DEPARTMENT OF SOCIOLOGY

Postgraduate Taught Master's Student Handbook

MA Societies in Transition (MAST)

MA Digital Societies (MADS)

2022-2023 V2

Head of Department: Prof. Mary Murphy

M.A. Co-ordinators: Dr. Paul Ryan and Prof. Aphra Kerr

This document is correct as of 21/09/2022

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WELCOME TO THE SOCIOLOGY DEPARTMENT AT MAYNOOTH UNIVERSITY

The staff in the Sociology Department would like to welcome you to the 2022/2023 Academic Year at Maynooth University. For some of you the MA is a continuation of your studies at Maynooth, but for those who are new to Maynooth University this handbook aims to cover some of the important information you will need to begin your postgraduate studies.

The University is providing a face to face student learning experience in 2022/2023. Lectures will mostly take place in the new Technology, Society and Innovation (TSI) building. All Sociology staff offices and the Department office are in this building.

Small group discussions, presentations, computer lab tutorials and fieldtrips are at the core of the MA experience. Additional resources will be available in moodle, our online learning system and in the library. The library is now fully open and study rooms are available to book in the library.

Moving from undergraduate to graduate education is about deepening and expanding your theoretical knowledge, research and communication skills and writing ability. Our MA programmes provide you with a supportive small group and individual learning experience, and we encourage you to find your sociological voice, debate and discuss with your class mates and lecturers and take time to read and think.

A strong taught postgraduate cohort is crucial to any department and we hope to both challenge and support you to continue developing your sociological interests, imagination, critical and practical research skills. The year ahead will no doubt be one of personal and educational challenges given the broader public health context in which we find ourselves, but we will support your study and personal career development regardless.

Please read this handbook to familiarise yourself with the Department and University guidelines for taught postgraduate work. This handbook is intended to provide you with the information you need about our two MA programmes - Societies in Transition (MAST) and Digital Societies (MADS). The two MAs have some modules in common, but others are specific to the MA you chose.

Please save the handbook where you can access it. We will also put a copy on the postgraduate pages of our website.

Department Postgraduate pages: https://www.maynoothuniversity.ie/sociology/ma-programmes

MU Postgraduate Studies : https://www.maynoothuniversity.ie/graduate-studies

Twitter: @MU_Sociology @MU_Politics

INTRODUCTION TO THE SOCIOLOGY DEPARTMENT

The Department you are about to join is an exemplar of public sociology and engagement. A quick overview of our staff's research and publishing profiles (https://www.maynoothuniversity.ie/sociology/our-research) should assure you that you will find our Department a distinctive and stimulating place within which to learn and practice sociological and political analysis.

Staff engage directly with the transformations in contemporary Irish, European and Global society and politics. They carry out research that combines theoretical concerns and critique with sustained empirical research.

There are two M.A. co-ordinators in 2022/23. If you have general MA questions or queries the co-ordinators should be able to help. If you have specific questions about a module please contact the module lecturer. In due course we will also get you to nominate an MA student representative.

(MADS) Prof. Aphra Kerr: Aphra.kerr@mu.ie [Room 2.26, TSI building]

(MAST) Dr. Paul Ryan: paul.ryan@mu.ie [Room 2.30 TSI Building}

Further inquiries can be made to the department office – Email sociology.department@mu.ie or call to Room 2.11, 2nd Floor, TSI Building during student hours. It is accessible by stairs and by lift.

Email policy: Please allow up to 3 days for a response to emails. You will not receive a response in the evenings, at weekends or during holidays. Student consultations and meetings may take place online, or face to face in our offices.

As far as possible this handbook is accurate **as of 13/09/2022**. Any substantive change will be communicated to students using MU email accounts and moodle. Please leave notifications for moodle on.

SOCIOLOGY & POLITICS @MU

OUR LEARNING COMMUNITY
KEY PRINCIPLES

Our Department is a community of teachers and learners who endeavour to learn from each other through relationships that are open respectful and engaging.

We respect others by avoiding disrupting their teaching and learning, we try to avoid talking during lectures, arriving late and/or leaving early from lectures, and other disruptive actions.

We understand that the staff of the department are concerned for the welfare of all students, for integrity, fairness and inclusiveness in our work and overall to promote learning in the ways that are judged to be most effective.

We are a diverse group of people who respect each other's varying experiences and perspectives.

We engage in active discussion and debate in an atmosphere of civility and mutual respect, in-person and online, inside and outside of the formal classroom and campus.

We respect the policies of each lecturer and tutor regarding classroom and module policies and practices, including the use of technology in the classroom.

We understand that we can bring concerns we might have to academic and administrative staff, and in particular to the Head of Department.

Maynooth University
National University
of Ireland Maynooth

E: sociology.department@mu.ie
www.maynoothuniversity.ie
@MU_Sociology   @MU__Politics

Student Involvement in the Department

An ethos of co-operation and exchange of ideas and knowledge amongst students is encouraged. Professional behaviour, including regular attendance at all timetabled sessions (in person or online) and punctual presentation of all assignments, is required.

As a postgraduate student you will be invited to specialist modules led by subject experts, regular departmental seminars and symposia featuring the work of advanced students, staff and invited speakers, and faculty seminars and workshops. You are encouraged to take advantage of all of these opportunities to advance your knowledge.

In addition to evaluating the programme at the end of the academic year, the Department normally carries out a short evaluation exercise during the first semester. This helps us to get a feel for how the class is managing and provides an opportunity to address any concerns. The Department also generally organizes an evaluation of the M.A. programme at the end of the year. In addition, we have a staff-student consultative committee in the Department on which postgraduate MA students are represented.

The Department strives to maintain good communications between staff and postgraduate students. In addition to open informal relationships, and the MA co-ordinator, communications are also maintained through

(a) The Postgraduate Liaison Committee: This committee consists of representative postgraduate students (two research postgraduate and one M.A. student) and staff (the M.A. Coordinator, the Research Postgraduate Coordinator and the Head of Department) and meets regularly to review issues relating to the postgraduate programmes.

 (b) Email and Twitter: An email list will be maintained to pass on regular announcements and other material of interest. Most announcements are posted on the Department notice board and circulated on the appropriate MU class e-mail lists. It is assumed that you will check your MU email every two to three days and provide the department with an up to date address and contact phone number. For more general news and events follow us on twitter at @MU_Sociology and @MU_Politics

Student Responsibilities in Taught Modules

Students' responsibilities include the following:

- Register and attend the required number of modules during the academic year.
- Read assigned texts in advance of classroom meetings
- Be prepared to participate in classroom discussion– you will be expected to discuss them in class
- Be prepared to work together in small groups on certain tasks and projects
- Submit all written work by the due dates.
- Meet with your thesis supervisor when appointed and follow the procedures for submission of your thesis during the summer of 2023

If you are having difficulty keeping up with your assigned work please speak with the relevant lecturer and make an appointment with the MA co-ordinator.

Meet our Academic Staff- Contact and Research Supervision Interests

Dr. Mary Benson - mary.benson@mu.ie
Cityscapes; gentrification; place; community; and visual representations. Current research focuses on urban agriculture.

Dr. Delma Byrne- Delma.Byrne@mu.ie
Research interests include social stratification in education and the labour market spanning the primary, second-level and higher education sectors as well as post-secondary education and training; transitions between education and the labour market and the evaluation of educational interventions.

Dr. Barry Cannon- Barry.Cannon@mu.ie
Research interests are on Latin American politics, with particular expertise on Peru, Venezuela and Central America, especially on issues of democratization, power relations, Left and Right politics, civil society, and development. Current research focuses on opposition politics in Venezuela; right wing politics in Latin America; and, comparisons between collective reactions to crisis in Latin America and in Ireland and Europe.

Dr. Brian Conway- Brian.Conway@mu.ie
Research interests include sociology of religion; collective memory; history of Irish sociology. Current research focuses on examining Catholic public discourses and institutional arrangements, trends and patterns in the Catholic workforce, and religious institutional responses to scandal, all in comparative perspective.

Prof. Mary P. Corcoran- Mary.Corcoran@mu.ie

Research interests include the Irish migratory experience, urban transformation and change, and public cultures. Her most recent edited book *Producing Knowledge, Reproducing Gender* (with Dr. Pauline Cullen) was published in 2020. Mary's current research interests focus on food activism, food practices and urban agriculture in the contemporary city. She is also interested in the interface between the visual arts and sociology having collaborated with visual artist Mary Burke on a number of community-engaged projects.

Prof. Colin Coulter- Colin.coulter@mu.ie
Research interests include development studies, global politics, Marxism, ethnicity and nationalism, popular culture and in particular popular music and Northern Irish politics and society.

Dr. Laurence Cox - Laurence.Cox@mu.ie

Research interests include social movement research (movement waves, alter globalization and anti-austerity movements, European social movements, movement theorising, protest policing, knowledge and learning production in social movements, activist sustainability); Buddhist Studies (Buddhism and Ireland, early western Buddhists in Asia); new religious movements; sociology of knowledge and culture (history of ideas, sociology of intellectuals, counter culture); working-class studies (community organising, oral history); social theory (western Marxism, socialist feminism); and methodology (participatory action research, community research).

Dr. Pauline Cullen- Pauline.Cullen@mu.ie

Research interests include political sociology; gender inequality, social movements; civil society and state relations; nongovernmental organisations; social policy and European Integration; coalitions between diverse constituencies; activism on social rights beyond national settings.

Prof. G. Honor Fagan- honor.fagan@mu.ie

Research interests include Human Security, Gender and Development Governance, and Social Sustainability.

