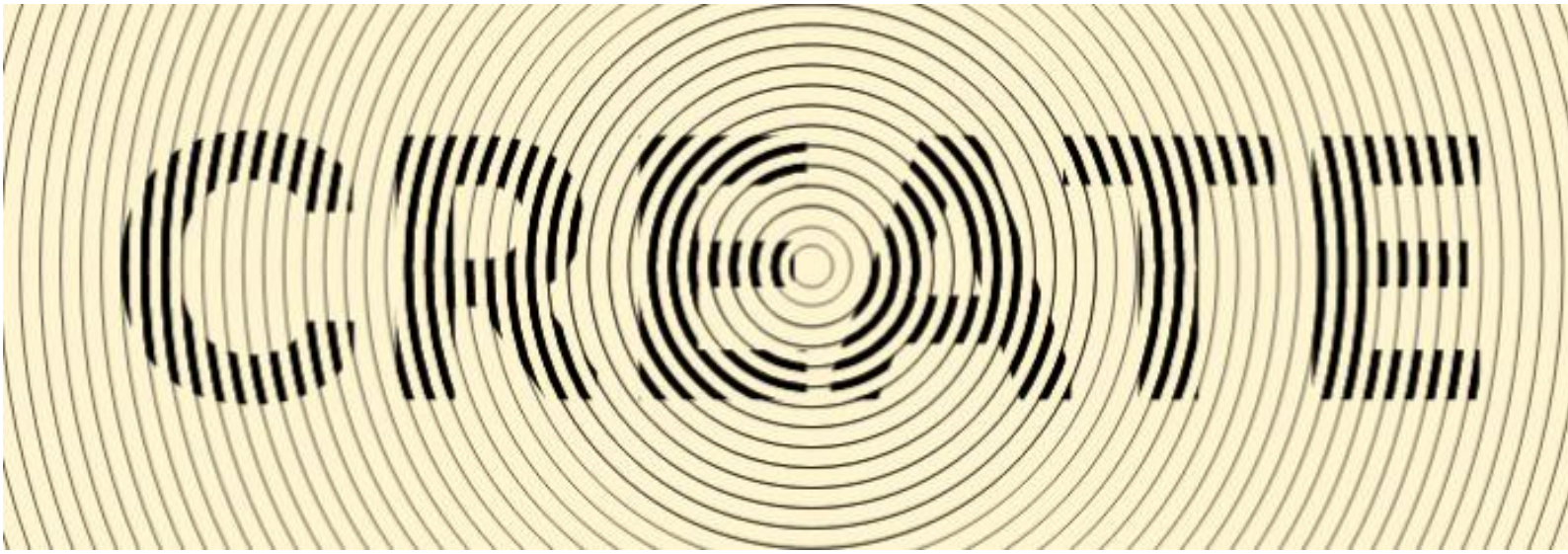
Maynooth University
National University of Ireland Maynooth

Department of Media Studies



MH109 BA Media Studies

3rd Year Student Handbook

2020-2021

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Welcome to Media Studies at Maynooth University!

Welcome to Maynooth University and the Department of Media Studies. We are delighted you have chosen to expand your understandings of all things media with us by choosing the Media Studies third year option. We are conscious of the challenges posed by the COVID 19 pandemic but are committed to making this year a safe, engaging and interesting year of learning for all of us.

This 2020-21 Handbook is your guide to the academic year and to the guidelines in place regarding your academic study and practice work. Please read it carefully and refer to it throughout the year. A copy can also be found on our department website, www.maynoothuniversity.ie/media-studies

The Handbook provides details of the modules to be completed in the Media Studies subject and lists contact information for administrative and academic staff in Media Studies. Also included are Maynooth University Staff-Student Policies, including grades and progression information and a link to the University's policy on plagiarism.

Any specific questions you have on these policies and guidelines may be addressed to any staff member during the academic year.

The Department of Media Studies is based in the Iontas Building, on the North Campus. Anne Byrne staffs our department office and Tracy O'Flaherty staffs the English and Media Studies office.

If you have questions relating to individual modules or assignments, you should first discuss these with the lecturer teaching the programme.

I wish you all the best for the coming academic year and look forward to working with you.

