



This is an English translation of the original and signed “Studienplan für die Master-Studienprogramme in Soziologie und Kommunikationswissenschaft” issued in German. Only the German version is legally binding.

Study Plan for the Master's Degree Programs in Sociology and Communication

of December 11, 2025 (effective August 1, 2026)

The Faculty of Business, Economics and Social Sciences is,

based on Article 44 of the statute of the University of Bern dated June 7, 2011 (University Statute, UniSt) and on the regulation regarding courses of study and assessment in the Faculty of Business, Economics and Social Sciences dated August 22, 2024 (study regulations for the Faculty of Business, Economics and Social Sciences, [RSL WISO 24]),

issuing the following study plan:

I. General information

SCOPE

Art. 1 ¹ This study plan applies to all students that pursue a master program in Sociology and Communication at the Faculty of Business, Economics and Social Sciences (Faculty) or students who receive credits from a master program in Sociology and Communication as part of other study programs.

STUDY PROGRAMS

Art. 2 ¹ The following study programs are offered:

- a* Master in Sociology and Communication
(Mono, 90 ECTS credits),
- b* Master in Sociology and Communication
(Minor, 30 ECTS credits).

DEGREE

Art. 3 ¹ The following degree can be acquired:

- a* Master of Science in Sociology and Communication, University of Bern.

ECTS CREDITS AND LEARNING OUTCOMES

Art. 4 ¹ The number of ECTS credits and the learning outcomes for each course are defined in the electronic course catalog.

- ² Course credits are allocated based on workload as follows:
- a Lecture: 1.5 ECTS credits per semester hour (SH),
 - b Seminars: 2 to 3 ECTS credits per SH,
 - c Research practica and colloquia: 2 ECTS credits per SH,
 - d Exercises: 1.5 ECTS credits per SH,
 - e Special assignments: Assessment of subject-specific individual work; 1-4 ECTS credits depending on the workload (a maximum of 6 ECTS credits from special assignments can be credited to the study program),
 - f Research internship: 6 ECTS credits per completed month of work (at a 100% workload), min. 6 ECTS credits, max. 12 ECTS credits,
 - g Master thesis: 30 ECTS credits.

ASSESSMENTS

Art. 5 ¹ The lecturers announce the objectives, content, form and timing of the assessment before the beginning of the course.

GRADING

Art. 6 ¹ The grading of assessments is covered in Article 38 RSL WISO 24.

² The research internship is assessed as „pass“ for satisfactory performance or „fail“ for unsatisfactory performance.

RETAKE AND COMPENSATION

Art. 7 ¹ Failed assessments in compulsory elective courses and elective courses can be retaken once. Failed assessments in mandatory courses can be retaken twice. This does not apply to the master thesis.

² As a rule, the retake takes place in the next exam session or at a time agreed upon with the lecturer.

³ Failed assessments cannot be compensated.

LANGUAGE OF INSTRUCTION

Art. 8 ¹ Courses are conducted in English. Courses that must be completed as additional requirements to be accepted to the study program may be conducted in German.

MOBILITY

Art. 9 ¹ For mobility stays abroad – either with ENLIGHT partners or exchange partners worldwide – the second or third semester of the master program is designated.

ACADEMIC STUDENT ADVICE

Art. 10 ¹ Students are entitled regular academic student advice.

II. Master study programs

1. Master in sociology and communication (Mono, 90 ECTS credits)

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Art. 11 ¹ Graduates

- are able to understand, apply, and further develop theories addressing questions relevant to the social sciences.
- are able to understand and apply social science research methods to answer questions relevant to the social sciences.
- are able to conduct independent academic research in at least one overarching topic in sociology and communication (e.g., inequality and social stratification, culture and interaction, political communication).
- are able to communicate precisely in writing and orally and to present complex topics to an interdisciplinary audience.
- possess the qualifications required for further academic training (e.g., doctorate), research related work outside the university sector, and professional activities in fields that require analytical thinking, research skills, and broad knowledge of social sciences.

ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS

Art. 12 ¹ The admission requirements for the study program are governed by Articles 10 to 14 UniV. The enrolment procedure is governed by Articles 70 to 76 UniSt and Articles 57 and 58 RSL WISO 24.