Dr. Eoin Flaherty – eoin.flaherty@mu.ie

Research interests include income inequality, financialisation, famine, and environmental sociology.

Prof. Jane Gray- Jane.gray@mu.ie

Research and teaching interests include families and households, comparative-historical sociology, life history analysis. My current research focuses on: life histories and social change in twentieth century Ireland; family and community, gender, household economies and social change.

Prof. Aphra Kerr- Aphra.Kerr@mu.ie

Research and teaching interests focus on technology and media in society and digital sociology. Current research explores the political economy of data driven digital media and smart technologies in society, production and work in the global digital games industry and digital and data governance policy and practice. Recent projects have explored developments in contemporary gambling, the design of telecommunications and 5G network services and applications, and gendered practices and cultures in digital games culture.

Dr. Rebecca King Ó Riain- Rebecca.King-ORiain@mu.ie

Research and teaching interests include globalization, emotions and technology; racial/ethnic beauty pageants; critical race theory; qualitative methods; interracial marriage and multiracial people. Her current research explores the 'Globalization of Love' through qualitative research with transnational, mixed couples and their children looking at uses of digital technology to create and maintain global emotional networks.

Prof. Mary Murphy - Mary.P.Murphy@mu.ie

Research interests include the impact of globalisation on welfare states, the political mediation of social policy reform, local governance and institutional mechanisms to support social innovation, social inclusion and citizenship, gender and social welfare, commodification, conditionality and welfare to work policies.

Dr. John O'Brennan- John.OBrennan@mu.ie

Research interests include the process and politics of European Union enlargement; the EU's relationship with the western Balkans and prospective enlargement to South Eastern Europe; the dynamics of EU external relations; EU-Russian relations; constructivist theories of International Politics; and the identity dimension to European integration. I am also very interested in Ireland's experience of European integration, its relationship with the European Union and the Lisbon Treaty debate in Ireland.

Prof. Seán Ó Riain- Sean.ORiain@mu.ie
Research interests are in the sociology of work, economic sociology, comparative and global political economy and social inequality. Specific areas of interest include work organisation and workplace regimes; developmental states; the global knowledge economy; economic liberalism; changing European societies.

Dr. Paul Ryan- Paul.ryan@mu.ie
Research and teaching interests include the sociology of personal life; sexuality and the law (with a specific focus on sex work and digital sexualities), LGBTQ histories and minority health

Dr. Eamonn Slater- Eamonn.slater@mu.ie

Research interests include the structure of modernity, the heritage industry (including tourism), the social construction of landscape and the environment, visual sociology and historical sociology. All of these sociological areas are investigated with a special emphasis on Irish society.

For more information please see the individual staff pages at:
https://www.maynoothuniversity.ie/sociology/our-people

Other Academic Staff (not available for Sociology thesis supervision)

Dr. J. Clark Powers – clark.powers@mu.ie
Clark has recently been awarded a PhD in Communications Studies from Dublin City University in Ireland. His work develops and demonstrates an interdisciplinary methodology for macro-level research of large-scale social phenomena in hybrid society, with an explicit focus on pedagogy. He holds a DEA in International Relations and an MSc in Technical Communication. Between those studies, Clark worked for 10 years in Geneva in the fields of disarmament and security sector governance, primarily with the United Nations.

Department of Law

Dr. Ciara Bracken- ciara.brackenroche@mu.ie
Dr. Bracken-Roche's current research program investigates the contribution of unmanned aerial systems to the rapid expansion of security, and policing surveillance in Canada and Ireland. Her project 'Big Data Governance: The adoption of surveillance technologies by policing and security agencies' was funded by the IRC in 2020. Throughout her academic career, her ongoing research interest has been about the relationship between governance and technology, and the social implications of technocratic governmentality. Another stream of research in which Dr. Bracken-Roche contributes is methods and methodology in surveillance studies and critical criminology/ security/ sociology. Dr. Bracken is a full time member of staff in the Department of Law in Maynooth University.

Dr. Maria Murphy – Department of Law
https://www.maynoothuniversity.ie/people/maria-murphy

Department of Media

Dr. Gavan Titley – Department of Media Studies

https://www.maynoothuniversity.ie/people/gavan-titley

Dr. Kylie Jarrett - Department of Media Studies

https://www.maynoothuniversity.ie/people/kylie-jarrett

Department of Geography.

Prof. Rob Kitchin – Department of Geography & MUSSI

https://www.maynoothuniversity.ie/faculty-social-sciences/our-people/rob-kitchin

Dr. Patrick Bresnihan– Department of Geography

https://www.maynoothuniversity.ie/people/patrick-bresnihan

Dr. Alistair Fraser – Department of Geography
https://www.maynoothuniversity.ie/people/alistair-fraser

Dr. Louise Fitzgerald – Department of Geography
https://www.maynoothuniversity.ie/people/louise-fitzgerald

Meet our Professional Staff – contact information

You will probably get to know Trish, Aine and Darien well in our Department office during the year.

They know how everything works in the Sociology Department.

An email to sociology.department@mu.ie can help to sort out many practical questions.

Their office is in room 2.11 on the second floor of the TSI Building.

For key buildings on campus see the map below.
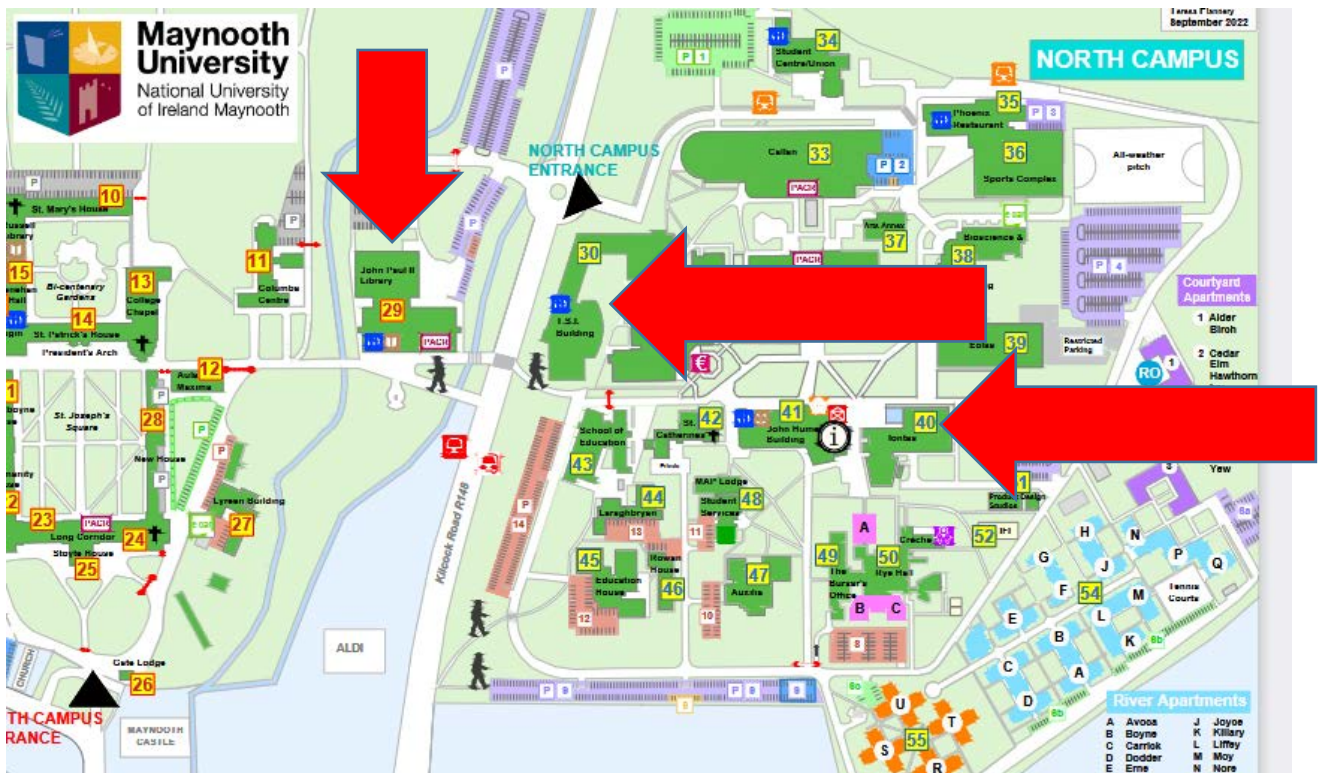
Key buildings

1. Sociology Department, Floor 2, Technology, Society and Innovation building. (No. 30)
2. Maynooth University Social Sciences Institute, Top floor, Iontas building. (No. 40).
3. Library (South campus) (No 29).

See more maps at https://www.maynoothuniversity.ie/campus-life/campus-map

MASTERS IN SOCIOLOGY (SOCIETIES IN TRANSITION) OVERVIEW

The Department of Sociology offers this one-year taught Master of Arts course in Sociology on the theme of 'Societies in Transition'. Societies are changing dramatically and facing multiple challenges - not only in terms of public health but also in relation to inequalities of multiple kinds and huge environmental challenges. How are our lives and relationships changing in the face of these challenges?

-What happens to our intimate relationships and emotional lives?
-How are our lives changing in the many forms of the family that we live in today?
-And how are relations between the generations shifting?
-How do our lives get shaped into overall patterns of inequality and how do those inequalities shape our lives and futures?
-How are these relationships intertwined with our relations with nature and environmental change?

All of these issues are coming to the fore more than ever, but they also reflect longstanding concerns. Learn from some of Ireland's leading experts in each of these areas, drawing on the best research internationally and from within the department.

