hes·
so
you.



My experience studying at HES-SO Valais/Wallis (Sierre)

Kirill Rakhimov

swissuniversities

> Who am I?



- Business IT student, majoring in software development, 26 y.o
- Russian with Finnish family ties
- First time in Switzerland
- Living in Sierre, Valais
- Speak Russian, English and Finnish

> My SD experience and Software development courses I'd done before I left

- Programming 1 & 2
- Front-end & back-end programming
- Data management and databases
- NoSQL Databases
- Software Requirements Analysis
- Software development project
- Mobile Programming

- Couple of Hackathons (Junction, local things etc.)
- Couple of pet projects
- Some extra courses like Machine Learning or Big Data in other universities

> My Application Process

Application process is quite straightforward. You can find most course descriptions from HES-SO's website.

You need to have health insurance. If you're an EU citizen, an EHIC card counts! (As of Spring 2026)

HES-SO doesn't offer accommodation. However, they do have a list of private potential accommodation to apply for.

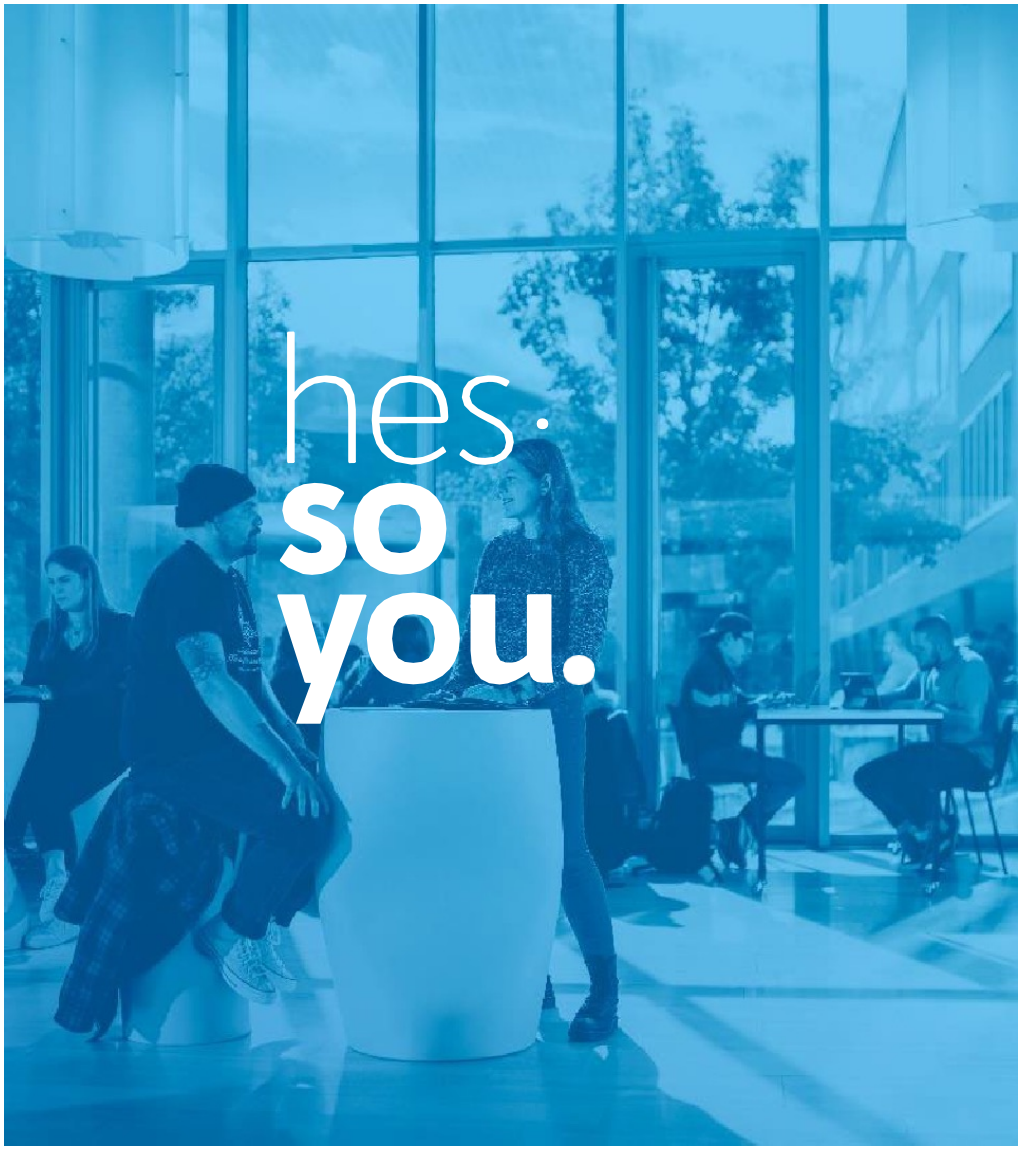
- **Motivation letter to Haaga-Helia (January)**
- **Haaga-Helia nominates students and informs HES**
- **HES response (March)**
- **Created & signed Learning Agreement (May)**
- **Sent required documents to HES (May)**
- **Received Acceptance Letter (June)**

