Lecture 1

Introduction to Computer-supported Co-operative Work (CS4458)
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Outline

- The Emergence of CSCW
- CSCW and Groupware
- The social unit: group, team, organisation
- What is co-operative work?
- Who, why, how
- Reflection on CSCW @ UL
- Core CSCW Issues
The Emergence of CSCW

- 1984 - Irene Greif and Paul Cashman coined the acronym CSCW for an invited workshop focused on understanding and supporting collaboration.
- Email - a major topic - in 1984 it was poorly designed, not interoperable across different platforms, and used primarily by researchers.
- 1986 - the first open CSCW conference
- 1989 – the first ECSCW conference - Gatwick, UK
But actually in 1967...
What is CSCW?

- There are many definitions for CSCW:

  - “CSCW should be conceived as an endeavour to understand the nature and characteristics of cooperative work with the objective of designing adequate computer-based technologies.” (Bannon & Schmidt 1989)

- Trying to answer question such as:
  - How is cooperative work different from individual work?
  - How can be computers used to alleviate problems of logistics?
  - How should designers go about designing systems that will shape social relationships?
Associated terms

- Human-Computer Interaction - the high level domain including CSCW, Interaction Design etc
- CMC - Computer-Mediated Communication - predates CSCW – looking exclusively at the Communication Aspect
- Groupware – the technology meant to support group work
The social unit

- Group
- Team
- Organisation
- Community
- Ensemble
What is cooperative work?

- Marx (1867): “multiple individuals working together in a planned way in the same production process or in different but connected production processes”.
- Forms of cooperative work: cooperative work, collaborative work, collective work, group work
- CSCW nowadays also includes the study of competition, conflict, coercion
But this is old!

Can you think of:

- Examples of software tools where interaction can be either synchronous or asynchronous?
- Other tools that we can try to place on the diagram?

Is the matrix still useful in 2018?
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Communication</th>
<th>Real time</th>
<th>Asynchronous</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Telephone</td>
<td>Email</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Video conferencing</td>
<td>Voice mail</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Instant messaging</td>
<td>Blogs</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Texting</td>
<td>Social networking sites</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information sharing</td>
<td>Whiteboards</td>
<td>Document repositories</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Application sharing</td>
<td>Wikis</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Meeting facilitation</td>
<td>Web sites</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Virtual worlds</td>
<td>Team workspaces</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coordination</td>
<td>Floor control</td>
<td>Workflow management</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Session management</td>
<td>CASE tools</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Location tracking</td>
<td>Project management</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Calendar scheduling</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 27.1: A two-dimensional collaboration framework with examples of technology features or products found within each cell.
Who, why, how

- Who is involved in CSCW research?
  - Computer scientists
  - Psychologists
  - Sociologists
  - Organisation theorists

- What is the aim?
  - Understanding cooperative work/Designing computer support

- What methods are used?
Can we think of CSCW tools in UL?

- Work in pairs.
- Identify and discuss as many CSCW systems available in UL as you can
- Can you think of a situation when a specific system broke down, and instead of supporting your work, it stayed in the way?
- Can you imagine a specific group work assignment done completely without computer support?
Core CSCW Issues

- Articulation work
- Sharing an information space
- Media spaces
- Coordination
- Adapting the technology to the organisation, and vice versa
Readings


Course content and assignments

- On the Wiki page: http://tinyurl.com/CS4458-2020
- On Sulis: CS4458 https://sulis.ul.ie/x/0iPC07