The programme stimulates students to think about the role that sociological analysis can play in helping to advance solutions to the current social and economic challenges. Consequently, it is attractive for those seeking to go into policy-making, journalism, market research, development work, and community action. It also provides an excellent platform for those interested in progressing to Ph.D. studies.

Aims
MA students will:

- Develop their ability to apply theories of social change to empirical investigation
- Enhance their ability to communicate effectively through regular class presentations and discussions.
- Receive a grounding in sociological methods and will be supported in using these methods in their dissertation work.
- Gain an enhanced understanding of the economic, social, political and cultural dimensions of Irish society in comparative perspective.
- Be provided with a comprehensive overview of the processes giving rise to social change and the challenges faced by societies in transition.

Course Structure

The table below provides an overview of the compulsory and elective modules in semesters 1 (S1) and 2 (S2) in this programme. You will need to take 60 taught credits and the thesis is worth a further 30 for a total of 90 credits.

Both Semesters:

SO691 Thesis seminar (Semester 1 & 2) Compulsory

Semester 1:

SO644, SO648, SO691(Compulsory)

Choose 1 from SO618, SO639, SO629A, SO646, LW698

Semester 2:

SO647, SO691, (Compulsory)

Choose 2 from SO619, SO638, GY619, GY629

Timetable

Semester 1 Compulsory Modules	ECT	Times / Venue
SO644 Data Studio Prof. Jane Gray	10	Thurs 9am – 11am MUSSI Conference Room Iontas 2nd Floor
SO648 Quantitative Methods & Data Visualization Dr. Eoin Flaherty	10	Thurs 12am – 2pm TSI239
SO691 Career Scaffolding & Research Project Workshop Thesis preparatory seminars Prof. Mary Murphy	(S1 & 2)	Fri 11am-1pm TSI035 Dates: 7th & 14th Oct 4th Nov 2nd & 16th Dec
Semester 1 Elective Modules **(Please choose 1 elective)**	**ECT**	**Time / Venue**
SO618 Intimate Lives Dr. Paul Ryan	10	Thurs 3pm –5pm Room 2.12, TSI 2nd floor
SO639 Understanding Digital Societies Prof. Aphra Kerr	10	Fri 9am-11am TSI041 ALE

SO629A Nature and Society Dr. Eamonn Slater	10	Fri 2pm-4pm TSI125 ALE
SO646 Digital Social Science Methods Dr. Clark Powers	10	Fri 2pm – 4pm Room 2.12, TSI 2nd floor
LW689 An Introduction to Surveillance Society Dr. Ciara Bracken Roche	10	Thurs 1-3pm SE 236 (School of Education)

Semester 2 Compulsory Modules	**ECT**	**Time / Venue**
SO647 Innovation in Qualitative Social Research Prof. Honor Fagan	10	Thurs 9am - 11am MUSSI Conference Room Iontas 2nd Floor
SO691 Career Scaffolding & Research Project Workshop Thesis preparatory seminars Prof. Mary Murphy	(S1 & 2)	Fri 11am - 1pm Room 2.12 TSI Dates: 3rd Feb 3rd & 31st Mar 7th Apr 5th May

Semester 2 Electives Modules (Please choose 2 electives)	ECT	Time / Venue
SO619 Families, Generations and Societies Prof. Jane Gray	10	Thurs 11am - 1pm MUSSI Conference Room Iontas 2nd Floor
SO638 Youth Transitions in European Societies Dr. Delma Byrne	10	Thurs 2pm – 4pm Room 2.12 TSI, 2nd floor
GY619 Public Engagement: Research & Practice Dr. Louise Fitzgerald	10	Fri 2pm - 4pm Cart Lab, Rhetoric House (with day-long field trip in week 8)
GY629 Spatial Justice: Geography of Social and Environmental Change Dr. Patrick Bresnihan	10	Thurs 2pm – 4pm Cart Lab, Rhetoric House (with day-long field trip in week 8)

MODULES MAST (2022-2023) FIRST SEMESTER COMPULSORY

SO644 Data Studio (Prof. Jane Gray/Soc)

This module aims to provide both a practical and theoretical introduction to the challenges and opportunities associated with managing, accessing, analysing and disseminating social science research data. It will equip the student to be familiar with the mechanisms for accessing data through archives, libraries, websites and to adjudicate the relative worth of sources. We will adopt a 'hands-on' collaborative approach to acquiring practical experience of all stages of the research data lifecycle and to learning about good practices in managing and sharing social science research data in all its variety. Where practicable, students will be invited to participant in Living Lab research being conducted by colleagues and external partners. For instance, Professor Aphra Kerr will be doing living lab research via the ADAPT Centre, and we will explore links to the Mi:Lab - https://www.maynoothuniversity.ie/mi-lab We will also connect to other Living Lab work ongoing at the University. The module will develop an understanding of national and international policies on sharing research data, and why this is important for research transparency and integrity, and for addressing important social questions. We will familiarize ourselves with social science research data infrastructures, and learn how to find, access and use existing data.

SO691 Career Scaffolding & Research Project Workshop (Prof. Mary Murphy/Soc)

The purpose of this module is to prepare you to write your Master's thesis proposal and to acquaint you with the process involved in writing your master's thesis, the "capstone" of your MA degree. Our workshops are designed to meet to work on the research trajectory: identifying a topic, choosing a research question, identifying appropriate evidence, connecting to theories, collecting data, making sense of the data, and writing up the thesis. The first semester is mainly devoted to preparing the thesis proposal and the second semester to refining the proposal through feedback.

On successful completion of the module, students should be able to:

- Identify and develop sociologically and empirically significant and interesting research questions
- Develop, assess and apply a research design appropriate to a research question
- Review and assess the relevant research literature in specific sub-fields
- Carry out primary research to a high standard, even if on a small scale
- Analyse evidence within a sociological framework
- Integrate theory, methods and data to analyse a problem, process or phenomenon sociologically

SO648 Quantitative Methods & Data Visualization (Dr. Eoin Flaherty/Soc)

Quantitative research methods have a long and important history in the social sciences. Sociologists, criminologists, geographers, educationalists and political scientists amongst a range of others in the Social

Sciences need to collect or make use of existing numeric data, make sense of it and use it to answer questions relevant to social and public debate. This course is aimed at postgraduate students in Sociology and cognate disciplines, and will use examples from a range of disciplines. The aims of this module are to: enhance the quantitative capacity of postgraduate students by learning how to develop and apply basic, intermediate and advanced quantitative research skills that are responsive to the needs of social science subject areas and disciplines; raise awareness of the secondary data sources (cross-sectional and longitudinal) that are available to postgraduate students as well as new data collection; boost the skills training social science students receive to enhance their employment and research prospects.

On successful completion of the module, students should be:

- Familiar with the logic of quantitative research design, analysis, and interpretation from a sociological perspective.
- Able to source, prepare, and manage secondary data.
- Competent with basic descriptive statistics.
- Able to graph and visually present summaries of quantitative data.
- Competent with multivariate statistical techniques including multiple regression

MODULES MAST (2022-2023) FIRST SEMESTER OPTIONAL (CHOOSE ONE)

SO646 Digital Social Science Methods (Dr. Clark Powers)

The aim of this module is to explore methods for social inquiry in contexts where offline and online social worlds are increasingly intertwined, and often inseparable. The module will address the opportunities and challenges of 1) adapting, or *digitising,* existing qualitative and quantitative methods for the sociological study of digital and digitally mediated contexts, and of 2) applying new methodological techniques that these contexts themselves can provide. These discussions will engage with the practical and ethical issues that arise in these emerging contexts, while remaining grounded in a perspective that is reflexive, critical and creative.

On successful completion of the module, students should be able to:
•Develop an understanding of digital sociology and good practice in digitised and digital social research methods
•Understand the strengths and limitations of established and emergent methods and tools in digital and digitally mediated contexts
•Understand the ethical challenges and legal constraints of social inquiry in digital contexts
•Develop an ability to select and properly apply specific methodological approaches for applied social inquiry
•Develop an understanding of new approaches and good practice in digital data presentation and archiving

SO639 Understanding Digital Societies (Prof Aphra Kerr/Soc)

Digital technologies provide an infrastructure for work, socialising, education, active citizenship, protest and surveillance. What are the dominant imaginaries and expectations surrounding digital infrastructures and what kinds of values inform their development?. Are these technologies neutral? What are the social, political, economic and cultural implications of this? How do experiences in Ireland compare internationally? This module will provide a broad theoretical and conceptual grounding to help students to understand these questions and to critically examine the emergence and ongoing development of digital infrastructures and related institutions, political economies and cultures.

Students will be introduced to contemporary social theories of digital societies including surveillance/data/platform capitalism, datafication, and the attention economy. These will be explored through topics including: digital work, identities online, games and play online, digital inequalities, online risks and safety, digital literacy and digital policies. We will also consider the environmental impacts of the digital.

On successful completion of the module, students should be able to:

- Understand the major social theories used to understand digital societies and digital infrastructures
- Evaluate empirical data on access and use of digital technologies
- Critically assess the influence of digital infrastructures in different domains
- Understand digital policy issues at a national and international level
- Develop an independent perspective on digital technologies and their relationship to social practices and social change

SO629A Nature & Society (Dr. Eamonn Slater/Soc)

The challenge facing the world today is that we as its residents appear to be destroying it as a living planet. Without exaggeration we are engaged with the ultimate fight for survival of all forms of life that inhabit this earth. The strategies to be adopted will depend upon how we conceptualize our relationship to Nature. This course examines in detail one such conceptualization which was developed by Marx and Engels. They proposed that any concrete entity within contemporary society can be determined by two or more forms simultaneously – a natural (ecological) and social forms. And these forms are themselves a manifestation of processes which metabolize with each other within the conditions of everyday life. With this ontological insight the course problematic moves on to explore a methodology that can analyze such complex relationships – a dialectical framework. And this dialectical form of conceptualizing is explicated from Marx and Engel's work on Ireland and specifically its colonial relationship with Britain. Recently, John Bellamy Foster suggests why we need to examine Marx and Engels on Ireland:

> A useful reference point, with which to gain a historical and theoretical perspective on the present planetary emergency, is Marx and Engels's analysis of conditions in colonial Ireland from the 1850s to the 1870s. (Foster, 2019).

