



## Course syllabus

Faculty of Arts and Humanities  
Department of Cultural Sciences

4HI505 Digital historia: metoder, resurser och ontologier, 7,5  
högskolepoäng

Digital History: Methods, Resources and Ontologies, 7.5 credits

### **Main field of study**

Digital Humanities  
History

### **Subject**

History

### **Level**

Second cycle

### **Progression**

A1N

### **Date of Ratification**

Approved 2020-09-16.

Revised 2026-05-20. Revision of course literature.

The course syllabus is valid from autumn semester 2026.

### **Prerequisites**

Specific entry requirements: a Bachelor of Arts in any discipline or an equivalent degree of at least 180 credits.

You also need:

English B

Or:

English 6

Or:

English level 2

Or:

the equivalent

## Objectives

After completing the course, the student should be able to

- define digital history
- critically review the role of digital history as a discipline within the humanities
- apply a selection of digital tools and/or methods within the field of digital history, from a digital as well as a traditional perspective
- critically review digital aspects, digitalisation and the digital turn in history research and communication of history.

## Content

In this course we critically examine the question of what defines digital history. The course provides an introduction to different digital methods and tools that can be used for research, communication and analysis in the subject of history. The student gets to work with digitised source material and critically reflect upon the difference between digitisation and digitalisation. The course also offers an introduction to a selection of different tools in the following fields: digital transcription, databases, digital communication and visualisation. The course furthermore covers theoretical aspects, including a critical review of how digital tools and digitalisation can be used in history research and communication of history.

## Type of Instruction

Teaching is distance-based, using an online learning platform. It consists of self-study in accordance with the teacher's instructions, lectures, participation in web-based group discussions and practical components. Lectures and assignments are available on the course learning platform. Deadlines for assignments and examinations are given in the schedule on the learning platform.

## Examination

The course is assessed with the grades A, B, C, D, E or F.

The course is examined through hand-in assignments on a selection of the practical parts, as well as through a major final assignment. The exact format of this final assignment is adapted to the approach taken, but it may include a recorded presentation. The hand-in assignments are assessed with Fail or Pass. The final assignment is assessed with the A–F scale, where the grade A constitutes the highest grade on the scale and the remaining grades follow in descending order where the grade E is the lowest grade on the scale that will result in a pass. The grade F means that the student's performance is assessed as fail. Grading criteria for the A–F scale are communicated to the student in a separate document. The student is informed about the grading criteria for the course when the course starts, at the latest.

Resit examination is offered in accordance with Local regulations for courses and examination at the first and second-cycle level at Linnaeus University. If the university has decided that a student is entitled to special pedagogical support due to a disability, the examiner has the right to adapt the exam or to let the student conduct the exam in an alternative way.

## Course Evaluation

During or shortly after the course, a course evaluation should be conducted. The result and analysis of the course evaluation should be promptly communicated to the students who have taken the course. Students who are taking the course when it is offered the next time should be informed of the result at the course introduction.

## Other Information

When the course is given in English, examination is in English too.

## Required Reading and Additional Study Material

Andersen, Jack. "Archiving, Ordering, and Searching: Search Engines, Algorithms, Databases, and Deep Mediatization". *Media, Culture & Society* 40, nr 8 (november 2018): 1135–50. (\*)

Autio, H., Barbagallo, M., Ask, C., Bard Hagberg, D., Lindqvist Sandgren, E., Strinnhom Lagergren, K. (2021). "Historically Based Room Acoustic Analysis and Auralization of a Church in the 1470s". *Applied Sciences* 11:4. (\*)

Birnbaum, D.J., Bonde S. & Kestemont, M. (2017). "The Digital Middle Ages: An Introduction". *Speculum* 92, p. S1-S38. (\*)

Bowker, Geoffrey C., Karen Baker, Florence Millerand, and David Ribes. 'Toward Information Infrastructure Studies: Ways of Knowing in a Networked Environment'. In *International Handbook of Internet Research*, edited by Jeremy Hunsinger, Lisbeth Klastrup, and Matthew Allen, 97–117. Dordrecht: Springer Netherlands, 2009. (\*)

Champion, E. & Foka, A. (2020). "Art History, Heritage Games, and Virtual Reality", in K. Brown (ed.) *The Routledge Companion to Digital Humanities and Art History*. London: Routledge. (\*)

Cohen, D. J. & Rosenzweig, R. (2006). *Digital History*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press. Introduction, Ch 1–3, 7, 9. ISBN 978-0812219234 (\*)

Crymble, A. (2021). *Technology and the Historian: Transformations in the Digital Age*, pp. 1-11, Ch 5-6. (\*)

