Data, Design & Society

Course Description

Data plays a pervasive role in modern society: we are all consumers and producers of data on a daily basis. Moreover, data is increasingly important for all aspects of academic endeavour. By understanding how data is collected, how it can be interpreted, and how it functions in social and political processes, you will be better prepared for your undergraduate studies, for your future career, and for becoming an informed citizen. This course will provide you with basic concepts, tools and a practice-based understanding of how data and design principles can support social innovation. By engaging in a team-based interdisciplinary project, you will address an existing social challenge that involves collecting, processing and analysing data as part of designing a prototype solution.

Data, Design and Society (INFR08024) is a new 20pt Level 8 course. There are no prerequisites, but students should be prepared to work with simple data analysis tools. There is a quota of 40 students for this course in academic year 2015/16.

Syllabus

- Design principles for social innovation
- Types of data, data formats and data collection methods
- Basic statistical properties of data sets, data quality
- Data cleaning, transformation and linkage
- Social science techniques for small scale experimentation and co-design
- Ethical and legal aspects of data collection and publication
- Data visualisation
- Using data to persuade, to inform and to support decision-making
- Economic value of data

Assessment

The course will be assessed by two pieces of coursework. These will both involve collecting new data 'in the wild', using data to inform and help design a prototype solution to an existing social problem, and presenting the results in a report.

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