LW689 An introduction to Surveillance Society

This module introduces students to the area of surveillance studies, an exciting and interdisciplinary field of study that engages with the ways in which surveillance shapes, permeates, and impacts everyday life. Some topics that shape the study of surveillance centre on the management of everyday life, as well as spaces of exception, such as: gender, personal data, privacy, race, security, and terrorism. Students will engage with foundational theories, key concepts, and empirical studies of surveillance.

Almost every aspect of contemporary life is permeated by multiple forms of surveillance. These might be connected to security practices: such as airport security screening, to CCTV cameras, to ID cards. However, surveillance is increasingly occurring outside of the realm of security: from all kinds of data collection and online monitoring, to consumer loyalty programs, to fitness tracking devices. Many individuals willingly participate in surveillance, sacrificing their data and privacy for the seductive aspects of a given program or system. However, the constant collection of personal information has a profound effect on our social experiences, and our private lives. However, these systems form an information infrastructure that underpins and structures contemporary societies. Most profoundly, perhaps, is that while surveillance touches everyone, its hand is heaviest in communities already disadvantaged by their poverty, race, religion, ethnicity, and immigration status. Technology and stealth allow government watchers to remain unobtrusive when they wish to be so, but their blunter tools—stop-and-frisk, suspicion-less search, recruitment of snitches, compulsory questioning on intimate subjects—are conspicuous in the lives of those least empowered to object. From the mundane to the extraordinary, to domestic policing and international security, this course will cover the breadth of surveillance topics while providing foundational theory building in this interdisciplinary area.

MODULES MAST (2022-2023) SECOND SEMESTER COMPULSORY

SO647 Innovation in Qualitative Social Research (Prof Honor Fagan/Soc)

This module course offers students a theoretical and practical guide to qualitative research methods. It locates these methods within an interpretivist tradition which explores the meanings with which people attach to human behaviour. It facilitates a greater understanding of the subject's perspective. The course explores human behaviour through methods such as participant observation, interviewing and focus groups and also how social action is represented through visual methods. The course offers practical experience to students in these methods but also focuses on the analysis and writing of qualitative research.

On successful completion of the module, students should be able to:

- Understand the epistemological foundations behind qualitative research
- Assess which qualitative methods are the most appropriate to answer particular research questions
- Demonstrate a knowledge of various qualitative research methods
- Understand how qualitative data is analysed and written up

SO691 Career Scaffolding & Research Project Workshop (Prof Mary Murphy/Soc)

As before in semester one

MODULES MAST SECOND SEMESTER OPTIONAL (CHOOSE TWO)

SO618 Intimate Lives (Dr. Paul Ryan/Soc)

This module will introduce students to key concepts in the study of intimacy, drawing from leading theorists like Castells, Richardson and Illouz. It will focus on the democratisation of intimacy and new claims for intimate and sexual citizenship. It will show how intimacy becomes embodied within specific spaces exploring family relationships, digital intimacy and the political economy of intimacy using the examples of care work, emotional labour and sex work.

On successful completion of the module, students should be able to:

- Show competency in a range of theoretical contributions exploring intimacy and intimate citizenship.
- Understand relationships in the practice of intimacy in public and private domains
- Understand how intimacy is embodied within practices of everyday life

SO619 Families, Generations and Societies (Prof. Jane Gray/Soc)

This module addresses advanced topics in changing family relationships across generations. Topics may include: demographic change and inter-generational relationships within families; changing generations and family life practices; how gender, sexualities, class and ethnicity intersect with changing relationships across the generations; consequences for social policy; Irish, European and global perspectives.

 On successful completion of the module, students should be able to:

- Understand how global demographic change affects the structure of inter-generational relationships
- Critically analyse theories and empirical findings on inter-generational family life
- Demonstrate an awareness and conceptual understanding of diversity and inequality in inter-generational relationships
- Demonstrate familiarity with the policy implications of changing inter-generational relationships

SO638 Youth Transitions in European Societies (Dr. Delma Byrne/Soc)

This module addresses advanced topics in the study of how young people's transitions are structured through institutions such as the education system, the labour market and social policy in the various branches of the welfare state, as well the role of social change such as migration, globalisation, digitalisation and automation, structural reform and activation in the aftermath of the economic and financial crisis and the Covid-19 pandemic. These developments have and continue to shape young people's transitions through European societies.

Topics may include: theorising youth, the school-to-work transition and transition regimes, theories of risk and social stratification, patterns and processes of social mobility; the mobilisation of resources of various

kinds by people at different times and places in their lives; the structuring of outcomes and opportunities by public and private institutions; how gender, sexualities, class and race/ethnicity intersect with the institutions structuring lives; consequences for societal development and social inequalities; Irish, European and global perspectives.

GY619: Public Engagement & Spatial Justice (Dr. Louise Fitzgerald/Geog)

In this module, students work on a 'real world' project as developed with a partner through such platforms as: action research; participatory action research; community service learning; advocacy for a civil society group; an internship with a community group, NGO, artistic institution or collaborative; participating and contributing to an activist, community or creative group or collaborative; or another public engagement framework. Students will work either in teams or individually on a project. This module will involve collaborative work with the chosen partner.

Upon completion of the module, students will: become familiar with applying key theoretical concepts and research methods in Geography to real world projects; become familiar with the theoretical and practice-based debates with respect to publicly engaged research approaches, such as participatory and action research design; develop a reflexive understanding of one's own critical lens on the world through this application and by working with local experts and other professionals; gain experience in applied empirical research and creative and/or activist practices on a project defined by a partner working on geographically relevant topics; and gain real life experience working with people outside of academic which provides a range of transferrable skills relevant for student post-MA careers.

(MA students in Sociology are required to gain instructor consent before registering for this module.)

GY629 Spatial Justice. Geographies of Social & Environmental Change (Dr. Patrick Bresnihan / Geog)

This module will critically explore: theories of spatial justice, the underlying spatial processes involved in social and environmental change; mechanisms for achieving and resisting these; and the possibilities of alternative futures. It will introduce students to theories of procedural, distributional, social, spatial, place-based, land, and environmental justice. Students will investigate the underlying spatial processes of injustice leading to current social, economic, and environmental crises, including legacies of colonialism, capitalism, and nature/society dualisms. It examines how spatial justice, and social and environmental change are conceptualised, manifest, fail and are resisted with a focus on power geometries and difference. The relationships between geographical knowledges, practices and material changes of activism will be examined. Class-based discussions and guest talks will examine the political, ethical, and aesthetic challenges of fostering hopeful politics in a time of environmental crisis, reactionary politics, and deepening global inequalities, with a particular focus on Irish-based artistic and activist interventions. Students will be introduced to ethical and responsible forms of research, and learn about the significance of local knowledges, including the voices of those affected by forms of injustice.

MASTERS IN SOCIOLOGY (DIGITAL SOCIETIES) OVERVIEW

The M.A. Sociology (Digital Societies) is new in 2022 and introduces students to the latest theories and research to understand contemporary digital societies. It is no longer possible to talk about offline and online social life as if they were separate domains, they are increasingly enmeshed in all areas of our lives, from education and work to leisure and politics. The focus of this MA course is on the digital in all its manifestations, from digital media to embedded digital technologies in our homes, cities, health care and personal lives.

While issues of access to digital networks remain for many, social science research has identified a range of emerging digital inequalities that also need to be tackled. We are witnessing new forms of digital and data inequalities, issues related to online safety, and issues related to information quality and disinformation. These digital inequalities are marked by gender, race, ethnicity and class. They are marked by new patterns of inclusion and exclusion with implications for how societies evolve. The digital also offers new possibilities for societal transformation, for connecting people and spaces in new ways, for rethinking how we do research.

This MA will equip graduates with the conceptual tools to understand digital societies and the advanced research skills to document, visualise, present and communicate your research findings. You will receive training and time to bring your quantitative, qualitative and digital research methods skills to a more advanced level, including time in computer labs and our data studio module using primary and secondary data. An important aspect of this advanced training is to interrogate the ethical challenges raised by conducting social science research in the digital age – when data appears to be available everywhere.

Small group discussions, presentations, computer lab workshops and fieldtrips are at the core of the MA experience. Students will have opportunities to work on funded research projects and to engage in co-developing projects with our partners which include community and activist groups, public sector organisations, local councils, and companies.

If you enjoyed your first experiences of conducting research in your undergraduate and want to improve your research skills. If you would like to learn how to conduct social science research and learn from, and with, top international researchers. And if you are concerned with social and digital inequalities and want to find solutions to these challenges. Then this is the MA for you.

Aims
This one-year programme offers:
(1) a critical sociological examination of digital technologies;
(2) knowledge of the latest research that engages with the social, political, cultural and legal aspects of digital technologies;
(3) advanced research skills, including professional and ethical data management.
(4) Experience applying advanced research skills in a thesis project
(5) enhanced communication skills through regular class presentations and discussions

The Department of Sociology at Maynooth has strong expertise and a proven research track record in studies of new media and technology in everyday life, the sociology of work (e.g. software and digital media work), sustainable communities, active citizenship, and in data infrastructures and research methods. We are also committed to public sociology and working to bring sociological perspectives to bear on contemporary social issues. This includes digital and communications policy and governance.

