COVID-19 update from the GCB

We would like to make you aware that due to the governmental regulations and the rector of the University of Bern the following measures have been taken, starting 16.03.2020 until further notice:
(Detailed information: https://www.unibe.ch/coronavirus/index_ger.html)

- There will no longer be any on-site teaching. The courses will be replaced by digital solutions.
- In research, in the administrative units and in the service centers, university operations will continue as before – the GCB belongs to that category

What does that mean for the GCB?
- **Enrollment Interviews** will be continued until further notice. This is possible because we are not more than 8 people at a time in one room and we will make sure we choose a room that complies with the rules of social distancing.
- **Financial aid**: On hold due to travel restrictions until further notice.
- **GCB is closed from April 6-19, 2020**. For those planning the thesis defense, we are reachable by homeoffice on info@gcb.unibe.ch.
- **Mid-term evaluation**: Following modifications need to be implemented:
  - Mid-term exams are until **April 30th CLOSED** exams (just with your thesis committee members, supervisor, co-advisor and mentor alone). The proceedings will remain as mentioned in the regulations with the exception of not more than eight people in the room. Make sure the room is big enough for social distancing. If the examiners are not sick or under quarantine, guidelines dictate they must be present in person.
- **Thesis defense** is our absolute priority and we will do everything possible to ensure that you can go through with your thesis as planned. **BUT** Following modifications need to be implemented:
  1. PhD theses defenses are until **April 30th CLOSED** to the public and will be held just with your thesis committee members (supervisor, co-advisor, external co-referee and mentor) alone. If the thesis committee is not sick or under quarantine, guidelines dictate they must be present in person or via skype or telephone conference. The proceedings will remain as mentioned in the regulations with the exception of no public persons there (first the powerpoint presentation (just without public) for 45 minutes and the closed exam for one hour). We know that the day of your defense should be one of your best days and you should be able to celebrate with your friends and family, but in the wake of this pandemic we need to show solidarity with the people at higher risk and do EVERYTHING we can to help to prevent further spreading of the Corona virus.
2. Apéros are **NOT** allowed.

3. We ask you to send your **PowerPoint presentation for the “public defense”** to all members of your thesis committee before hand, in case one of the members will be under quarantine or sick and will have to join over skype from her/his home office. In case of technical difficulties with skype, phone conference putting your mobile phone on loudspeaker (in the worst case) should be used.

   ✔️ If you have symptoms of influenza (fever, cough, breathing difficulties) you must stay at home and cancel your thesis defense. Furthermore you have to contact your doctor by phone. Please follow the instructions of the Canton of Bern (in German) or [https://www.bag.admin.ch](https://www.bag.admin.ch). Please let us know immediately and we can help you postpone your thesis.

   **PLEASE** stay healthy and we are sorry for our soon-to graduates to have to finish under those circumstances, but we hope you understand.

   **PLEASE CHECK THE HOMEPAGE FREQUENTLY FOR FURTHER UPDATES!**
   ([www.gcb.unibe.ch](http://www.gcb.unibe.ch))

All the best your GCB Team