



Department of Media Studies



BA Media Studies

1st Year Student Handbook

2017-2018

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Welcome to Media Studies at Maynooth University!

Welcome to Maynooth University and the Department of Media Studies.

This 2017-18 Handbook is your guide to the academic year and to the guidelines in place regarding your academic study and practice work. Please read it carefully and refer to it throughout the year. A copy can also be found on our department website, www.maynoothuniversity.ie/media-studies

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

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

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

Some of your practice modules are held at Kairos Communications, our industry partner based over the Moyglare Road. Dr Anne O'Brien is our AV Practice Coordinator and your primary contact person for matters relating to Kairos. Assignments and projects for those modules will be submitted directly to Kairos.

If you have questions relating to individual modules or assignments, you should first discuss these with the lecturer teaching the module. Any issues relating to practice modules held in Kairos should be directed to Dr Anne O'Brien. Questions or difficulties related to your programme, including extended absences, should be discussed with Dr Marcos Dias, the First Year BA Media Studies Coordinator.

I look forward to an enjoyable and productive year working with you.

Dr Kylie Jarrett
Head of the Department of Media Studies

Contact Details

Website: www.maynoothuniversity.ie/media-studies

Facebook: Media Studies at Maynooth University

Twitter: @NUIMedia

Dr Kylie Jarrett

Head of Department of Media Studies

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Lecturer in Media Studies, Third Year BA Media Studies, BA Digital Media &

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Lecturer in Media Studies, Audiovisual Practice & Kairos Coordinator

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Dr Sarah Arnold

Lecturer in Media Studies, Postgraduate & Research Coordinator

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Dr Marcos Dias

Lecturer in Media Studies, First Year Coordinator

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Dr Gwen Bouvier

Lecturer in Media Studies, Second Year Coordinator

Department of Media Studies

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Dr Denis Murphy

Lecturer in Media Studies, Student Committee Coordinator

Department of Media Studies

Iontas 0.23

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Email: denis.murphy@mu.ie

Dr Gavan Titley

Lecturer in Media Studies, (on leave until September 2018)

Department of Media Studies

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Programme Module Information

BA MEDIA STUDIES

30 ECTS credits

Semester 1

Media Studies I (MD160)

7.5 ECTS Credits

This module introduces students to foundational media studies concepts and theories through a focus on the centrality of narrative and storytelling to mediated communication. This module concentrates on an introduction to forms of textual analysis.

Lecturers: Dr Denis Murphy & Dr Anne O'Brien

Semester 2

Media Studies II (MD161)

7.5 ECTS Credits

This module continues the introduction to foundational Media Studies concepts and theories begun in Media Studies I (MD 160). The focus is on the centrality of narrative and storytelling to mediated communication. This module concentrates on production, reception, and circulation of media content in socio-cultural and political-economic contexts.

Lecturers: Dr Denis Murphy & Dr Anne O'Brien

Semester 1 & 2**Students e****either take MD170A and MD180B or MD180A and MD170B****Principles and Practices of Screen Design (MD170A/MD170B)****7.5 ECTS Credits**

This module introduces students to key principles and practices of screen design. Students will learn how to not only create appropriately formatted visual content but also how to use such content effectively as part of multimodal digital communication. Students will learn visual, textual, and technical methods and tools in order to produce and critique content for the contemporary online environment.

Lecturer: Dr Marcos Dias**Film and Television Production: Principles and Practices (MD180A/MD180B)****7.5 ECTS Credits**

Students will learn to think creatively and critically about film and television production while they also develop key production skills. Students work in groups to generate creative ideas for documentary formats. They will execute ideas in audiovisual production and postproduction. They will learn how to operate DV cameras, lighting, and sound equipment and how to edit. They will learn to express ideas verbally and in written form, to reflect critically on their practice and to respond to live verbal analysis and feedback on their practice.

Lecturers: Yvonne McDonald & Naomi Seale (Kairos Communications)

Important information regarding module completion and progression.