This M.A. also offers optional modules which draw upon relevant expertise in the Departments of Law, Geography and Media Studies. In these options students will be in classes shared with students from other Departments and will encounter perspectives from other disciplines.

There is a demand for digitally literate graduates who understand the social, cultural, political, legal and business aspects of networked cities, organisations and individuals. This M.A. prepares students to work in academic and non-academic research positions. Graduates will be able to develop, execute and report on research projects for a range of public and private sector employers. It also prepares you to work in public policy roles and in roles which require people to work in teams.

Course Structure

The table below provides an overview of the compulsory and elective modules in semesters 1 (S1) and 2 (S2) in this programme.

You will need to take 60 taught credits and the thesis is worth a further 30 for a total of 90 credits.

Normally most of the MA SO modules take place in the Auxilia Seminar Room.

Both Semesters: SO691 (Semester 1 & 2) Compulsory

Semester 1:   SO639 and SO646 (Compulsory)

Choose 1 from 4: SO644, SO648, LW689 or AN676/AN662G

Semester 2:

Choose 3 from 6: SO647, MD632, MD635, NIR606, LW685, AN693

Timetable

Semester 1 Compulsory Modules	ECT	Time / Venue
SO639 Understanding Digital Societies Prof. Aphra Kerr	10	Fri 9am-11am TSI041 ALE
SO646 Digital Social Science Methods Dr. Clark Powers	10	Fri 2pm – 4pm, Room 2.12, TSI 2nd floor
SO691 Career Scaffolding & Research Project Workshop Thesis preparatory seminars Prof. Mary Murphy	S 1 & 2	Fri 11am-1pm TSI035 (2nd floor) Dates: 7th & 14th Oct 4th Nov 2nd & 16th Dec
Semester 1 Elective Modules **(Please choose one elective)**	**ECT**	**Time / Venue**
SO644 Data Studio Prof. Jane Gray	10	Thurs 9am – 11am MUSSI Conference Room Iontas 2nd Floor
LW689 An Introduction to the Surveillance Society Dr. Ciara Bracken-Roche	10	Thurs 1-3pm SE 236 (School of Education)

SO648 Quantitative Methods & Data Visualization Dr. Eoin Flaherty	10	Thurs 12pm – 2pm TSI239
AN676 Ethnographic Practice Prof. David Prendergast **(Must take AN662G in January if you take this)**	5	Thurs 10am – 12pm RW 1.20 Seminar Room (Every 2nd week)
AN662G Ethnography Winter School Dr. Chandana Mathur **(Must have taken AN676 in term 1)**	5	January 2023

Semester 2 Compulsory Modules	ECT	Time / Venue
SO691 Career Scaffolding & Research Project Workshop Thesis preparatory seminars Prof. Mary Murphy	S 2	Fri 11am - 1pm Room 2.12 TSI Dates: 3rd Feb 3rd & 31st Mar 7th Apr & 5 May
Semester 2 - Electives Modules **(Please choose 3 electives)**	**ECT**	**Time / Venue**
SO647 Innovation in Qualitative Social Research Prof. Honor Fagan	10	Thurs 9am - 11am MUSSI Conference Room Iontas 2nd Floor
MD632 Media Publics: Digital media, public discourse and political formations Dr. Gavan Titley	10	Wed 10am – 12pm
MD635 Media Theory Dr. Kylie Jarrett	10	Wed 4pm – 6pm
NIR606 Critical Data Studies TBC	10	TBC

LW685 Information Technology Law TBC	10	TBC
AN693 Anthropology of Digital Media Dr. Pauline Garvey		Mon 11am – 1pm RW 1.20 Seminar Room

MODULES MADS (2020-2021) FIRST SEMESTER COMPULSORY MODULES

SO639 Understanding Digital Societies (Prof Aphra Kerr/Soc)

Digital technologies provide an infrastructure for work, socialising, education, active citizenship, protest and surveillance. What are the dominant imaginaries and expectations surrounding digital infrastructures and what kinds of values inform their development?. Are these technologies neutral? What are the social, political, economic and cultural implications of this? How do experiences in Ireland compare internationally? This module will provide a broad theoretical and conceptual grounding to help students to understand these questions and to critically examine the emergence and ongoing development of digital infrastructures and related institutions, political economies and cultures.

Students will be introduced to contemporary social theories of digital societies including surveillance/data/platform capitalism, datafication, and the attention economy. These will be explored through topics including: digital work, identities online, games and play online, digital inequalities, online risks and safety, digital literacy and digital policies. We will also consider the environmental impacts of the digital.

On successful completion of the module, students should be able to:

- Understand the major social theories used to understand digital societies and digital infrastructures
- Evaluate empirical data on access and use of digital technologies
- Critically assess the influence of digital infrastructures in different domains
- Understand digital policy issues at a national and international level
- Develop an independent perspective on digital technologies and their relationship to social practices and social change

SO646 Digital Social Science Methods (Dr. Clark Powers/Soc)

The aim of this module is to explore methods for social inquiry in contexts where offline and online social worlds are increasingly intertwined, and often inseparable. The module will address the opportunities and challenges of 1) adapting, or *digitising,* existing qualitative and quantitative methods for the sociological study of digital and digitally mediated contexts, and of 2) applying new methodological techniques that these contexts themselves can provide. These discussions will engage with the practical and ethical issues that arise in these emerging contexts, while remaining grounded in a perspective that is reflexive, critical and creative.

On successful completion of the module, students should be able to:
•   Develop an understanding of digital sociology and good practice in digitised and digital social research methods
•   Understand the strengths and limitations of established and emergent methods and tools in digital and digitally mediated contexts
•   Understand the ethical challenges and legal constraints of social inquiry in digital contexts
•   Develop an ability to select and properly apply specific methodological approaches for applied social inquiry
•   Develop an understanding of new approaches and good practice in digital data presentation and archiving

SO691 Career Scaffolding & Research Project Workshop (Semester 2 Prof. Mary Murphy /Soc)

Students will be offered a choice of a methods focused thesis or work- based engaged research project with partner organisation (20,000 words max). The Department has already experimented with such partnership arrangements. Project Live, an initiative begun in 2020, enabled staff members and postgraduate students to team up with civil society organisations to solve problems through applied research. We will build on our learning from this initiative to extend opportunities to postgraduate students to engage in "real world" research. We intend to adapt elements of the VITAE Researcher Development Framework into the new programme with a focus on preparing work-ready graduates.

Students will be enrolled in a workshop series throughout Semester 1 and 2 to support:

· The conceptualisation and management of the thesis/work-based project

· Student researcher self-development and professional career development

· Masterclass/guest lecture inputs and mentoring sessions delivered by employers and alumni.

MODULES MADS FIRST SEMESTER OPTIONAL MODULES - CHOOSE ONE

SO644 Data Studio (Prof. Jane Gray/Soc)

This module aims to provide both a practical and theoretical introduction to the challenges and opportunities associated with managing, accessing, analysing and disseminating social science research data. It will equip the student to be familiar with the mechanisms for accessing data through archives, libraries, websites and to adjudicate the relative worth of sources. We will adopt a 'hands-on' collaborative approach to acquiring practical experience of all stages of the research data lifecycle and to learning about good practices in managing and sharing social science research data in all its variety. Where practicable, students will be invited to participant in Living Lab research being conducted by colleagues and external partners. For instance, Professor Aphra Kerr will be doing living lab research via the ADAPT Centre, and we will explore links to the Mi:Lab - https://www.maynoothuniversity.ie/mi-lab We will also connect to other Living Lab work ongoing at the University. The module will develop an understanding of national and international policies on sharing research data, and why this is important for research transparency and integrity, and for addressing important social questions. We will familiarize ourselves with social science research data infrastructures, and learn how to find, access and use existing data.

SO648 Quantitative Methods & Data Visualization (Dr. Eoin Flaherty/Soc)

Quantitative analysis is one of a wide menu of approaches to social science research. This module introduces you to the fundamentals of quantitative data analysis, with a particular emphasis on visualisation, interpretation, and critical appraisal. Working with real-world data, and with few assumptions of prior knowledge, it will equip students with a range of techniques to perform independent analyses, present your results intuitively, and ultimately design your own theoretically informed studies. The course will involve working with cross-sectional, longitudinal, and a mix of micro and macro-data, enabling study patterns of social change over space and time, whilst gently exposing students to the practice of multivariate data analysis.

On successful completion of the module, students should be able to:

- Conceptualise and understand different approaches to measurement of quantitative data
- Know and understand different options for data visualisation and presentation
- Generate, analyze and critique quantitative research
- Work with logics of statistical modelling
- Operationalise regression-based approaches

LW689 An Introduction to the Surveillance Society - Dr Ciara Bracken-Roche (Law/Criminology)

This module introduces students to the area of surveillance studies, an exciting and interdisciplinary field of study that engages with the ways in which surveillance shapes, permeates, and impacts everyday life. Some topics that shape the study of surveillance centre on the management of everyday life, as well as spaces of exception, such as: gender, personal data, privacy, race, security, and terrorism. Students will engage with foundational theories, key concepts, and empirical studies of surveillance.