Dunn, S. 2019. *A History of Place in the Digital Age*. London: Routledge. Ch 1, "Spatial Humanities in the Digital Age: The Key Debates", p. 1–22 & Ch 3, "The longue durée of the Spatial Humanities: Part II: The Case of Archaeology", p. 46–54. 31 pages. ISBN 9781138223578 (\*)

Ellis Nilsson, S., Fröjmark, A., Zachrisson, T. (2026). "From Parchment to Pixels: Building a Digital Research Resource for the study of Medieval Lived Religion in Sweden and Finland". *Digital Humanities in the Nordic and Baltic Countries Publications*. 7 (4). 9 pages (\*)

Ellis Nilsson, S. (2020). "Digital history: digitizing and communicating the past: a case study", in J. Hansson & J. Svensson (eds.) *Doing digital humanities: concepts, approaches, cases*, p. 219–239. Växjö: Linnaeus University Press. 27 pages. (\*)

Elo, K. (2020) "Big Data, Bad Metadata. A Methodological Note on the Importance of Good Metadata in the Age of Digital History", in M. Fridlund, M. Oiva, & P. Paju (eds.). *Digital Histories: Emergent Approaches within the New Digital History*. Helsinki: Helsinki University Press. (\*)

Graham, S., Eve, S., Morgan C., & Pantos, A. (2019). "Hearing the past", in K. Kee, T. Compeau (eds.). *Seeing the Past with Computers: Experiments with Augmented Reality and Computer Vision for History*. Michigan: University of Michigan Press, p. 224-236. (\*)

Guldi, J. (2020). "The Common Landscape of Digital History", in M. Fridlund, M. Oiva, & P. Paju (eds.). *Digital Histories: Emergent Approaches within the New Digital History*. Helsinki: Helsinki University Press.

Jarlbrink, J. (2020) "All the Work that Makes It Work. Digital Methods and Manual Labour", in M. Fridlund, M. Oiva, & P. Paju (eds.). *Digital Histories: Emergent Approaches within the New Digital History*. Helsinki: Helsinki University Press. (\*)

Knox, H. & Walford, A. (2016). "Is There an Ontology to the Digital?" *Theorizing the Contemporary, Cultural Anthropology website* (March 24, 2016). (\*)

Manovich, Lev, "Databases as Symbolic Form". <http://manovich.net/index.php/projects/database-as-a-symbolic-form> (\*)

Milligan, I. (2022). *The Transformation of Historical Research in the Digital Age (Elements in Historical Theory and Practice)*, Sections 1.3, 2.3-27. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. (\*)

Nockels, J., Gooding, P. & Terras, M. (2024). "The Implications of Handwritten Text Recognition for Accessing the Past at Scale", *Journal of Documentation* 80, nr 7 (18 april 2024): 148–67. (\*)

Nygren, T., Foka, A. & Buckland, P. (2014). "The Status Quo of Digital Humanities in Sweden: Past, Present and Future of Digital History," *H-Soz-Kult, Humbolt University*. 18 pages. (\*)

Nygren, T. (2015). "Students Writing History Using Traditional and Digital Archives". *HUMAN IT* 12:3, p. 78–116. 39 pages. (\*)

Lünen, A. v. (2013), "Tracking in a New Territory: Re-imaging GIS for History", in Lünen, A. v. & C. Travis (eds.), *History and GIS: Epistemologies, Considerations and Reflections*. Dordrecht: Springer, p. 211–239. (\*)

Owens, T. (2015). "Digital Sources & Digital Archives: The Evidentiary Basis of Digital History". *Trevor Owens: User Centered Digital Memory*. (\*)

Petrulevich, A., Backman, A. & Adams, J. (2019), "Medieval Macrospace Through GIS: The Norse World Project's Approach". *The Cartographic Journal* 57:1. Circa 10 pages. (\*)

Putnam, L. (2016), "The Transnational and the Text-Searchable: Digitized Sources and the Shadows They Cast", in *Am. Hist. Rev.* 121. pp. 377–402. 26 pages. (\*)

Risam, R. (2019). *New Digital Worlds: Postcolonial Digital Humanities in Theory, Praxis, and Pedagogy*. Evanston, USA: Northwestern University Press. Selected excerpts, about 30 pages. (\*)

Robertson, S. et al., Arguing with Digital History working group (2017). "Digital History and Argument," white paper, Roy Rosenzweig Center for History and New

Media (November 13, 2017). 30 pages. (\*)

Robertson, S. (2016). "The Differences between Digital Humanities and Digital History". M. K. Gold & L. F. Klein (eds.). *Debates in the Digital Humanities*, 2016. 10 pages (\*)