Dr Anne O' Brien
Head of the Department of Media Studies

Contact Details

Website: www.maynoothuniversity.ie/media-studies
Facebook: Media Studies at Maynooth University
Twitter: @MU_MediaStudies

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Administrator
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Lecturer in Media Studies, Deputy Head of Department and MA Coordinator
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Lecturer in Media Studies, Second Year Coordinator
Department of Media Studies
Iontas 0.25
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Dr Kylie Jarrett
Lecturer in Media Studies, (on sabbatical leave)
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Lecturer in Media Studies, First Year Coordinator
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Dr Jeneen Naji
Lecturer in Media Studies, Practice Coordinator
Department of Media Studies
Iontas 0.26
Tel: 01-708 3521
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Professor Maria Pramaggiore
Lecturer in Media Studies
Department of Media Studies
TBC
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Dr Stephanie Rains
Lecturer in Media Studies, Third Year, Exams and International Coordinator
Department of Media Studies
Iontas 0.22
Tel: 01-708 6980
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Dr Gavan Titley
Lecturer in Media Studies, Research and PhD Coordinator
Department of Media Studies
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Module Information

BA MEDIA STUDIES (Double Major)
30 ECTS credits in Media Studies

BA MEDIA STUDIES (Major/Minor)
40 ECTS credits in Media Studies

All students must take MD314
Students must take either MD315 and MD316 OR MD317 and MD318 OR MD319 and MD320

Semester 1

Dissertation 1 (MD315)
5 ECTS Credits

This module explores various dimensions of the academic research process through a series of workshops and seminars. Classes will explore the practical implications of methods and analytical approaches as experienced in the work of Department researchers. Students will use this module to identify the topic and primary site of their independent research project, design a viable research project and identify relevant and related secondary sources.

Lecturer: Dr Gavan Titley

Interactive Project 1 (MD317)
5 ECTS Credits

In this capstone module, students will pitch a digital media practice project based on an existing or new concept. They will be required to research, conceptualise, scope, and plan an interactive project for a specific target audience. Students will work in teams, allowing individual students to develop their own areas of capacity or interest within digital media practice. By maintaining a log of production decisions, students will also reflect upon their practice.

Lecturer: Dr Jeneen Naji & Dr Javad Khajavi

Short Film Production 1 (MD319)
5 ECTS Credits

In this module students engage in the development and production phases for a major short film project. Students will present ideas for shorts in the form of pitch presentations and treatments, they will work through script development in the pre-production stage to organize locations, cast and crew. Hands on workshops in scriptwriting, camera operations, lighting and sound will complement the key stages of short film development covered in lectures.

Lecturer: Yvonne Mc Donald

Social Media and Digital Storytelling (MD323)
5 ECTS Credits

This module introduces students to the modes through which people tell stories through social media and provides a critical lens through which to interpret the social and cultural significance of these emerging practices. It considers a variety of platforms/apps, examining how the particular ways in which the sociotechnical and economic affordances of each shape what can be said and the form that story takes. It also examines a variety of online story-telling functions – journalism, activism, dating/hook-ups, community – as well as a variety of modes through which stories are told – microblogging, selfies, user profiles, avatars. It asks questions about how the widespread use of social media shapes and reshapes our relationship with self, body, politics, and society.

Lecturer: Dr Meredith Dabek

Podcasting and 21st Century Radio (MD326)
5 ECTS Credits

This module will examine the origins, form and economic structures of podcasts. It will explore the relationship between podcasting and traditional broadcast radio, as well as discussing it as an important example of convergence culture in which radio and digital culture combine. Throughout the module, topics covered will include the development of podcasting genres, the political economy of commercial podcasting production as opposed to its incorporation into public service broadcasting, and the nature of audience relationships and interactions with podcasts.

Lecturer: Dr Stephanie Rains

Publics, Politics and Public Discourse (MD327)
5 ECTS Credits

The aim of this module is to examine the significance of digital media in the shaping of publics and public contestation, with a thematic focus on the politics of multiculturalism, racism and diversity in contemporary societies. Building on key foundational, normative ideas of the public covered in previous modules, it will cover key conceptual discussions of political publics (such as 'counter-publics', 'subaltern publics', 'anti-publics') in relation to recent theorisations of mediated publics (such as 'networked publics', 'public horizons', 'ad hoc publics', 'eventisation', 'algorithmic publics').