Almost every aspect of contemporary life is permeated by multiple forms of surveillance. These might be connected to security practices: such as airport security screening, to CCTV cameras, to ID cards. However, surveillance is increasingly occurring outside of the realm of security: from all kinds of data collection and online monitoring, to consumer loyalty programs, to fitness tracking devices. Many individuals willingly participate in surveillance, sacrificing their data and privacy for the seductive aspects of a given program or system. However, the constant collection of personal information has a profound effect on our social experiences, and our private lives. However, these systems form an information infrastructure that underpins and structures contemporary societies. Most profoundly, perhaps, is that while surveillance touches everyone, its hand is heaviest in communities already disadvantaged by their poverty, race, religion, ethnicity, and immigration status. Technology and stealth allow government watchers to remain unobtrusive when they wish to be so, but their blunter tools—stop-and-frisk, suspicion-less search, recruitment of snitches, compulsory questioning on intimate subjects—are conspicuous in the lives of those least empowered to object. From the mundane to the extraordinary, to domestic policing and international security, this course will cover the breadth of surveillance topics while providing foundational theory building in this interdisciplinary area.

MODULES MADS (2020-2021) SECOND SEMESTER OPTIONAL – CHOOSE THREE

SO647 Innovation in Qualitative Social Research (Prof Honor Fagan /Soc)

This course offers students a theoretical and practical guide to a broad range of innovative qualitative research methods. It locates these methods within an interpretivist tradition, which explores the meanings people attach to human behaviour and the subject's perspective. The course explores human behaviour through methods such as participant observation, interviewing and focus groups, discourse analysis and visual methods. The course offers practical experience to students in these methods as well as on analysis and writing of qualitative research. Students should be able to understand the epistemological foundations behind qualitative research, assess which qualitative methods are the most appropriate to answer particular research questions, demonstrate a knowledge of various qualitative research methods, demonstrate a competence in MAXQDA and understand how qualitative data is generated, analysed and written up.

On successful completion of the module, students should be able to:

- Identify and to work within Interpretive and phenomenological approaches
- Execute formal, comparative, mixed and interdisciplinary methodologies
- Utilise qualitative secondary analysis software incorporating Big Data approaches
- Extract data from qualitative interviews and focus groups and from other textual and narrative sources
- Work with two different coding programmes and use the software to do analysis
- Assess and utilise a variety of qualitative research strategies including ethnography and Participatory Action Research.

NIR606 Critical Data Studies (TBC /Geog/MUSSI)

There is a long history of governments, businesses, science and citizens producing and utilising data in order to monitor, regulate, profit from, and make sense of the world. In general, data are taken at face value. This module, however, will critically interrogate the nature of data, how they are being produced, organised, analysed and employed, and how best to make sense of them and the work they do. In other words, it will employ a more philosophical approach to data.

The course will provide:
(1) a detailed overview of big data, open data and data infrastructures;
(2) an introduction to thinking conceptually about data, data infrastructures, data analytics and data markets;
(3) a critical discussion of the technical shortcomings and the social, political and ethical consequences of the data revolution;
(4) an analysis of the implications of the data revolution to academic, business and government practices.

Upon completion of the module, students should be able to:
(1) have a thorough understanding of the nature of data and different types of data;
(2) be familiar with key philosophical debates concerning how to make sense of data;

(3) have a detailed knowledge of how big and open data are being used in context;
(4) be able to apply a critically reflexive analysis to datasets.

MD632 Media Publics: Digital Media, Public Discourse & Political Formations (Dr. Gavan Titley/Media)

Publics are produced by the circulation of discourse. Politics, in a digital age, is in part shaped by the expansive production of discourse, in and through emergent and contingent public formations. This has the benefit of broadening the range of 'voices' and actors in public circulation, though this by no means fundamentally re-shapes communicative power relations. At the same time, the dramatic increase in the extent and intensity of media content raises questions for the categories and concepts used to conceptualise 'the public', and publics.

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, gender and class in contemporary societies. Building on key foundational, normative ideas of the public it will cover key conceptual discussions of political publics (such as 'counter-publics', 'subaltern publics', 'anti-publics') in relation to more recent theorisations of mediated publics (such as 'networked publics', 'public horizons', 'ad hoc publics', 'eventisation', 'algorithmic publics').

Upon successful completion of this module, a student will be able to:

- Identify and discuss key dimensions of the concept of the public in historical and contemporary terms;
- Apply theoretical concepts related to digital media publics to key examples and case studies;
- Recognise and understand the relevance of mediated publics to the analysis of contemporary politics, with a particular emphasis on racism, gender and class;
- Demonstrate advanced, independent research skills in relation to contemporary media research.

MD635 Media Theory - Dr. Kylie Jarrett (Media)

This module presents key theoretical concepts, approaches, and research questions to enable students to develop a thorough understanding of the field's conceptual underpinnings as well as to inform research undertaken for MA dissertation and PhD thesis projects.

Through weekly seminars and a conference-paper in-class presentation that form the basis for a final essay, students explore a range of media theories from humanities and social sciences, engaging with their historical and scholarly contexts. Exploring and critiquing central arguments and critical debates in the field, students develop a repertoire of theoretical frames for media studies inquiry.

On successful completion of the module, students should be able to:

- Demonstrate familiarity with the central arguments and historical and scholarly contexts of a range of media studies theories from humanities and social sciences.

- Synthesise, appraise, and/or critique theoretical frameworks from humanities and social sciences.
- Apply media studies theories appropriately and effectively to specific research questions, including those relevant to MA dissertations and PhD theses.
- Engage in effective scholarly argument and debate, both orally and in written formats.

LW647 Information Privacy Law (Lecturer TBC/Law)

Throughout history, the protection of privacy has faced an ongoing challenge to keep pace with developments in technology. Never has this challenge been more apparent than in the current digital age where technological innovation is constant and the accumulation of electronic information is massive. Accordingly, appreciation of the technological context is an essential aspect of this course.

The growth of the internet has led to a certain globalisation of privacy issues that poses both opportunities and threats for the protection of privacy. With the lack of jurisdictional boundaries online, internet companies can be compelled to comply with local privacy and data protection regulations worldwide. Differences in regional understandings of privacy remain however, and the study of different approaches to the protection of privacy can enable better understanding of privacy and its role in society.

Several different fields of law are relevant to the issue of privacy and suitable topics have been selected to explore how privacy operates in these distinct contexts.

Topics to be studied include:
(1) The foundations and history of the right to privacy: US, UK, Irish, and European approaches
(2) Data Protection and the global reach of privacy laws
(3) Developments in technology: a comparison of US and European approaches
(4) Government surveillance
(5) Privacy and the Press
(6) Social networks and privacy
(7) Access to Information Law

Questions of policy are central to the course and students are encouraged to consider the political, economic, and technological issues that inevitably surround the regulation of privacy issues. Critical engagement with the debate taking place in both the academic literature and the general press will be encouraged through assigned readings.

Any aspect of this module may be changed in any given academic year, subject to the discretion of the module lecturer.

RESPONSIBILITIES IN TAUGHT MODULES & SUBMISSION PROCEDURES FOR STUDENTS

Students' responsibilities include the following:

- ✓ Attend the full range of modules provided during the academic year.
- ✓ Read assigned texts in advance of classroom meetings
- ✓ Be prepared to participate in classroom discussion
- ✓ Be prepared to work together on certain tasks and projects
- ✓ Submit all written work by the due dates.
- ✓ Regularly check your university email and moodle sites.

If you are having difficulty keeping up with your assigned work please speak with the relevant lecturer and make an appointment with the semester coordinator immediately.

YOUR MA YEAR

Classes will run from Monday the 19th of September, 2022 to Friday, 5th May 2023, inclusive

The thesis must be submitted by July 28th, 2023 at 12 am.

Students are expected to work full-time on their thesis from the end of the teaching period until the submission date although you will have carried out significant work on the thesis before then.

Continuous assessment work deadlines have been staggered to enable you to work at a steady pace throughout the academic year. Work on the thesis during the year is supported through the teaching year in a special seminar designed to help you develop your research topic and methodology. You will write a thesis on a topic of your choosing, agreed with your supervisor. Please note that you must pass both the coursework/module component and the thesis component of the programme in order to successfully complete the M.A.

During the reading weeks and the inter-semester break period postgraduate students are expected to read widely in the subject area, prepare their assignments and work on the thesis. Some extra classes/seminars may be scheduled in those weeks.

2022-2023 key Semester Dates

Ser the full university academic timetable at https://www.maynoothuniversity.ie/registrar/key-term-dates

Semester 1

Graduate Studies will hold a Taught Postgraduate Induction and Welcome on Wednesday, September 14, 2022 - 10:00 to 13:00 in the TSI Building.

 14th of September Department of Sociology Taught Masters Induction and Q&A 2-4pm

19th Sept Week 1 lectures begin across the campus. [all students]

7th October: Change of module deadline for all continuing students

31 October – 4th November : Study/reading week

16th December: Last day of Semester 1

19th December –30th December: Christmas Vacation (students)

Semester 2

**Normally final continuous assessment deadlines from semester 1 are in January.

23rd -27th January: Inter-semester break

30st January: Resumption of classes for semester 2

13th – 17th March: Study week

7th of April (Good Friday): University closed.

10th –14th April: Easter vacation

17th April: Resumption of classes

1st May: Bank Holiday. University Closed.

2rd -5th May: Last week of lectures for Semester 2

** Normally continuous assessment deadlines for semester 2 are in May and students will then move to concentrate on their thesis project and meeting with their supervisor.

30th **June: Staff no longer available to supervise thesis.**

31th July: Submission of theses by 12pm – End of programme

Virtual Learning and Teaching Environments [Moodle & MS Teams]

Readings and course materials are placed on **moodle**, the university's virtual learning environment.