> Here's my learning agreement

Before the mobility:

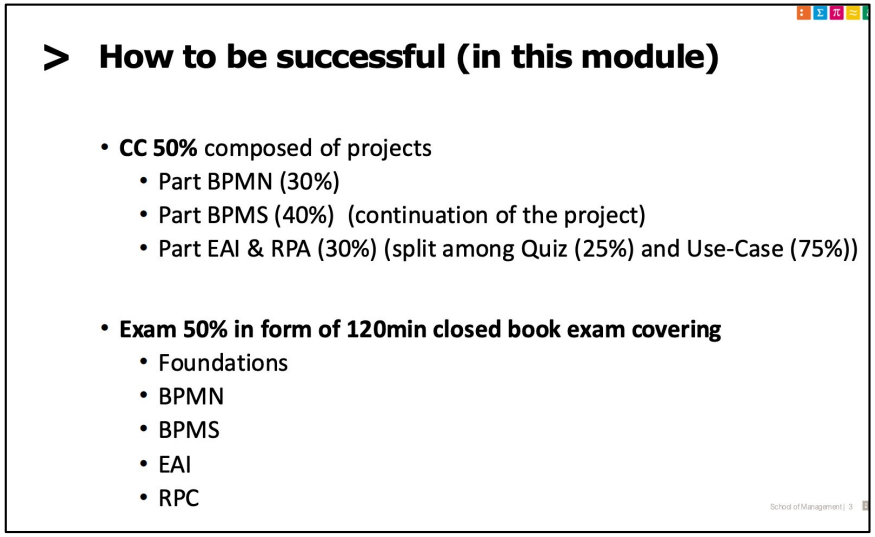
Courses to be attended (table A):

	Table A: Courses/educational components to be attended at the host institution		
Title (as indicated in the course catalogue of the host institution)		**Course code** (if available)	**Credits** (ECTS or equivalence)
Project Team		61-12	5
Strategy		61-51	5
Integration and Development Cycle		62-51	5
eHealth		64-51	5
Interactive Technologies		65-51	5
Architecture		62-41	5
Emerging Technologies		63-51	5
Object-Oriented & Intercultural Project		64-21	5
International Data Cycle Project		64-61	5
Methodological Tools		66-61	3
Bachelor Thesis		66-62	12
Total			60



> What's it like at HES-SO Valais/Wallis?

> Projects.



- **Less assignments, more projects**
- **Courses in Haaga-Helia are called modules here**
- **Grades go from 0 - 6, to pass you need > 4.0**
- **Most modules have a project, and you'll be working on 3-5 simultaneously**
- **Lessons are great, but different**

> Schedule and Road Trips

HES-SO Valais
CH-3960 Sierre

Automn Semester - Kirill Rakhimov

Schedule 2026-2027

Provisional programme – subject to change once the semester schedules have been finalized.

