



Information Science

Information technology for problem-solving

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Aysha Rimoni BCom(Hons)
Chief Investment Analyst,
Unit Trust of Samoa

We live in an increasingly complex world with vast amounts of information created every day. Information scientists are vital to the capture, processing and communication of this information to help people and organisations operate effectively.

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What is Information Science?

Information Science sits at the intersection of technology, people and organisations. It is a broad discipline that combines solid technical foundations with an understanding of the ways in which organisations use information.

Information scientists analyse, develop, integrate, test and evaluate information systems. They also gather, prepare, model and interpret data to support informed decision-making in organisations. Information systems are omnipresent – every organisation depends on usable and reliable information systems.

Information Science is an exciting and rapidly changing discipline – it requires strong foundations and a life-long approach to learning.

Career opportunities

People with Information Science skills are in high demand because of the vital role that information and information systems play in modern organisations. There are many and varied career opportunities in fields such as business management and analytics, science and data science, education, research, finance, health, manufacturing and automation, media production and user experience technology, music and entertainment, and engineering.

Background required

There are no formal prerequisites for studying Information Science. You do not need to have studied digital technologies at school. However, it is advantageous if you are interested in and have taken background subjects in Digital Technology, Science, Mathematics, Accounting or English.

What subjects go well with Information Science?

The concepts taught in Information Science are an excellent complement to other subjects, preparing you for the modern work done in these disciplines. Examples of well-suited subjects include: Accounting, Finance, Marketing, Management, Law, Psychology, Mathematics and any of the natural or applied sciences.

The first year

The Information Science programme is available in the Bachelor of Commerce (BCom), Bachelor of Science (BSc), Bachelor of Arts (BA) and the Bachelor of Arts and Science (BASc) degrees.

During the first year of your Information Science degree you will study COMP 101 and one of COMP 161 or 162:

COMP 101 Foundations of Information Systems

In this course, you will learn about the fundamentals of our information and computer science disciplines, which include topics like computability, data analysis, information storage and processing, and database management techniques. There are no prerequisites for this course, but a basic mathematical understanding will be needed – you might want to consider MATH 151 before or alongside COMP 101.

COMP 161 Computer Programming

An introduction to computer programming suitable for beginners with little or no prior experience. Introduces the Java programming language, basic object oriented concepts and simple graphical applications.

COMP 162 Foundations of Computer Science

An introduction to computer programming suitable for beginners with some prior experience. Builds on and extends basic Java and object oriented programming. Introduces broader programming concepts and other languages.

(Students are exempt from COMP 161 if they have gained entry to COMP 162 by passing COMP 151 with a grade of at least B or via an Advanced Placement Test.)

Teaching style

Your classes will consist of lectures, tutorials and practical laboratories. In the third year you will work on a team project with an industry partner. We have award-winning teaching staff who are recognised experts in their fields and who are considering technological, ethical, professional, societal and behavioural factors of our discipline.

Information systems are complex in terms of scale and changing dynamics, so our teaching focuses on practical skills and complex problem solving usually found in real-world tasks. Through practical lab work, our teaching will prepare you for the ever-changing world of Information and Communication Technology.

Social media

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PROFILE

Aysha Rimoni

BCom(Hons)
Chief Investment Analyst, Unit Trust of Samoa

Aysha Rimoni's academic achievements in Samoa earned her a scholarship to study in New Zealand.

She'd heard Otago was a prestigious university and chose Dunedin as it was completely different from Samoa – and she really wanted to see snow.

Her study choice was easy. "I had always been interested in finance and I wanted to do a double major. Doing a BCom at Otago was so good because you do 100-level papers from all the different majors so you can see what you actually like, and that's how I found Information Science to go with Finance."

"I'd always been interested in the areas of corporate finance, investment and analytics, and I liked dealing with systems, which made mixing Finance and Information Science such a good combination. There will always be a need for finance and the digital age is revolutionising how we deal with it."

The Pacific Islands Centre helped Aysha find her feet. "I'd never been to the South Island before and I was completely out of my comfort zone. I didn't know anyone in Dunedin but I was made to feel right at home and met other

students there. The centre helped with tutorials and later I gave back by being a tutor for some of the papers, not only with the centre, but also as the course tutor for one of the 200-level Information Science papers.

"Dunedin is such a student-oriented city. I really enjoyed my time there – and even got to experience more snow on a ski trip to Queenstown only a few hours away."

After completing her BCom and an honours degree in Information Science, Aysha returned to Samoa and entered banking, working as a Financial Markets Dealer with Westpac, which later became Bank of South Pacific. She is now Chief Investment Analyst at the Unit Trust of Samoa.

"From my first graduate position onwards, I applied what I learned about systems at Otago to streamline and automate, and to simplify information gathering and analysis with the available resources. I still use what I learned in Information Science daily. It is a subject that can be adapted and applied to just about anything; it opens up a whole world of opportunities."



For questions about
Information Science
otago.ac.nz/information-science