Lecturer: Dr Gavan Titley

Global Cinema: Ireland and the World (MD330)
5 ECTS Credits

This module examines debates and films classified under the rubric of Global Cinema. Since the 1920s, US cinema has dominated cinema screens around the world, while European cinemas have most often defined themselves in national terms and/or in relation to such art practices as neorealism, impressionism and expressionism. Cinema beyond these US- and Eurocentric models has often been ghettoized as the consumption category "world cinema." Moving beyond these categories, this module focuses on film and filmmaking practices that meaningfully address the global, examining how a medium consisting of moving images and recorded sound

engages with experiences of international mobility, border crossing, migration and population flows.

Lecturer: Dr Denis Condon

Socialisation of Technology (MD353)
5 ECTS Credits

The module will provide an historical view of the adoption of technological innovations and the processes by which technological change occur. The module will consider issues such as the dynamics of technological uptake by particular social groups, and how social uses shape and re-shape the nature of technology.

Lecturer: Dr Sarah Arnold

Semester 2

Media Industries (MD314)
5 ECTS Credits

This module explores the context, structures and dynamics of the contemporary media industries in Ireland. Through a series of lectures with industry professionals, students will develop an understanding of the requirements of various industries both for new entrants and for those developing sustainable careers. Students will also be encouraged to develop a career focus through classes lead by the Career Development Office. A final dimension is critical appraisal of media industry dynamics in seminars focusing on studies of media production, cultural work, media economics and media industry policy.

Lecturer: Dr Sarah Arnold & Dr Maria O'Brien

Dissertation 2 (MD316)
5 ECTS Credits

During this semester, students will continue to work independently on the research project identified in MD315. Under the direction of appointed supervisors, they will complete the study and develop and write a short dissertation based on this research.

Lecturer: Dr Gavan Titley

Interactive Project 2 (MD318)
5 ECTS Credits

In this capstone module, students will create and exhibit a digital media practice project based on a pre-approved proposal. They will be required to design, build, test, and exhibit an interactive project for a specific target audience. Ideally students will work in teams, allowing individual students to develop their own areas of capacity or interest within digital media practice. By maintaining a log of production decisions, students will also reflect upon their practice.

Lecturer: Dr Jeneen Naji & Dr Javad Khajavi

Short Film Production 2 (MD320)
5 ECTS Credits

In this module students engage in filming and in post-production for a short film project. Hands on workshops in directing and editing will complement the key stages of short film making and editing. Students will operate camera, lights and sound to shoot their self-initiated short script. They will collaborate in post-production to develop a rough cut and have screenings for feedback from peers, tutors and industry professionals, which will be incorporated into the final online version of the short.

Lecturer: Yvonne Mc Donald

Authorship in Film and Television (MD321)
5 ECTS Credits

This module examines key and emerging debates surrounding film and television authorship in relation to the detailed analysis of the work of individual directors, showrunners, and other crewmembers who may act as potential film authors. It explores notions of authorship articulated and developed in film, television, and other media studies. It also considers how these ideas, whether popular or scholarly, inform our understanding of the production, distribution, and exhibition of the media in question.

Lecturer: Prof Maria Pramaggiore

Digital Communication and Design (MD322)
5 ECTS Credits

This module develops students' digital communication skills through the use of multimodal theory, critical analysis and practical outputs. It combines practical and theoretical material for final-year students with the skills that can be used across a number of jobs in the creative industries related to design and marketing, but also journalism. This module builds on existing screen design skills in order to critically analyse designs in magazines, web-pages, food-packaging and any other kind of visual communication. It does this by looking at colours, typography, composition of online visuals and layouts, and understanding and mapping their communicative potential via Multimodal Analysis. This is combined with writing online content that specifically targets media audiences. This kind of writing is prevalent across blogs and marketing materials, and aims to engage users and build a following e.g. by signaling in-crowd knowledge and mimicking a conversation.

