



Programme syllabus

Faculty of Arts and Humanities

Digital humaniora, masterprogram, 120 högskolepoäng

Digital Humanities, Master Programme, 120 credits

Level

Second Level

Date of Ratification

Approved by the Faculty Board within the Faculty of Arts and Humanities 2019-09-10

The programme syllabus is valid from autumn semester 2020

Prerequisites

General entry requirements for studies on second-cycle level, and specific entry requirements:

- At least 90 credits including independent work of at least 15 credits with arts and humanities or social sciences as main field of study, or informatics, information science, computer science, or a related discipline;
- English B/English 6.

Description of Programme

The aim of the programme is for the student to develop comprehensive theoretical and practical knowledge about digital humanities, representing a bridge between the humanities and technology. Included are also theoretical aspects and critical perspectives on the opportunities and challenges of the digital transformation of the humanities, and of society at large.

At the same time, the student acquires practical skills in digital methods to solve a number of problems within the cultural heritage sector and humanities research. Thus, the programme prepares students for current and future positions in public and private sectors, including cultural heritage institutions, public authorities, and companies providing related services. The programme also provides a foundation for further studies on third-cycle level.

Objectives

According to the Swedish Higher Education Ordinance, the degree objectives for a Degree of Master (120 credits) is that the student will:

Knowledge and understanding

- demonstrate knowledge and understanding in the main field of study, including both broad knowledge of the field and a considerable degree of specialised

knowledge in certain areas of the field, as well as in-depth insight into current research and development work, and

- demonstrate in-depth methodological knowledge in the main field of study.

Competence and skills

- demonstrate the ability to critically and systematically integrate knowledge and analyse, assess and deal with complex phenomena, issues and situations even with limited information,
- demonstrate the ability to identify and formulate issues critically, autonomously and creatively as well as to plan and, using appropriate methods, undertake advanced tasks within predetermined time frames and, thereby, contribute to the formation of knowledge as well as the ability to evaluate this work,
- demonstrate the ability in speech and writing, both nationally and internationally, to clearly report and discuss his or her conclusions and the knowledge and arguments on which they are based in dialogue with different audiences, and
- demonstrate the skills required for participation in research and development work or autonomous employment in some other qualified capacity.

Judgement and approach

- demonstrate the ability to make assessments in the main field of study informed by relevant scientific, social and ethical aspects and also to demonstrate awareness of ethical aspects of research and development work,
- demonstrate insight into the possibilities and limitations of research, its role in society and the responsibility of the individual for how it is used, and
- demonstrate the ability to identify the personal need for further knowledge and take responsibility for his or her ongoing learning.

Objectives specific to the programme

After completing the programme, the student will also:

- demonstrate the ability to summarise major approaches to digital humanities research while describing, comparing, and evaluating the usefulness of influential theoretical views within digital humanities,
- be able to apply one or more digital research methods to relevant humanities research questions, as well as be able to critically describe the possibilities and limitations of the used digital methods,
- be able to exemplify theoretical and methodological problems using in-depth, subject-specific, and empirical evidence, and
- be able to critically discuss the relationship between problem formulations in digital humanities research and society's needs and expectations on this research and development.

Content

The main field of study is digital humanities. The programme consists of a total of two years of full-time studies.

A programme coordinator is responsible for the quality assurance, development, and coordination of the programme. A programme council works for long-term strategical development of the programme.

Programme overview

The programme is based on three comprehensive problem areas:

- a) Theoretical foundations of digital humanities – including an overview of the field of digital humanities, the origins of the field, the interdisciplinary and collaborative nature of the field, potential and challenges ensuing from the complexity involved; as well as the wider context of digital transformation at different levels of society and academia, examined through the lens of critical theory to contextualise and problematise implementation of new digital technology in academia and society.
- b) Digital methods for the humanities, including how to formulate humanities research questions and implement technology to get answers as well as how to evaluate the results critically; examples of such methods are programming and interactive technologies.
- c) Humanities research data, including data from cultural heritage institutions, as well as related digitisation processes and making data available on the Semantic Web, and challenges of digitisation and data use; for instance, concerning ethics, politics, and policies.

Semester 1

Introduction and in-depth studies of digital humanities, critical theory and digital transformation, as well as digital research methods for the humanities.