- Candidates must pass all 1st year modules before proceeding to 2nd year.
- Students must submit all assessable components of each module. Students who do not may be required to repeat the module.
- In order to pass a continuous assessment module, students must pass each assessment with 40% or better. If a range of particular conditions are met, students *may* pass by compensation at 35%. For more details, see the Marks and Standards document available at the Exams Office website:
<https://www.maynoothuniversity.ie/exams/information-students>
- All repeat continuous assessment assignments are capped at 50%, unless there are extenuating circumstances, which should be presented to the module lecturer in the form of medical certificates or other relevant evidence before the repeat is undertaken.
- Students must meet the minimum attendance requirement for all modules. Students who do not meet this requirement may fail the module or have grade penalties applied.

Timetables

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

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

Staff-Student Communications

Website

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

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

Email

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

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

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

Moodle

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

Access to Staff

Students are encouraged to consult with lecturers on academic and other matters relating to a particular module. They should contact the relevant Year Coordinator for matters concerning their work in the university and their general progress as students. All full-time lecturers have specific times set aside to meet students, and these times are posted on their individual pages on the Department's website, as well as on their office doors. If the times posted by a lecturer you wish to see clash with your classes, you can ask for an appointment to see the lecturer at a mutually convenient time. These requests should be made by email. In the case of an urgent need to speak to a lecturer, please contact Anne in the Media Studies Office.

Social Media

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

Library

The Library also offers training to develop your information seeking, researching, referencing and study skills. See what is available by checking the library website www.maynoothuniversity.ie/library.



Department of Media Studies

Staff-Student Polices

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

1. All faculty and staff of the Department of Media Studies and Kairos Communications Ltd. undertake to treat colleagues and students with respect. It is understood that all students undertake to treat their fellow students, faculty and staff of Maynooth University and Kairos Communications Ltd. with respect.
2. **Communication:** The Department of Media Studies often sends important information to students by Maynooth University email, and through Moodle. Please check your Maynooth University email account and Moodle regularly.
3. **Attendance:** Students are expected to attend all timetabled classes. In particular, the following conditions will apply to all students:
 - Students **must meet the attendance requirements** for all Media Studies modules.
 - In particular, all students must attend at least 90% of all Media Studies lectures, labs, seminars or tutorials, unless exempted for documented medical or personal reasons agreed by the module coordinator.

NB: Students failing to meet this standard may be required to repeat the module or have grade penalties applied.

- Students who are unable to attend a timetabled class for a legitimate documented medical or personal reason must notify the Department of Media Studies of such absences at the earliest opportunity (if possible, prior to such an absence).
 - Documentation supporting reasons for such absences will not be accepted after the end of the semester in which the absence has occurred.
 - The Department of Media Studies will undertake to ensure that all classes take place as timetabled. Should unavoidable circumstances necessitate the cancellation or rescheduling of a class, every effort will be made to notify students promptly.
4. Students must submit **all the assignments** specified for a module. A module will be regarded as incomplete unless all assignments are submitted.
5. **Students are responsible for the submission of all assignments.** In particular, the following conditions will apply to all students:
- **Submission:** Assignments for Kairos must be placed in the essay submission box in reception with an appropriate cover sheet attached and signed. Assignments are collected daily and date-stamped. Department of Media Studies assignments must be placed in the essay submission box near the stairs in the Iontas building with a signed cover sheet (available at the shelf under the stairs) attached. Assignments are collected daily and date-stamped.
 - **By email:** Where written assignments are assigned, emailed submissions will **not be accepted** unless agreed with the module coordinator in advance. All emailed assignments should contain a digital cover sheet (available on the department moodle page) with student name and the details of the module and assignment.
 - **Email details:** Where module coordinators request a submission by email, the file should have the name of the student and the module code in the file name. The email subject field should name the module and the assessment.
 - **Submission date:** All assignments must be received on the date on which they are due. Late assignments will be penalised at a rate of 5% per working day

unless exempted for documented medical or pressing personal reasons **agreed by the programme coordinator**.

