

Computer applications in the social sciences and humanities

Computer applications in the social sciences and humanities is an area of study which aims to consolidate the relationship between BA study and information technology. Its subjects are designed to promote an understanding of the use and significance of current information and communication systems, and to train students to use these technologies, both in their studies and their chosen careers.

The subjects on offer are directed toward practical experience, using state-of-the-art software to manipulate text, numbers, graphics, sounds, video, animation, archived data and other digital media. Students are also encouraged to engage in a critical analysis of these technologies and their products as they circulate within cultural and social contexts.

The subjects cater to levels ranging from introductory classes to advanced multimedia development. Although they are open to arts students in general, they are not usually available to those enrolled in the combined arts/science or arts/engineering courses.

Skills subjects limitations

Students should note that they may take no more than two subjects in computer applications in their second/third year, and a maximum of three skills subjects for credit towards the BA degree. See *Skills-based subjects* (p.6).

For more information

Dr Michael Arnold
Department of History and Philosophy of Science
Ground Floor, Old Arts Building
The University of Melbourne
Victoria 3010
Tel. +61 8344 7020
Email: mvarnold@unimelb.edu.au
Web: <http://www.hps.unimelb.edu.au>

First-year subjects

103-100 Computer Applications

Note: Formerly available as 103-001/101 and 121/230. Students who have completed 103-001, 103-101 or 121-230 are not eligible to enrol in this subject.

This subject is suitable for students who are inexperienced with computer applications, and for students who have very limited experience and would like a systematic exposure to current-version computer applications and methods. Students enrolled in the Bachelor of Information Systems and the Bachelor of Computer Science, and students who have passed an introductory level computing subject at tertiary level are not eligible to enrol in this subject.

Availability: 1st year

Credit points: 12.5

HECS-band: 1

Coordinator: Dr Michael Arnold

Contact: A 1-hour lecture and a 2-hour laboratory session per week (*Semester 1*).

Description: This subject provides students with the opportunity to develop practical skills, and introduces students to theoretical concepts and issues relating to contemporary computer use. The subject has six goals: to achieve an understanding of personal computers; to provide a basis for an informed decision concerning the suitability of personal computers, and types of software to be used, for particular projects; to develop skills in the use of standard types of software including a word processor, graphics software, a spreadsheet, a database management system, and contemporary operating systems; to acquire skills in problem solving through the use of specific types of software; to enhance newly acquired skills through exposure to some of the more powerful features of the software; and to demonstrate an awareness of controversies and issues related to computing and computer use in contemporary society.

Assessment: Computer assignments equivalent to 3000 words and critical writing totalling 1000 words.

Second/third-year subjects

103-002 Internet Applications

Note: Formerly available as 103-203/303. Students who have completed 103-203 or 103-303 are not eligible to enrol in this subject. Restrictions apply to

Summer Semester enrolments. Students must contact the HPS Office (ph: 8344 6556) to register before enrolling for the Summer Semester.

Availability: 2nd and 3rd year

Credit points: 12.5

HECS-band: 2

Coordinator: Dr Michael Arnold

Prerequisites: Familiarity with computers, including use of keyboard, mouse and pull-down menus.

Contact: A 2.5-hour tutorial/practical session per week (*Semester 2, repeat Summer*).

Description: This subject should enable students to develop the skills required to effectively access and acquire information from the internet in an area of interest in the social sciences or humanities, and to develop the skills required to design, construct and publish a web site reflecting this area of interest. Students who complete this subject successfully should be familiar with the various resources available on the internet; have an understanding of how to purposefully access and retrieve information from the internet; have an understanding of the limitations of the internet for the social sciences and humanities; have an understanding of the principles of effective web site design; have the practical skills to construct a web site using current web-authoring software.

Assessment: An internet-based research and publication project equivalent to 4000 words.

103-005 Cybersociety

See full subject details on page 2.

103-006 Multimedia Authoring

Note: Formerly available as 103-201/301. Students who have completed 103-201 or 103-301 are not eligible to enrol in this subject. For credit to an art history major the multimedia product must be approved by the School of Fine Arts, Classical Studies and Archaeology.

Availability: 2nd and 3rd year

Credit points: 12.5

HECS-band: 1

Coordinator: Dr Michael Arnold

Prerequisites: Successful completion of 103-100 Computer Applications (*p.1*) or demonstrable competence in computer use.

Contact: A 2.5-hour workshop/tutorial per week (*Semester 2*).

Description: This subject offers students an opportunity to critically appraise interactive multimedia as a mechanism for the construction and expression of knowledge, and to develop practical skills in the authorship of interactive multimedia products. Students who successfully complete this subject should demonstrate an understanding of the characteristics of interactive multimedia and its strengths and weaknesses relative to other media; be able to critically review and appraise the design of contemporary multimedia products and demonstrate practical skills in interactive multimedia authorship using contemporary interactive multimedia authoring software.

Assessment: Written work totalling 1000 words, and a multimedia product equivalent to 3000 words. Students will be given the opportunity to participate in group work.

136-045 Fact, Fiction & Fraud in the Digital Age

See full subject details on page 4.

Third-year subject

103-302 Computing in Qualitative Research

Note: Formerly available as 103-003. Students who have completed 103-003 are not eligible to enrol in this subject. Formerly available as 103-302/402. Students who have completed 103-302 or 103-402 are not eligible to enrol in this subject.

Availability: 3rd year

Credit points: 12.5

HECS-band: 2

Prerequisites: Completion of 103-100 Computer Applications (*p.1*) or demonstrable competence in computer use.

Semester: Not Offered

Description: This subject is directed at students who are currently undertaking a research project, or who intend to in the near future. Students will be introduced to techniques for computer-based data capture, data manipulation and theory building, and to this end will make use of a variety of general purpose computer applications (eg. word processor, web forms, idea processor, database), software utilities (eg. project management software, bibliographic software), and purpose-built research software (eg. *Atlas/ti*, *Nudist*). The methodological implications of computer-based research will also be covered.

Third/fourth-year subject

103-401 Advanced Multimedia Applications

Note: Formerly available as 103-004 or 103-312/412. Students who have completed 103-004 or 103-312 or 103-412 are not eligible to enrol in this subject. For this subject to be credited towards a major in fine arts the main project/s must be approved by the School of Fine Arts, Classical Studies and Archaeology. Strict enrolment deadlines apply to subjects taught during the Summer Semester. Any enrolment in, or withdrawal from, this subject for the Summer Semester must be made in line with HECS census dates, see page 7.

Availability: 3rd and 4th year

Credit points: 12.5

HECS-band: 2

Prerequisites: Completion of 103-006 Multimedia Authoring (*p.1*) or 103-002 Internet Applications (*p.1*) or an approved equivalent.

Semester: Not Offered

Description: This subject is directed at students who wish to further develop their understanding of interactive multimedia and hypermedia as a media form, and who wish to further develop their multimedia design and authoring skills. Each student will determine genre, content and appropriate software tools to design and execute a multimedia project. During the course of the semester students will have the opportunity to develop a more sophisticated understanding of the aesthetics of multimedia; the technical problems associated with form, and their solutions; the epistemological implications of the form relative to other media forms, and the significance of hypertextual and interactive structure in the context of the content and the anticipated readership. Students will demonstrate their understanding through the design and construction of a multimedia product, and through a critical review of their multimedia product.