Lecturer: Dr Radek Przedpelski

Fans and Fandoms (MD324)
5 ECTS Credits

This module will introduce students to the study of media fans and fandoms in convergent media environment. Fans are often active consumers with a deep attachment to specific media texts and a desire to express their appreciation for those texts in a variety of ways. The module provides an overview of the history of fan studies and fan theories, with students examining a selection of diverse fan practices and cultures. Students will also investigate the relationships between fans and media texts, fans and media producers / creators, and fans and fan communities, with an emphasis on the participatory, interactive nature of fans as "produsers." The module will also examine current debates in fan studies, including fan activism, fandom and identity, and the potential futures of fandom.

Lecturer: TBA

Virtual Animation Environments (MD329)
5 ECTS Credits

This module offers a theoretical and practical exploration of emerging digital animation techniques that enable innovative forms of storytelling in virtual environments. Building upon contemporary animation techniques and tools, students will consider a range of philosophical and critical issues regarding immersion, moving image, reality, space, and story. Students will be

introduced to the future of virtual design and its multiple and convergent means of expression, such as virtual reality, augmented reality, parallax techniques, and interactive narratives.

Lecturer: Dr Javad Khajavi

Timetables

The official university timetable information can be accessed at
http://www.maynoothuniversity.ie/timetable

Occasionally minor changes may have to be made to timetables after they have been published – when this occurs, the online version will be amended, and all affected students will also be notified of the change by email at the earliest opportunity.

Important Information on Grading and Progression

Module completion and progression

- Students must pass all 1st year modules before proceeding to 2nd year.
- Students must submit all assessable components of each module. Students who do not may be required to repeat the module.
- In order to pass a continuous assessment module, students must pass each assessment with 40% or better. If a range of particular conditions are met, students *may* pass by compensation at 35%. For more details, see the Marks and Standards document available at the Exams Office website: https://www.maynoothuniversity.ie/exams/information-students

Marks and standards for student work

Maynooth University has a detailed Marks and Standards policy document for all undergraduates degrees. **All students should refer to this document at the earliest opportunity**.
This may be downloaded at www.maynoothuniversity.ie/exams/information-students.
However, the most important information regarding marking is summarised here:

All student work is marked according to the following classifications:

First Class Honours	70-100%
Second Class Honours Grade I	60-69%
Second Class Honours Grade II	50-59%
Third Class Honours	45-49%
Pass	40-44%

Any mark below 40% is a failing mark, although depending upon their full spread of marks in all modules, students may be able to 'pass by compensation' modules up to half the subject credit-weighting, where they have received marks of 35-39%.

For the sake of consistency, the Department of Media Studies marks in percentage grades.

The following guidelines on the awarding of specific marks to specific standards of work should be noted:

Letter Grade	Description	Representative %	Class
A++	Answer which could not be bettered	100	1:1
A+	Exceptional answer displaying unexpected insight	90	1:1
A	Undoubtedly first class, flawless answer, demonstrating originality	80	1:1
A-	Almost flawless answer demonstrating some originality	70	1:1
B+	Extremely high competence, perhaps displaying limited originality or technical flaws or minor errors	68	2:1
B	Fundamentally correct and demonstrating overall competence	65	2:1
B-	Competent performance, substantially correct answer but possibly containing minor flaws or omissions	60	2:1
C+	Awarded on the basis of the answer being somewhat better than a C but below a B-	58	2:2
C	Basically correct, answer with minor errors or one major error/omission.	55	2:2
C-	Awarded on the basis of the answer being somewhat below a C but better than a D+	50	2:2
D+	No more than adequate answer	48	3
D	Adequate answer with serious errors or omissions	45	Pass
D-	Lowest passing grade, barely deserving to pass	40	Pass
E+	The answer is inadequate and does not deserve to pass	38	Fail
E	The answer fails to address the question properly but displays some knowledge of the material.	35	Fail
E-	Fails to address the question	30	Fail
F+	Little relevant or correct material but some evidence of engagement with question	20	Fail
F	Very little relevant or correct material	10	Fail
F-	Totally irrelevant answer	0	Fail

Staff-Student Communications

Website

The Department of Media Studies website is at www.maynoothuniversity.ie/media-studies. This website includes all programme information, including links to detailed module descriptors showing module outlines and basic assessment information. The website also includes staff contact information and regular news/announcements. Please check the website on a regular basis.

You can also follow us on our Facebook page – Media Studies at Maynooth University – or on Twitter - @MU_Media Studies.