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
8:30 9:15			**61-12 Project team** Nicolas Debons Jean-Paul Calbimonte Stéphanie Bertherat with class I11F		**64-51 School** eHealth 1st part of semester / **65-51 Share** Interactive Tech. 2nd part of semester	
9:15 10:00						
10:20 11:05						
11:05 11:50						
11:50 12:35						
12:45 13:30			**61-51 Strategy** Raphaël Rey Xavier Barmaz Vincent Grèzes with class I15F	**62-51 Integration and development cycle** David Wannier Antoine Widmer with class I15F	**64-51 School** eHealth / **65-51 Share** Interactive Tech.	
13:30 14:15						
14:30 15:15						
15:15 16:00						
16:15 17:00					with class I15F	
17:00 17:45						
17:45 18:30						
18:45 19:30						
19:30 20:15						
20:30 21:15						

- **Modules are mostly at Bellevue (Sierre) or Technopôle (Sierre)**
- **There are shared modules which take place at other campuses (Geneva, Neuchâtel etc.)**
- **Modules are a mix of lectures & asynchronous (independent) work**
- **This is a semester of 25 ECTS**
- **Modules can last 8, 10 or 16 weeks**



> Sierre

Credit: Florence Zufferey
https://www.sierre.ch/fr/habiter-sierre-formalites-2404.html

> Sierre (or Siders)

- Located in the canton of Valais (FR) / Wallis (DE)
- Nicknamed ”cité du soleil” = “city of the sun”, 300+ days of sunlight / year
- Population: ~18 000
- Located alongside the Rhône river which continues into France after Geneva
- Altitude: 533m



Credit: OpenStreetMap, 2025

Source:
https://www.valais4you.ch/en/valais-in-a-nutshell/geography/the-abc-of-municipalities/sierre/sierre-165

> What would I have wanted to know?

- Switzerland is expensive, train tickets are very expensive.
- Sierre is really small town so be ready for non-speaking English community around. Be prepared to learn French. It's a big challenge.
- It's really warm in Sierre! If you're interested in why, check out what Foehn winds are. But in the same time, it's really cold when sun is not there.
- If you're taking 5th or 6th semester programming courses, learn what 3 tier architecture is and learn the basics of C#. Be ready for different IT stack here, you should be ready to learn fast.
- It will take time to make everything work right here.



> What is there to do outside of studies?

> Nature.

