochemistry and molecular biology, chemistry and molecular sciences, earth sciences and computer science of 1 September, 2004 shall, as from 1 October, 2005, be transferred to this Regulations (RSL) or, as the case may be, to joint BeNeFri regulations.

<sup>4</sup> Students other than those mentioned in paragraph 1 to 3 shall study pursuant to the regulations governing the studies and examinations at the Faculty of Science of the University of Bern of 10 June, 1999. Studies must be completed at the latest by the end of the academic year 2010/2011 (end of SS 2011); otherwise these students are transferred to the regulations at hand.

<sup>5</sup> Students who have not completed their minors and supplementary subjects at the Faculty before 1 October, 2005, shall complete these pursuant to the regulations of the respective major valid for them.

<sup>6</sup> Studies of minors worth 45 ECTS points for the secondary level S1 must be completed by the end of the summer semester 2008.

<sup>7</sup> The deadlines stipulated herein cannot be extended.

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<sup>8</sup> Titles according to former legal regulations cannot be converted into a bachelor or a master.

REPEAL OF LEGAL TEXT

**Art. 68** The following legal text is repealed:

Regulations governing the studies and examinations at the Faculty of Science (study and examination regulations Phil.-nat. Faculty, RSP99 Phil.-nat. Faculty) of 10 June, 1999.

ENTRY INTO FORCE

**Art. 69** These regulations shall enter into force upon approval by the Ministry of Education (Erziehungsdirektion) on 1 October, 2005.

Bern

On behalf of the Faculty of Science  
The Dean:

*Approved by the Ministry of Education (Erziehungsdirektion):*

Bern

The Minister of Education (Erziehungsdirektor):

### **Amendments**

#### *Entry into force*

Amendment of 31/07/2008, in force as of 01/09/2008

Amendment of 06/03/2014, in force as of 01/08/2014

Amendment of 10/03/2016, in force as of 01/08/2016

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