Email

All Maynooth University students are issued with an email account when they register, and retain the same account until they leave. These Maynooth University email accounts are the primary mode of communication used by the Department of Media Studies to contact students on both an individual and group basis. It is therefore your responsibility to check your email regularly, and we recommend that you do this ***at least once a day***.

If you set up your Maynooth University email to forward messages to another email account, you must still regularly access your Maynooth University account to delete old messages. If you do not do this, your account will rapidly exceed its quota, and new messages will not be delivered until it has been cleared out.

Students wishing to make contact with a member of staff should use their Maynooth University email account only to send emails – messages from other email accounts may very well be delayed or removed by the spam-filter. All emails to any member of staff in the university should be treated as professional communications. This means **completing the subject heading of the message, addressing the recipient formally, and writing the message in clear, grammatical English**. Emails sent to any recipient must also be respectful and non-abusive.

Staff members will only reply to or send email between 9am and 5pm, Mon-Friday, except in serious, exceptional circumstances. Students who request information that is available either on moodle or which has been discussed in class will not normally receive a reply.

Moodle

The Department of Media Studies uses Moodle online learning spaces for each module; they contain detailed information on module content and assessment. Once registered all students are automatically registered for Moodle access to all the modules they are taking. Please check the Moodle pages for your modules on a regular basis. Any difficulties with Moodle access should be reported to **moodlesupport@mu.ie**, not to the Department of Media Studies. Before using Moodle, please also consult its Acceptable Use Policy, available after login.

Access to Staff

Students are encouraged to consult with lecturers on academic and other matters relating to a particular module. They should contact the relevant Year Coordinator for matters concerning their work in the university and their general progress as students. Lecturers will meet with students online through Teams while health guidelines necessitate social distancing. These requests should be made by email. In the case of an urgent need to speak to a lecturer, please contact Anne Byrne in the Media Studies Office.

References

Requests for references from staff should be made by formal email, giving full details of the nature of the course or appointment for which an application is being made (in the form of web-links where possible). Referees should have details of the applicant's address and telephone number to facilitate communication.

Every request for a reference should specify whether the reference required is a letter, a reference form (printed or online), and whether printed references should be forwarded directly to the applicant or to the institution or employer concerned. In either case, a full postal address must be supplied to the referee.

As much notice as possible should be given to referees, the final date for submission of the reference being clearly specified. **At least two week's notice** before this final date is required.

It is essential that the referee is also supplied with an updated copy of the applicant's CV. It should indicate subjects and modules studied, along with results received to date, and also relevant extracurricular activities, such as voluntary work, relevant work experience, etc.

All of the above information should be supplied in one email to your proposed referee.

An 'open reference' may be of more limited value than the confidential reference relating to a specific application for a specific course or appointment.

Staff members appreciate a brief note informing them of the outcome of applications.

Social Media

You can follow us on Facebook - Media Studies at Maynooth University or on Twitter - MU_Media Studies - for news and events related to the study of media.

Department of Media Studies Staff-Student Policies

The Department of Media Studies is committed to creating a safe and productive working environment for all students, faculty and staff of Maynooth University and Kairos Communications Ltd. This Charter is intended to contribute to this aim.

1. All faculty and staff of the Department of Media Studies and Kairos Communications Ltd. undertake to treat colleagues and students with respect. It is understood that all students undertake to treat their fellow students, faculty and staff of Maynooth University and Kairos Communications Ltd. with respect.

2. **Communication:** The Department of Media Studies often sends important information to students by Maynooth University email, and through Moodle. Please check your Maynooth University email account and Moodle regularly.

3. Students must submit **all the assignments** specified for a module. A module will be regarded as incomplete unless all assignments are submitted.

4. **Students are responsible for the submission of all assignments**. In particular, the following conditions will apply to all students:
   - **Submission**: Assignments for Kairos must be placed in the submission box in the Kairos reception with an appropriate cover sheet attached and signed. Assignments are collected daily and date-stamped.
   - Submission of written assignments are through moodle and may also be requested in hard copy. If the assignment is requested in hard copy, it must be

placed in the essay submission box near the stairs in the Iontas building with a signed cover sheet (available at the shelf under the stairs) attached.