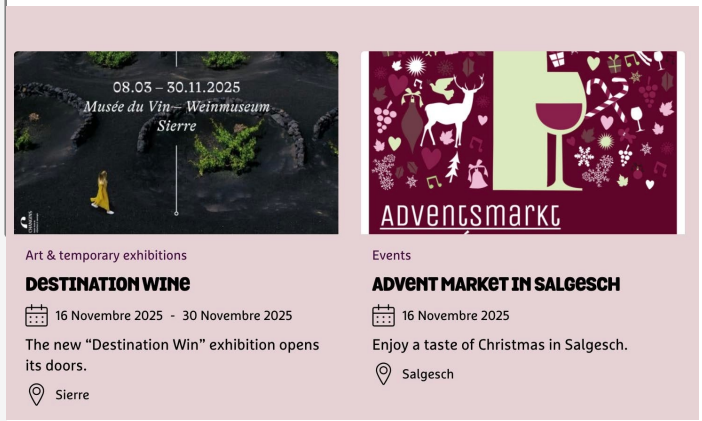


Credit: Me, Lac de Géronde, September 2025

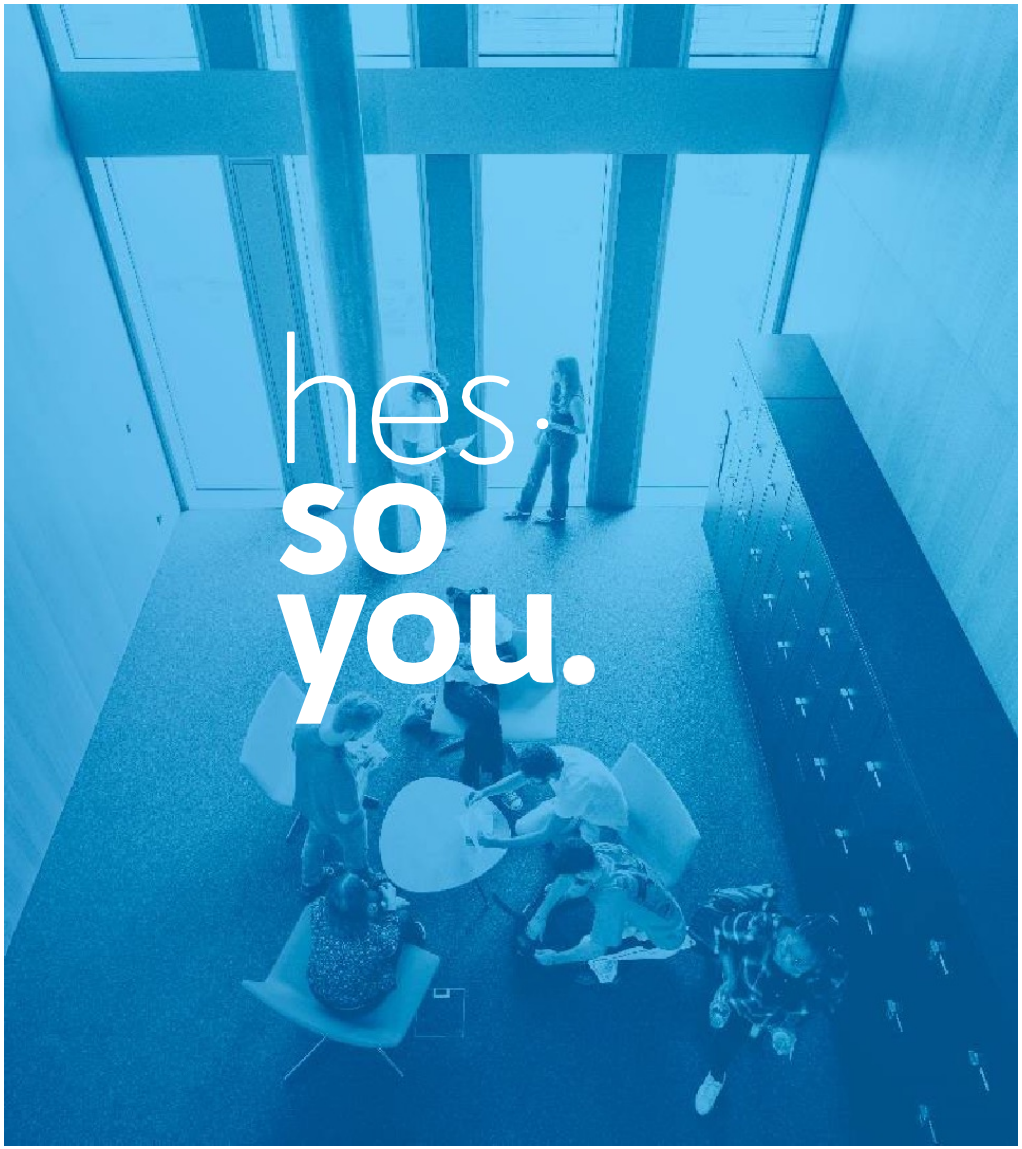
- **If you like hiking, there's a lot to explore**
  - Bisses, waterfalls, vineyards
- **You can find a lot of routes from Sierre Tourisme https://www.sierretourisme.ch/en/**

> Events.





- **The student association HEG organises events quite frequently**
- **Sierre Tourisme has an event calendar https://www.sierretourisme.ch/en/Z17281/full-calendar**



> Conclusion

Would I recommend studying at HES-SO Valais/Wallis?

Yes.

It’s great here!

The professors are great, and the modules are up to date & very interesting.

If you put in the effort, you can learn a lot.

Thanks!

If you have questions, you can reach me at

kirill.rakhimov@myy.haaga-helia.fi

HES-SO Valais-Wallis
Rue de l'Industrie 23
1950 Sion

hevs.ch