 Moodle has its own internal forums which are often used for module announcements by lecturers. See https://moodle.maynoothuniversity.ie/login/index.php

Please begin to familiarise yourself with Moodle if you have not used it before. There is online support through a help section within moodle and through email support. The library also offers introductory sessions.

Many of our modules use online submission through moodle as well as online grading and feedback in moodle.

Further information on our blended learning approaches can be found on the Sociology website at https://www.maynoothuniversity.ie/sociology/blendedlearninghub

https://www.maynoothuniversity.ie/sites/default/files/assets/document/8 Hacks_0.pdf

Assessment

Each course is assessed on the basis of the completion of one or more assignments. Requirements for each course are determined by the lecturer.

The following summarizes the grade-related criteria that professors and instructors will use to guide the marking of coursework (essays, reports, presentations and exams). These broad guidelines should be read in conjunction with any specific advice on assessment that may be provided by the module leader(s).

Written assignments:
The overall criteria used to arrive at the mark reflect the ability of students to:

- ✓ Respond to a specific question
- ✓ Think independently
- ✓ Structure an argument
- ✓ Support an argument with reference to different literature and examples
- ✓ Evaluate different kinds of evidence
- ✓ Undertake independent study of the topic in question
- ✓ Communicate effectively in writing
- ✓ Produce a well-presented, well-written piece of work

Oral presentations:
The overall criteria used to arrive at the mark reflect the ability of students to:

- ✓ Structure an oral presentation
- ✓ Compile suitable material
- ✓ Communicate effectively
- ✓ Deliver a balanced and complete presentation within a time limit
- ✓ Design and use visual aids
- ✓ Undertake independent study of the topic in question
- ✓ Respond to questions (when appropriate)

Class	Mark range	Grade-related criteria for written work
First class honours	80+	Outstanding answer based on extensive reading that demonstrates an impressive ability to understand theoretical literature and to make connections between that literature and appropriate examples Exceptional insights and originality in the use of evidence Very well written with no grammatical or other errors Contains material of publishable quality, as a whole or in part, as a journal paper, and is worthy of retaining for reference
First class honours	70-79	Excellent answer based on extensive reading and a clear understanding of theoretical debates Original or insightful answer drawing on own observations and critical treatment of literature Very well written with no grammatical or other errors Contains material that is potentially of publishable quality, in part, as a journal paper, and/or is worthy of retaining for reference
Second class honours - Grade I	60-69	Very good answer that shows a thorough understanding of arguments, contributions and context, with pertinent use of relevant reading and examples Well-organized, clearly expressed, direct response to the question/topic Evidence of good analytical skills and reflection of wider reading Does not display the outstanding ability, critical insight and/or originality characterizing the award of first class honours
Second class honours - Grade II	50-59	Competent treatment of ideas and concepts from classes and set reading Little evidence of independent critical assessment Evidence of good effort and reasonably solid argument, but little spark or critical insight
Pass	40-49	Shows a basic understanding of the question/topic and of the broader subject area Little evidence of detailed knowledge or reading is partial and selective Contains mistakes, misunderstanding and/or irrelevant material Poor organization, poor expression and an uncritical approach
Fail	0-39	At worst, nothing of relevance in answer to the questions/topic At best, not a direct response to the question/topic, but shows some basic understanding of the general field Likely to be muddled, incomplete, and/or poorly expressed Little evidence of reading or reading sources are trivial

Fail	0	Copied or plagiarized answer with no intellectual input from student
		Work penalized for late submission without the granting of an extension (as per the course policy regarding deadlines and extensions)
		Plagiarized material may be reported to the University Authorities

Thesis Guidelines

Eight thesis preparation classes are scheduled across the first and second semesters, and will be led by the Thesis Coordinator. At the end of the first semester you will submit **a Research Proposal** upon which you will receive feedback. You will then be matched with an appropriate supervisor who will work with you toward completion of the thesis component of the M.A programme.

The following format is recommended for the completed thesis. Please note that these are general guidelines only. Depending on the nature of the project, some students may need to adapt these guidelines. This should be done in consultation with your supervisor and the Thesis Coordinator.

Submission
The completed thesis must be submitted by 31th July, 2023. Please contact your supervisor as early as possible if this will pose a difficulty.

Presentation
In general the thesis is expected to be between 15,000 and 20,000 words in length which is between 60-80 double-spaced, typed pages. Please use font size of 12 points, double-spacing format, and include page numbers.

Submission
Students should submit an electronic copy of the thesis through MOODLE on or before the submission date. In addition, a hard copy of the thesis should be submitted to the Department office, with a green cover sheet. The completed manuscript should be ring-bound but avoid the use of plastic covers if possible. Please ensure that you retain a secure copy of your thesis.

Typical Format
Title page: Title of thesis, your full name and student ID, your Taught M.A. programme, and the name of your supervisor.

A signed declaration that the thesis constitutes your own original work.

Table of Contents: list each section and the page on which it begins.

Abstract

Introduction

Review of Literature

Research question(s) and methodology

Discussion of findings

Conclusion

Relevant bibliography

Appendices (if appropriate)

Content under each heading

Abstract

The abstract provides a one or two paragraph synopsis of the research project and should state clearly the nature and scope of the research undertaken. You should identify the key contribution your study makes to our knowledge of the subject. Identify, in particular, key findings.

Introduction

The purpose of the introduction is to set the research project in context, to define the relationship of this work to other work in the same field and to explain your own motivation in undertaking the research. You should clearly set out the aims and objectives of the study.

Literature Review

The purpose of the literature review is to identify the state of current knowledge in the area on which you have decided to carry out your research, and to form a foundation for the research you will carry out. It should:

- Establish the socio-historical context of the topic or question or problem
- Critically assess the significance of work already done in the field
- Illustrate the key ideas or theoretical concepts in the field that relate to your topic
- Justify the study that you are proposing

Carrying out a literature review calls for scholarship and time spent reading and reviewing relevant materials. Use the library facilities to research your chosen topic (for more detail, see https://nuim.libguides.com/sociology). Your discussion should be organised thematically addressing the points outlined above. It is not acceptable to simply summarise the content of a given number of books and articles.

Statement of research problem and methodological approach

Include a clear, concise statement of your research question(s) or objective(s). This should be followed by an outline of the research methodology you chose in order to address your research question(s). You need to explain the process by which you got from posing a question to finding out some answers. You should, therefore, address:

- How you identified the kind of data you would need to answer your question(s)
- How you selected your research technique(s) and why you consider this the most appropriate technique
- Identify the main sources of your data. You need to explain clearly here, if relevant, the type of sample which is being used, the size of the sample and the population from which the sample is being selected. If observation methods or interviews are being employed, outline clearly from whom, in what context, and for what purpose you are collecting the information. Likewise, if you are using secondary or documentary analysis you need to demonstrate what types of documents are required, where they are located, how they are accessed, and how you utilise them to answer your research question(s).

Any special difficulties encountered in the course of the research, or any refinement of your original proposal should be briefly dealt with here.

Ethical issues

There are important ethical issues that must be taken into account in the conduct of research. These issues will be covered in class during the academic year. Among the key points of which you should be aware:

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- Inform yourself of the University's research ethics policy and of the ethical guidelines of the Sociological Association of Ireland. Be aware of how these ethical standards are to be maintained in the course of your research.
- Make explicit reference to the ethical issues specific to your research topic when writing up.
- Students must adhere to the principle of informed consent at all times.
- As a general principle, students are advised not to carry out research directly with people under 18 years old. Any such contact requires garda vetting.
- Students wishing to carry out research with vulnerable groups must consult with their supervisor in advance on the feasibility or advisability of same.

Data requirements
Students should expect to spend up to 20 hours carrying out the empirical research for their research thesis. As a general guide this would translate into approximately:

- Up to 20 hours of participant observation (for which field notes must be recorded)
- Up to 20 semi-structured interviews (depending on the extent of transcription)
- 50-60 survey interviews

Empirical investigation can also be conducted through 20 hours of desk research such as:

- Content analysis of a discrete number of websites, or newspapers or magazines or some combination of those. Specific databases and tools are available locally for conducting this work. For example, Lexus Nexus provides a database of national and international newspapers.
- Analysis of visual materials (photographs, audio visual resources, etc)
- Secondary analysis of existing open source data sets such as Central Statistics Office data, Growing Up in Ireland Longitudinal study, TILDA (Irish Longitudinal study of Ageing), etc.
- Public policy, historical or contemporary documents
- Irish social science data archive (ISSDA)
- Irish Qualitative Data Archive (IQDA) based at Maynooth University
- Administrative data for example materials on the HEA website, and Department of Education & Skills website, any government agency
- Eurostat, OECD, European Value Survey, Eurobarometer, UN
- Irish social and political values survey (IKSSDA)

Findings, Analysis and Interpretation
Apply the concepts and/or theoretical framework that you outlined in the literature review section to analyse and interpret your findings. Outline your key finding(s) and present some commentary and discussion that helps the reader to make sense of the finding(s). Always refer back to the relevant sociological literature. This is your opportunity to demonstrate how the sociological perspective can help to deepen and broaden our understanding of the particular phenomenon which is being researched. This is also your opportunity to identify where existing theory does not appear to fit your particular empirical case; if so, you should reflect on why this is and suggest either ways in which the theory can be refined or a more appropriate theoretical perspective than the one from which you started. This section will work well if it is organised under thematic (analytical) headings.

Conclusion
This is your opportunity to reflect on the research process from the conceptualisation of your research question(s) through collecting the data to analysing your key findings. You can discuss the implications of your research findings making recommendations as appropriate. You may comment on your own learning and point to avenues for further research in this field.