- **By email:** Where written assignments are assigned, emailed submissions will **not be accepted** unless agreed with the module coordinator in advance. All emailed assignments should contain a digital cover sheet (available on the department moodle page) with student name and the details of the module and assignment.
- **Email details**: Where module coordinators request a submission by email, the file should have the name of the student and the module code in the file name. The email subject field should name the module and the assessment.
- **Submission date**: All assignments must be received on the date on which they are due. Late assignments will be penalised at a rate of 5% per working day unless exempted for documented medical or pressing personal reasons **agreed by the** module coordinator.
- **Late submissions**: No assignment will be accepted after the end of teaching and exam periods in the semester in which such work falls due, unless exempted for documented medical or personal reasons agreed by the module coordinator.
- **Retained Copies**: The Department of Media Studies requires each student to retain an exact copy of each piece of work (both written and practice-based) submitted for assessment. Submitted work is not returned to the student, but feedback is provided. In the event of submitted work being mislaid, the student will be expected to provide a replacement copy when asked. If you store your work electronically, you must be sure to maintain a back-up copy.

6. **Plagiarism**: The Department of Media Studies has a strictly enforced policy on plagiarism. Plagiarism is regarded as a serious offence in the Department and in the University. Please read the plagiarism and exam checking policies carefully; they are available at www.maynoothuniversity.ie/policies. Students who have a specific question regarding correct referencing should always seek the advice of the relevant lecturer in advance of submitting their work.

7. **Style and referencing of submissions**: All written assignments should be submitted in Times New Roman, 12pt, 1.5 spacing, have numbered pages, a detailed cover

sheet and full references and a bibliography. Referencing should be done according to the Harvard system of referencing.

8. **Equipment procedures**: When signing out equipment from Kairos Communications Ltd., students undertake to be responsible for such equipment, and to use such equipment in a safe and responsible manner. In cases of wilful misuse or gross negligence resulting in loss or damage of equipment, such actions will be reflected in the student's continuous assessment mark. Moreover, the Department of Media Studies may refer the matter to the Disciplinary Committee of Maynooth University, which may impose a penalty up to and including withdrawal from the University.

    - **Safety:** The Department of Media Studies will undertake to ensure that all students are fully instructed in the safe and correct use of all equipment. Any student can refuse without prejudice to undertake an assignment if that student does not feel capable of making safe and competent use of the necessary equipment.

9. **Content of audio-visual material**:
    - All students will act responsibly when producing visual and audio materials for any programme. In particular, the following conditions will apply to all students: No student will deliberately produce any material that may be subject to legal proceedings (including material that is libellous, pornographic, incites hatred or is in breach of previously existing copyright).
    - Kairos Communications Ltd. reserves the right to withhold copyright on all material produced by students as part of their programme.
    - The Department of Media Studies will seek to ensure that students are aware of the legal and ethical issues relevant to media production prior to completion of the programme.

10. No provision contained herein contravenes a student's statutory rights, including such rights conferred by virtue of being enrolled as a student of Maynooth University.

11. The Department of Media Studies, acting in conjunction with Kairos Communications Ltd., undertakes to implement these policies in a reasonable manner, taking due account of any exceptional circumstances not expressly defined herein.

Addendum to contract for services between Maynooth University and Kairos Communications Ltd.

In addition to the obligations on all students of the University encoded in the *Code of Discipline for Students,* for those students undertaking courses related to the Media Studies Programmes the following may constitute a serious breach of the Code

"Malicious or reckless damage or theft of University property or any other property on the University grounds, *or any property contracted for use of the University*. Misuse of University property, *or any property contracted for use of the University,* including library materials or private material on the campus".

The words in italics indicate the amendment to the relevant clause (bullet point 7) in the *Code of Discipline.*

J. A. Walsh,
Vice-President: Innovation and Strategic Initiatives

21 September 2006

Code of Practice for Kairos Communications Ltd.

Students may access Kairos through the entrance at the car park. The code for the door will be announced in class.

Kairos is open to students from **09:00 to 20:00 Monday to Friday**. All equipment available to students can be booked in advance. Equipment can be collected and returned between **09:00 – 12:30 and 13:30 - 16:30 hrs.**

Students are responsible for the submission of all assignments. On occasion assignments may be gathered during class time onto an external drive or students may have to submit via Microsoft Teams. If in doubt please check for instructions on Moodle.