² Applicants with a bachelor's degree from a Swiss university in one of the following fields of study may be admitted to the study program:

- a Communication and Media Science,
- b Political Science or
- c Sociology.

This includes the major study programs Social Sciences as well as Political Science and Public Administration at the University of Bern.

³ Knowledge and skills not acquired during the completed bachelor's program may be demanded as additional requirements up to a maximum of 60 ECTS credits. Graduates of the major study program Social Sciences at the University of Bern are admitted without additional requirements.

⁴ Applicants with a bachelor's degree from a Swiss university in another field of study (e.g., economics, psychology, geography, computer science) may be admitted provided that the necessary requirements for successful completion of the master program can be met by earning additional credits of up to 60 ECTS credits.

⁵ Applicants with a bachelor's degree from a recognized foreign university with equivalent qualifications may be admitted, provided that the necessary requirements for successful completion of the master program can be acquired by earning a maximum of 60 additional ECTS credits.

⁶ The admission of students holding a bachelor's degree from a University of Applied Sciences is governed by the corresponding university regulations.

⁷ Additional requirements in the form of conditions or stipulations for admission are defined individually by the examination board. The corresponding ECTS credits are listed separately as additional requirements in the diploma supplement. Further details are governed by Article 58 RSL WISO 24.

LANGUAGE REQUIREMENTS

Art. 13 ¹ Applicants holding a foreign educational qualification must provide proof of an English language test at level C1 of the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) with the required minimum score at time of application for admission:

Language test	Minimum score
TOEFL iBT	95
IELTS	7.0
Cambridge	C1 Advanced (CAE)

² The language test must not be more than two years old at the time of application; older tests will not be accepted.

³ An exemption from the English test may be granted to applicants who have completed their previous studies in English within a language community in which English is the majority spoken language.

⁴ Applicants holding a foreign educational qualification who are required to complete additional requirements in German must, prior to commencing their studies, provide proof of sufficient German language proficiency in accordance with the university administration's German language test regulations.

COURSES

Art. 14 ¹ The study program consists of the following components:

a Compulsory courses (54 ECTS credits):

- Theory building, development and testing (6 ECTS credits)
- Applied research methods I (6 ECTS credits)
- Applied research methods II (6 ECTS credits)
- Research topics in sociology and communication (6 ECTS credits)
- Master thesis including thesis writing seminar (30 ECTS credits)

b Compulsory elective courses (12 to 18 ECTS credits):

- At least 2 courses from the following:
 - Applied research in inequality, culture, and social relations (6 ECTS credits)
 - Applied research in political communication (6 ECTS credits)
 - Applied research in computational social science (6 ECTS credits)
- c Elective courses (18 to 24 ECTS credits):
 - Master level courses in sociology and communication at the Department of Social Sciences, including block seminars and research colloquia
 - Research internship at the Institute of Sociology or the Institute of Communication and Media Studies
 - Other courses at master or advanced bachelor level. For these courses, a learning agreement is concluded between the student and the master program coordinator.

MASTER THESIS

Art. 15 ¹ Articles 31 to 35 and 60 to 61 of RSL WISO 24 apply to the master thesis.

² The master thesis is written as a research paper and includes both a theoretical and an empirical part.

³ Registration for the master thesis and the associated seminar (thesis writing seminar) is permitted only once the following requirements have been fulfilled:

- a 24 ECTS credits from compulsory requirements (excluding the master thesis) in accordance with Article 14, paragraph 1, letter a,
- b at least 12 ECTS credits from the compulsory elective courses in accordance with Article 14, paragraph 1, letter b, and
- c at least a further 12 ECTS credits have been successfully completed.

⁴ The master thesis is written as part of the corresponding seminar (thesis writing seminar), which guides students through the entire process. The seminar includes a kick-off event and four milestone meetings in which students and lecturers discuss the following elements of the thesis:

- a Research question and introduction,
- b Theory and hypotheses,
- c Data, research design and methods, as well as
- d Results and conclusions.

⁵ The master thesis usually takes a maximum of six months to complete.