Bibliography

List the books, articles, reports, websites, etc that you have consulted and which were relevant to the research. This should be presented using an approved format. See the Maynooth University Guide to the Harvard Referencing System, Second edition (2014). Please take careful note of the Maynooth University's policy on plagiarism when completing your thesis and take steps to reference your work appropriately.

Statement on plagiarism

When you directly copy another person's text without placing it in quotation marks and without acknowledging the source, you are plagiarising. The same is true when you present someone else's original idea, research or argument as though it were your own. Plagiarism is strictly forbidden. It reveals an unwillingness to think for oneself and is both unethical and illegal under copyright laws.

Please do not make the mistake of assuming that we won't recognise plagiarised material. It is almost always possible to identify text that has been professionally copy-edited, or is different in style from your own.

The direct copying of passages (including illustrations) from a book, an article or the Internet without adequate references being made will be heavily penalised. Submitting essays or projects written by anyone other than you will also result in heavy penalties. As your final assessment is partly based on written assignments, plagiarism is equivalent to cheating at examinations.

For more detail, see the University's plagiarism policy https://www.maynoothuniversity.ie/sites/default/files/assets/document/MU%20Policy%20on%20Plagiarism%20Updated%20July%202019_0.pdf

Other relevant policies can be found at https://www.maynoothuniversity.ie/university-policies/rules-regulations-students

Ethical guidelines

You should familiarise yourself as soon as possible with the university guidelines on research ethics. This information is available from the Office of Research and Graduate Studies or on the web at https://www.maynoothuniversity.ie/research/research-development-office/research-ethics The SAI has published a booklet titled Ethical Guidelines, which you may wish to consult. You will find this a most useful handbook of general principles and statements of ethical practice concerning the professional activities of sociologists in Ireland, practices that now are of direct concern to you as a research student of Sociology. These guidelines are available on line at the SAI website at www.sociology.ie.

Sociological Association of Ireland

For information on professional activities of sociologists in Ireland we would like to guide you to our professional organisation the Sociological Association of Ireland (SAI):

http://www.sociology.ie/

Submission Procedures

All written work must be submitted online with a cover sheet (available online) to the Departmental Office by the due date. Some lecturers may also require submission through Moodle. Check the requirements for each module with your lecturer.

- ✓ There is a late work policy in operation and marks will be deducted for late course work.
- ✓ Students must retain a copy of all work submitted to the Department.
- ✓ Students will be given feedback on their projects/assessment work. Generally, we do not use standard evaluation forms at this level, but provide the students with commentary on their work.

Staff will be available to work with students on thesis supervision until **30th June 2023**, but the Department cannot guarantee supervisor's availability after this date. For this reason, you are required to meet with your supervisor regularly before the 26st June, and have their inputs and advice on your thesis plans for completion over the summer.

University Policy on Submission of Work after Conclusion of the Programme

Maynooth University has introduced a new policy regarding taught MA students who require extra time to complete their work, after the conclusion of the programme. The MAs (2022-23) conclude on 31th July 2023. Please read the information below carefully, as the Department cannot override University regulations and you may incur additional fees if the guidelines are not followed.

If you anticipate that you will be unable to complete your work by the July due date, it is very important that you notify the M.A. Coordinator and the relevant module facilitators and/or your thesis supervisor as early as possible, to seek permission for an extension.

The following rules apply:

Late submission date (NOTE: <u>ALL</u> extensions must be approved in advance by the Department)	Implications for registration and results	Implications for fees.
After 30th of July deadline, but allowing sufficient time for assessment before the University deadline for uploading marks, in time for the Autumn examinations board. THIS SUBMISSION DATE MUST BE AGREED IN ADVANCE WITH THE DEPARTMENT	Late submission can be accepted by the university.	No additional fee.
Before the Autumn examination board (date to be confirmed), but not in	You will be registered for an additional period (normally R1/ 8 month)	No additional fee.

sufficient time to be assessed before the University deadline for uploading marks.	Results and graduation will be delayed until the next year. Supervision, library access, moodle and other services will be discontinued.	
After the Autumn examination board (date to be confirmed)	You must formally apply for an extension using 'Registry form R4' You will be registered for an additional academic year as a continuing student. Results delayed until the next year. Supervision, library access, moodle and other services will be continued.	You will be charged a continuation fee, of approximately 60% of modules fee. This can be charged for one semester or a full year.

In the event that you do not pass one or more of your modules, you will be required to repeat the module, register as a repeat student and pay the repeat fee.

DEPARTMENT AND FACULTY RESOURCES FOR TAUGHT POSTGRADUATES

The Department of Sociology undertakes a variety of activities that are aimed at promoting intellectual community within the department and more widely. While some of these are aimed specifically at postgraduate students, others promote sociological discussion more broadly within the department and the university. It is recommended that you participate in as many of these activities as possible, as they form a crucial part of your development as a sociologist. While many of these activities are targeted primarily at research postgraduates, M.A. students are very welcome and are encouraged to attend.

Seminars

The Department of Sociology and the Maynooth University Social Sciences Institute (MUSSI) host seminars throughout the year, with guest speakers from across Ireland as well as international scholars. Information on these seminars will be posted on the University, Department and research centre websites and will be circulated via email. Postgraduate students are expected to make every effort to attend seminars on a regular basis, as these represent great opportunities to expand knowledge, extend networks and to get involved in the life of the departments and the University at the same time.

The Sociology department will from time to time undertake joint seminars with other departments - including Anthropology, Geography and History. You are also welcome to attend these.

MUSSI

Maynooth University Social Sciences Institute is a resource for social science at Maynooth University, located on the third floor of IONTAS, the Humanities and Social Sciences building. MUSSI is a valuable source of interdisciplinary intellectual engagement at Maynooth University and Sociology students are encouraged to participate in its activities as much as possible. Check out the MUSSI website and notice boards for details of upcoming events.

Facilities

There is a computer lab *on the second floor* in TSI (2.39), containing networked PCs, with printing facilities and quantitative and qualitative data analysis software available. When not being used for teaching students can use this. A small postgraduate room will also be made available on the second floor where you bring in your own computer. The room number has to be decided.

There is a *Sociology staff and postgraduate kitchen* in the TSI building on the second floor. In deference to all users, students are asked to keep this room clean and tidy at all times.

Interlibrary Loans: the department typically pays interlibrary loans costs. However, in order to manage these often heavy costs, students are required to contact the departmental office for the necessary permissions.

All these facilities are subject to restriction in line with the Department's financial situation and pressures on work-space.

In addition to the resources available in the Sociology Department, all postgraduate students have access to the many Student Services offered on campus. These services assist students during their time at Maynooth University and ensure that any difficulties that arise do not affect the students' success in University. See the University Website for further details.

References and testimonials
Staff-members regard it as a pleasure as well as a duty to act as referees when requested to do so by students with whose work they are familiar. Please bear the following in mind when requesting references:

- Requests should be made in writing, full details being given of the nature of the course or appointment for which an application is being made.
- Full documentation relating to the course or appointment should be supplied, including all forms (duly completed) and envelopes that are required for the furnishing of references.
- Referees should have details of the applicants' address and telephone number to facilitate communication.
- As much notice as possible should be given to referees, the final date for the submission of the reference or testimonial being clearly specified.
- It is desirable for the referee to have an updated copy of the applicant's curriculum vitae to provide background to the writing of a reference.
- Staff-members always appreciate a brief note informing them of the outcome of applications for courses or job appointments.

UNIVERSITY OFFICES AND SUPPORT FOR POSTGRADUATES

All students have access to the many Student Services offered on campus. These services assist students during their time at Maynooth University and ensure that any difficulties that arise do not affect the students' success in University. Here are some of the services that you may find helpful:

Access Programme <https://www.maynoothuniversity.ie/access-office>
Encourages under-represented groups to enter third level and provides these groups with support through their time at Maynooth.

Crèche Facilities <https://www.maynoothuniversity.ie/campus-life/campus-facilities/creche-facilities>
Available to staff and students of the university

Examinations and timetabling <https://www.maynoothuniversity.ie/exams>
Responsible for the central administration of the University written examinations.

Graduate Studies Office <https://www.maynoothuniversity.ie/graduate-studies>
Provides advice and support for students in all aspects of postgraduate study.

IT Services <https://www.maynoothuniversity.ie/it-services>
Provides a wide range of general and specialist IT services to students and staff of the university in support of the university's objectives in areas including teaching, learning and research.

Library <https://www.maynoothuniversity.ie/library>
Dedicated to helping you with your research and studies during your time in University.

Office of the Dean of Teaching and Learning <https://www.maynoothuniversity.ie/dean-teaching-learning>
The Office of the Dean of Teaching and Learning supports teaching and learning across the university, coordinating the work of:

- Centre for Teaching and Learning
- Career Development Centre
- Work Placement
- Experiential Learning
- Centre for Interdisciplinary Studies

Student Fees and Grants <https://www.maynoothuniversity.ie/student-fees-grants>
Primary function is the setting and collection of all student fees due to the University.

Student Records and Registration <https://www.maynoothuniversity.ie/records>
Responsible for the Registration of the entire Student Population and the subsequent maintenance and up-date of the Student Records Database system

Student Services <https://www.maynoothuniversity.ie/student-services>
There are many resources and people in **Student Services** who can help you on your journey. Services include counselling, health centre, pastoral care, home-finder information and budgeting advice.

Writing Centre https://www.maynoothuniversity.ie/centre-teaching-and-learning/writing-centre
A free, friendly, non-judgemental writing help to any student, undergraduate or postgraduate, regardless of course, degree or level. The support is primarily through one-to-one appointments, where students can discuss their writing with peer/expert tutors.