All work will be deleted from the hard drives of Kairos computers two weeks after an assignment deadline. Students are responsible for backing up their own work and must have their own external drive, formatted for MAC. The Department does not keep copies of your work so throughout the three years of your degree it is recommended that you take responsibility for keeping copies of your AV projects.

Students are encouraged to make use of their designated facilities during the allocated times (Mon- Fri, 9am-8pm or otherwise as stated). If students have any problems with any equipment or need some help with any project work, they can text for technical support from 9am-12:30pm and 1.30pm-5pm. The text number will be announced in class.

For any other help, students should contact Dr Jeneen Naji, **Email**: jeneen.naji@mu.ie

Useful Resources

Student Support Services

Managing your life at University can be a challenge.

Not only do you have to deal with the new ideas of your subject, you must also find ways to manage the workload among your other activities and keep your finances stable. Negotiating your way around the policies, procedures and processes of the institution can also be a frustrating experience as you may not know who to ask or what you need to know. It is also common for students to experience personal and emotional difficulties that affect their study. All of this is even more challenging in the context of the COVID 19 pandemic.

You are not alone in dealing with these problems. Maynooth University has an array of student services, student support services and offices that can help you manage these or any other problems you may encounter during your studies. See the list at www.maynoothuniversity.ie/current-students page of the University website to find out who can help you.

Programme Advisory Office

The Programme Advisory Office is available to advise you on any choices you might have to make related to your programme including subject choice.

The Programme Advisory Office can be contacted via

Email: programme.choices@mu.ie

Telephone: 01 474 7428

Maynooth University Library

MU Library is the portal to a vast collection of Media Studies resources that you'll need for your essays and research. The MU library homepage; has excellent information, training, materials, supports and services that will help you in your studies. The library also provides a dedicated Media Studies Subject Guide *(see Fig. 1 below)* space on their webpage; it's a great source of subject-specific material and news.

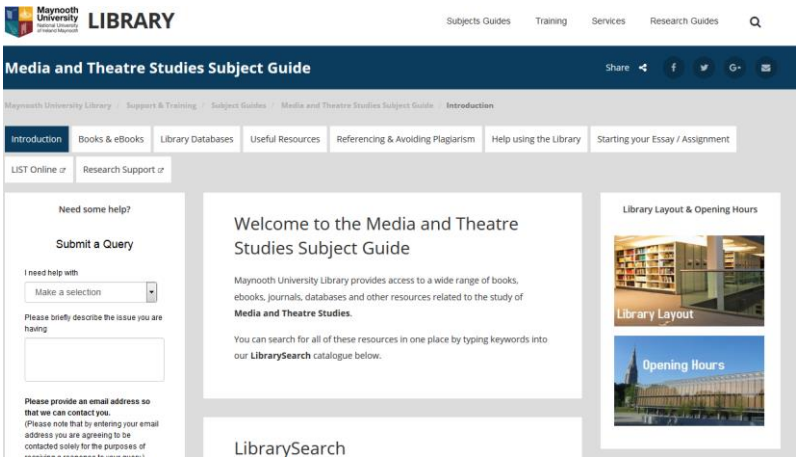

Fig 1. Media Studies subject guide online

Fig 2. The search-box, LibrarySearch, that searches all the content in MU Library

Use **LibrarySearch** *(see Fig. 2 above)* on the library homepage to discover everything MU Library holds on your subject and topics. It gives you the location and details of thousands of e-books and e-journals you can read online on your devices, as well as information on books, journal articles, and databases on your subject.
You can access the information on LibrarySearch, and e-books, e-journals and databases when you're on or off-campus. If you've any queries about finding material; just ask at the Library desk or live *"Library Chat*" box on the homepage.

Your **MyCard** (student card) entitles you to borrow material from the Library.

USEFUL LINKS AND CONTACTS:

Links:

- Library homepage: https://www.maynoothuniversity.ie/library
- Media Studies Subject Guide: http://nuim.libguides.com/mediastudies

Contact:

- Undergraduates contact: Áine Carey/Niall O'Brien: aine.carey@mu.ie /niall.obrien@mu.ie