OPEN SOURCE IN THE EDUCATION SPACE

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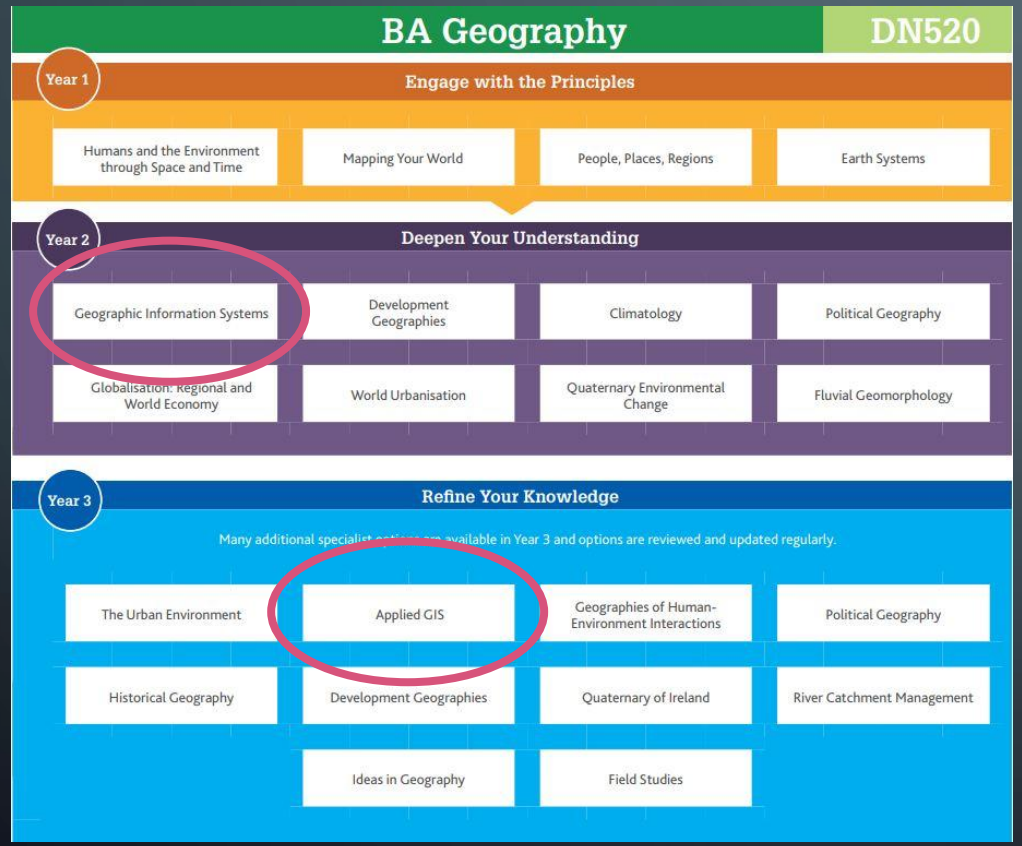
EDUCATION AS FREE AND OPEN SOURCE

- Longer history than I can recall now – university-based research and college educated enthusiasts
- Education in Ireland is decreasingly free and open source – proprietary providers
- Source of pride among some of decreasing reliance on public funding

GEOGRAPHY AT UCD



WITH LARGER NUMBERS COME…

- Licensing issues
  - Volumes
  - Costs
  - Technical support
  - Corporate normalisation
- Less flexibility of approach
- The notion that every nail needs just one hammer

SINCE SEPTEMBER 2016

- Geog30830 GIS module
- C. 180 each academic year
- Use of QGIS 2.x
- Some use of other FOSS4G – back to hammers and nails
- Diffusion among other cohorts: graduates, some staff

MODULE AIMS

While learning the software is an important part of the course, the main focus is:

- the analysis and visualisation of geographic data
- conducting research on substantive and topical issues
- self-directed learning

LIMITED SUCCESS WITH…

The integration of GIS work with broader analyses and writing skills to produce relevant and comprehensible reports.

By the end, students

- Gain knowledge of GIS as a tool that geographers use
- Learn how to use the QGIS software system
- Demonstrate an understanding of GIS's role in spatial analytics through the assessment

Dates	Indicative content
W1: 23/1 and 25/1	Introduction to GIS and GIS software
W2: 30/1 and 2/2	QGIS and its interface
W3: 6/2 and 8/2	Files, projects and layers
W4: 13/2 and **15/2**	Attribute tables and data formats
W5: 20/2 and **22/2**	Spatial data vector and raster layers
W6: 27/2 and 1/3	Filters and querying data
W7: 6/3 and **8/3**	Spatial joins: matching data with spatial units
	Mid Term Break
W8: 27/3 and **29/3**	Choropleth mapping
W9: 3/4 and 5/4	Analysis 1: buffers
W10: 10/4 and **12/4**	Analysis 2: point-in-polygon
W11: 17/4 and 19/4	Online mapping techniques
W12: 24/4 and **26/4**	Next steps: pitfalls and possibilities

SKILLS DEVELOPMENT

- The assessment builds on these skills to integrate report writing and other research skills but....
- Student focus is on 'getting it right'

STUDENT FEEDBACK

- Most are happy but…
- the rapidity of the module
- complex tasks
- Student expectation of ‘it should just work’

1-5 LIKERT (STRONGLY AGREE TO STRONGLY DISAGREE)

Question	Question Text	Times Answered	Mean	Standard Deviation
Core				
QUEST1	I have a better understanding of the subject after completing this module	21	4.38	.86
QUEST2	The assessments to date were relevant to the work of the module.	20	4.45	.76
QUEST3	I achieved the learning outcomes for this module	21	4.19	1.17
QUEST4	The teaching on this module supported my learning	21	4.19	1.21
QUEST5	Overall I am satisfied with this module	21	4.00	1.14
Optional				
QUEST12	Ideas were clearly communicated in class.	20	3.60	1.23
QUEST25	I know how the assessments related to the module's learning outcomes.	20	4.30	.86
QUEST28	The workload on this module was manageable.	20	4.05	1.05
QUEST32	I have been able to access general IT resources when I need to.	20	4.15	.99
QUEST41	My on-line experience has helped me engage actively in my learning	20	4.00	1.21

VIABILITY OF USE OF FOSS4G