Salmi, H. (2021). *What is Digital History?* Cambridge: Polity Press. 92 pages. (\*)

Virdee, P. (2022). "Histories and Memories in the Digital Age of Partition Studies", *The Oral History Review*, 49:2, pp. 328-345, 18 pages. (\*)

White, M. & Jackson, B. (2020). "A Service-Oriented and Open-Source Approach to Developing Virtual Museums", in K. Brown (ed.) *The Routledge Companion to Digital Humanities and Art History*. London: Routledge. 23 pages (\*)

Wolfgang, E. (2013). *Digital Memory and the Archive*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press. About 50 pages. (\*)

Wrisley, D. J. (2017). "Locating Medieval French, or Why We Collect and Visualize the Geographic Information of Texts". *Speculum* 92, s. S145-S169. (\*)

Ca 100 pages of scientific literature chosen in consultation with the instructor.

#### **Additional literature**

Baca, Murtha (2016). "Intro to Metadata." In Murtha Baca (ed.), *Introduction to Metadata*, 3rd ed. Los Angeles: Getty Publications. (\*)

Boyle, J. & Burgess, H. J. (ed.) (2017). *The Routledge Research Companion to Digital Medieval Literature*. London: Routledge. Selected chapters. (\*)

Burrows, T. (2017). "The History and Provenance of Manuscripts in the Collection of Sir Thomas Phillipps: New Approaches to Digital Representation". *Speculum* 92, p. S39-S64. (\*)

Crymble, A. (2021). *Technology and the Historian: Transformations in the Digital Age*. (\*)

Driscoll, Kevin (2012). 'From Punched Cards to "Big Data": A Social History of Database Populism'. *Communication +1* 1, no. 1 (2012). (\*)

Dunn, S. (2019). *A History of Place in the Digital Age*. London: Routledge. Remaining chapters. (\*)

Ellis Nilsson, S., Zachrisson, T. Fröjmark, A., et al. (2023). "Mapping Saints: creating a digital spatial research infrastructure to study medieval lived religion", in A. Petrulevich & S. Skovgaard Boeck (eds.). *Digital Spatial Infrastructures and Worldviews in Pre-Modern Societies*. York: ARC Humanities Press, 33-58. (\*)

Frankle, E. "More Crowdsourced Scholarship: Citizen History". *AAM Center for the Future of Museums blog*. Available at: <https://www.aam-us.org/2011/07/28/more-crowdsourced-scholarship-citizen-history/> Retrieved: 23/06/2020. (\*)

Fridlund, M., Oiva, M. & Paju, P. (eds.) (2020). *Digital Histories: Emergent Approaches within the New Digital History*. Helsinki: Helsinki University Press. (\*)

Gitelman, Lisa, ed. (2013) *'Raw Data' Is an Oxymoron*. Infrastructures Series. Cambridge, Massachusetts; London, England: The MIT Press. (Introduction + 1 chapter).

Gregory, I., DeBats, D. & Lafreniere, D. (eds.) (2018). *The Routledge Companion to Spatial History*. London: Routledge. Selected chapters.

Kee, K. & Compeau, T. (eds.) (2019). *Seeing the Past with Computers. Experiments with Augmented Reality and Computer Vision for History*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press.(\*)

Leon, S. M. (2017). "Returning Women to the History of Digital History". *[bracket] images, teaching technology...* Available at: <https://www.6floors.org/bracket/2016/03/07/returning-women-to-the-history-of-digital-history/> Retrieved: 23/06/2020. (\*)

Milligan, I. (2022). *The Transformation of Historical Research in the Digital Age*. (\*)

Milligan, I. (2019). *History in the Age of Abundance? How the Web Is Transforming Historical Research*. Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press. Ch 2, pp. 62-105. 44 pages. (\*)

Milligan, Ian. (2013). "Illusionary Order: Online Databases, Optical Character Recognition, and Canadian History, 1997–2010." *Canadian Historical Review* 94:4, p. 540–69. (\*)

Muehlberger, G., et al. (2019) "Transforming scholarship in the archives through handwritten text recognition: Transkribus as a case study". *Journal of Documentation* 75:5, p. 954–976. (\*)

Ramsay, Stephen (2016). [Databases](#). In S. Schreibman, R. Siemens & J. Unsworth (eds.), *A Companion to Digital Humanities*. Wiley-Blackwell. (\*)

Terras, M. (2016). "Crowdsourcing in the Digital Humanities". In S. Schreibman, R. Siemens & J. Unsworth (eds.), *A New Companion to Digital Humanities*. Wiley-Blackwell, p. 420–439. (\*)

Texts marked with an asterisk (\*) are available on the course learning platform or via a link.