- **Late submissions:** No assignment will be accepted after the end of teaching and exam periods in the semester in which such work falls due, unless exempted for documented medical or personal reasons agreed by the programme coordinator.
- **Retained Copies:** The Department of Media Studies requires each student to retain an exact copy of each piece of work (both written and practice-based) submitted for assessment. Submitted work is not returned to the student, but feedback is provided. In the event of submitted work being mislaid, the student will be expected to provide a replacement copy when asked. If you store your work electronically, you must be sure to maintain a back-up copy.

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

7. Style and referencing of submissions: All written assignments should be submitted in Times New Roman, 12pt, 1.5 spacing, have numbered pages, a detailed cover sheet and full references and a bibliography. Referencing should be done according to the Harvard system of referencing, or the system the module lecturer designates.

8. Equipment procedures: When signing out equipment from Kairos Communications Ltd., students undertake to be responsible for such equipment, and to use such equipment in a safe and responsible manner.

In cases of wilful misuse or gross negligence resulting in loss or damage of equipment, such actions will be reflected in the student's continuous assessment mark. Moreover, the Department of Media Studies may refer the matter to the Disciplinary Committee of Maynooth University, which may impose a penalty up to and including withdrawal from the University.

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

9. Content of audio-visual material:

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

21 September 2006

Code of Practice for Kairos Communications Ltd.

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

Kairos is open to students from **09:00 to 21:00 Monday to Friday** and students should not be in the building outside of these times.

All equipment available to students can be booked in advance. Equipment can be collected and returned between **09:00 – 12:30 and 13:30 - 16:30 hrs.**

Students are responsible for the submission of all assignments. All project assignments must be left in the essay submission box at reception. Kairos staff will not take responsibility for assignments which have not been signed in. See Department of Media Studies staff student policies above.

All work will be deleted from the hard drives of Kairos computers two weeks after an assignment deadline. **Students are responsible for backing up their own work.**

Students must attend all practice lectures unless exempted for documented medical or personal reasons by the programme coordinator either in advance of the lecture or at the earliest opportunity. Documentation supporting reasons for such absences may not be accepted after the end of the semester in which the absence has occurred. Attendance will be recorded at all sessions, it is the responsibility of the student to sign relevant attendance sheets.

Students are encouraged to make use of their designated facilities during the allocated times (Mon- Fri, 9am-9pm or otherwise as stated) but students should not enter parts of the building or production facilities not designated for their use.

If students have any problems with any equipment or need some help with any project work they can text for technical support from 9am-1pm and 2pm-5pm. The text number will be announced in class.

For any other help, they should approach Dr Anne O'Brien, **Mobile:** 087 6739163 **Tel:** 708 6470 or **Email:** anne.obrien@mu.ie, who is available to students for consultation

on all matters pertaining to the AV practice modules of the course. Should students wish, they may email to make specific appointments to see Anne.

References

Requests for references should be made by formal email, 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 (in the form of web-links where possible). Referees should have details of the applicant's address and telephone number to facilitate communication.

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

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

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

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

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

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

Marks and Standards for Student Work

Maynooth University has a detailed Marks and Standards policy document for all undergraduates degrees. **All students should refer to this document at the earliest opportunity.**

This may be downloaded at <https://www.maynoothuniversity.ie/exams/information-students>.

However, the most important information regarding marking is summarised here:

All student work is marked according to the following classifications:

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

Any mark below 40% is a failing mark, although depending upon their full spread of marks in all modules, students may be able to 'pass by compensation' modules up to half the subject credit-weighting, where they have received marks of 35-39%. This process will be calculated by the Media Studies Office in consultation with the Programme Coordinators and the Head of Department.

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

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

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

Useful Resources

Remember that we will contact you by email, so please check your Maynooth University account regularly.

Student Support Services

Managing your life at University can be a challenge.

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

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