Description:
This module provides an introduction to, and foundation for, future study of Information Studies. The concepts data, information, knowledge, and the question, ‘what is information studies?’ are explored and discussed. The module has four main themes:
1. It presents a general description and overview of information in society;
2. It explores technological change and changes in communication channels in an historical perspective;
3. It describes current approaches to information management; information seeking behaviour, and information policy; and
4. It reviews current means for information delivery and exchange.
Examples from contemporary society are used to highlight core themes and areas, such as privacy and social media (Facebook etc), Google generation / digital natives and their information seeking behaviours, and the relationship between print and online media.

Learning Outcomes:
On completion of this module students should be able to:
1. Trace the historical development of information technologies
2. Review the information devices and sources in daily life.
3. Distinguish between print, electronic and digital information, and the significance of these differences.
4. Appreciate the impact of changes in communication channels.
5. Identify the professional groups and institutions that create, distribute and manage information.
6. Describe the factors that influence information seeking behaviour.
7. Understand the key information policy and ethical issues.
8. Discuss the significance of social media in information and communication practices.
9. Identify key themes and sub-areas that form part of Information Studies.
Topics:

- What is information studies?
- What is information?
- Biological and cultural significance of information and communication
- Information transfer, speech
- Invention of writing and printing
- Electronic technologies for information and communication: production, dissemination, consumption
- Information revolution: electronic and digital information
- Information behaviour and information seeking
- Information retrieval
- Information Society: post-industrial society, network society or knowledge society?
- Publishing and news: print, electronic, digital, web 2.0
- Economics of Information
- Regulatory policy - copyright, data protection, FOI, censorship
- Information policy - economic development, state services (Ireland, EU).
- Privacy issues, the surveillance society
- Information and political change
- Technology and social constructivism
- Social media: the communication revolution
- Information professions

READINGS

Core Texts:


What is Information Studies?

- Lester & Koehler. Fundamentals of Information Studies. Chapters 1, 2
What is Information?

- Lester & Koehler. *Fundamentals of Information Studies*. Chapters 1, 2
- Madden, A D (2000) A definition of information, *Aslib Proceedings*, 52 (9) 343-349. (look up this in the ejournals through the UCD Library website)

History of Information Technology

- Briggs, Asa and Peter Burke (2005) *A Social History of the Media*. Polity Press. Chapters 2, 3
- Lester & Koehler. *Fundamentals of Information Studies*. Chapter 4

Organising and Retrieving Information

- How does Google work?
  http://www.google.com/support/webmasters/bin/answer.py?answer=70897&topic=15256
  http://www.googleguide.com/
  http://www.marketingtom.com/2010/06/how-does-google-work.html
  http://www.whitehatworks.com/google_latest_algorithms.asp
Information Behaviour


Information Society

- Lester & Koehler. *Fundamentals of Information Studies*. Chapter 8

Economics of Information


Politics


Information Policy

Technology, culture and society