⁶ In agreement with the supervisors, the master thesis may be written as a group project by up to three students. The individual contributions must be clearly identified.

⁷ An unsatisfactory master thesis may be repeated once.

CONDITIONS FOR PASSING

Art. 16 ¹ The study program is successfully completed, if:

- a the required 90 ECTS credits from the compulsory, compulsory elective, and elective courses have been earned in accordance with Article 14,
- b the master thesis has been awarded a grade of at least 4.0,
- c no grade is below 4.0, and
- d any additional requirements have been assessed with at least a sufficient grade.

GRADING

Art. 17 ¹ Article 64 RSL WISO 24 applies to the grade for the study program and the master's degree.

2. *Master in Sociology and Communication (Minor, 30 ECTS credits)*

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Art. 18 ¹ Graduates are able to

- understand, apply, and further develop theories addressing questions relevant to the social sciences.
- understand and apply social science research methods to answer questions relevant to social science.
- examine the topics and problems of their respective major field of study from a sociological or communication science perspective.

ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS

Art. 19 ¹ Admission is open to people who meet the general admission requirements for studying at the University of Bern and Articles 57 and 58 RSL WISO 24.

² Admission requires a total of 30 ECTS credits in communication and media science, political science, or sociology. This includes the study programs Social Sciences as well as Political Science and Administration at the University of Bern.

³ Knowledge and skills not acquired during the completed bachelor study program may be demanded as additional requirements.

⁴ Additional requirements in the form of conditions or stipulations are defined individually by the examination board. The corresponding ECTS credits are listed separately as additional requirements in the diploma supplement. Further details are governed by Article 58 RSL WISO 24.

COURSES

Art. 20 ¹ The study program consists of the following components:

- a Compulsory courses (12 ECTS credits):
 - Theory building, development and testing (6 ECTS credits)
 - Applied research methods I or Applied research methods II (6 ECTS credits)
- b Compulsory elective courses (6 to 18 ECTS credits):
 - At least one course from the following:
 - Applied research in inequality, culture, and social relations (6 ECTS credits)
 - Applied research in political communication (6 ECTS credits)
 - Applied research in computational social science (6 ECTS credits)
- c Elective courses (0 to 12 ECTS credits):
 - Research topics in sociology and communication (6 ECTS credits)
 - Other master-level courses in sociology and communication at the Department of Social Sciences, including block seminars and research colloquia

CONDITIONS FOR PASSING

- Art. 21** ¹ The study program is successfully completed, if:
- a the required 30 ECTS credits have been completed in accordance with Article 20,
 - b no grade is below 4.0, and
 - c any additional requirements have been assessed with at least a sufficient grade.

GRADING

Art. 22 ¹ Article 64 RSL WISO 24 applies to the grade for the study program and the master's degree.

III. Administration of justice

COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

Art. 23 ¹ The complaints procedure is governed by RSL WISO 24.

IV. Transitory and final provisions

AMENDMENTS TO THE STUDY PLAN	Art. 24 ¹ Amendments to the study plan are subject to approval by the Executive Board of the University. This does not apply to amendments to the Annex, which are the responsibility of the Faculty Council.
TRANSITORY PROVISIONS	Art. 25 ¹ Students who begin their studies in Sociology and Communication from the fall semester 2026 onward are subject to the present study plan. ² Students who began their studies under the study plan for the master's degree program in Sociology dated September 1, 2006, shall complete their studies under the study plan dated September 1, 2006, by the end of the fall semester 2028. ³ Students pursuant to paragraph 2 may transfer to the present study plan upon application to the director of studies.
REPEAL OF DECREES	Art. 26 ¹ The study plan for the master's degree program in Sociology dated September 1, 2006, is hereby repealed.
EFFECTIVE FROM	Art. 27 ¹ This study plan will take effect on August 1, 2026.

Bern, December 11, 2025 On behalf of the Faculty of Business, Economics and Social Sciences
The Dean:

Prof. Dr. Thomas Myrach

Approved by the Executive Board of the University:

Bern, December 16, 2025 The Rector:

Prof. Dr. Virginia Richter