Semester 2

Introduction to complexities surrounding digitisation of cultural heritage, including issues and implications relating to ethics, politics, and policies in the digital world, as well as technologies for interaction with cultural heritage and other humanities research data, and linking the data in the Semantic Web.

During the second semester, it is possible to replace the last two modules (Module 7 and 8) with an independent project, 15 credits within the main field of study, and thus enable a 60 credit master's degree.

Semester 3

Eligible courses are offered from which the student chooses in consultation with programme coordinator in order to obtain a degree with a coherent content with specialisation on the topic of choice (for instance, digital humanities and library and information science, digital humanities and history, digital humanities and digital transformation, digital humanities and data-intensive methods, etc). The field of subject should be aligned with the topic of the final thesis, 30 credits. Students are offered the opportunity to take courses abroad.

Semester 4

Independent degree project, 30 credits. Students are encouraged to carry out their degree project in collaboration with external actors.

Courses on the programme:

Semester 1

1. Introduction to digital humanities, 7.5 credits, A1N*. The course provides an introduction to theoretical underpinnings of the field of digital humanities and insight into a range of sub-fields and challenges. The interdisciplinary and collaborative nature of the field is also discussed. (Theoretical foundations of digital humanities)
2. Critical theory and digital transformation, 7.5 credits, A1N*. The course discusses different perspectives on how the critical tradition of the humanities and social sciences can contextualise and problematise implementation of new technology in research and society. (Theoretical foundations of digital humanities)
3. Digital humanities research methods, 7.5 credits, A1N*. The course provides an overview of digital research methods as part of contemporary approaches to solve problems in the humanities. (Digital methods for the humanities)
4. Programming for digital humanities, 7.5 credits, A1N*. The course introduces basic programming concepts with application on simple text analysis. (Digital methods for the humanities)

Semester 2

5. Interactive technologies for digital humanities, 7.5 credits, A1N*. The course provides an introduction to interactive technologies with application in digital humanities, including virtual reality, mobile-based technologies, digital storytelling, multi-touch interaction, gaming, and app design. (Digital methods for the humanities)
6. Digitisation of cultural heritage, 7.5 credits, A1N*. The course covers various aspects relating to digitisation of information objects in libraries, archives, museums, galleries; XML encoding; retrieval. (Humanities research data)
7. Linked data and information structures, 7.5 credits, A1N*. The course introduces premises for cultural heritage in the Semantic Web, including major standards and information structures. (Humanities research data)
8. Information ethics, politics and policies in the digital world, 7.5 credits, A1N*. The course addresses ethical perspectives and challenges for using data in digital research, policies, and politics. (Humanities research data)

Semester 3

A number of eligible courses at different departments and faculties are offered depending on demand and availability. Eligible courses may also be taken at a partner university. The eligible courses must be chosen in consultation with programme coordinator, in order to make sure that they constitute a coherent body of knowledge within the overall field of digital humanities (a total of 30 credits).

Semester 4

1. Master's thesis, 30 credits, A2E*.

*=course within the main field of study of the programme (a total of 90 credits)

Societal relevance

The initiative digital humanities at Linnaeus University has a strong collaborative component with external sectors. Libraries, archives, and museums are key players in digital humanities research and development. Throughout the courses, professionals from the public and private sectors will, therefore, be invited to contribute to research-based teaching by discussing challenges and solutions from a practical perspective. A strong collaboration is established through the thesis work, which in turn is beneficial to the general public.

Internationalisation

Studies abroad or internship abroad within administration, teaching or research can take place during the third semester on the programme, this is subject to agreement with programme coordinator.

Digital humanities is an international field of research that is well-established in global research and teaching environments. The teachers on the programme are active researchers within humanities, computer-based social sciences, and technical subjects in a number of European countries and in North America.

The programme is offered online. All this contributes to bringing international perspectives, ideas and different cultural backgrounds together on the programme.

Perspectives on the programme

The perspectives sustainable development, gender, diversity, and internationalisation are part of the programme through the course content, the list of required reading, and the design of examinations. The perspective sustainable development is brought to the fore through reflections concerning how research and practice in (digital) humanities can help meet societal goals. Through the topics dealt with on the programme, such as digitisation of cultural heritage, data and information management, and related ethics and privacy issues, the programme contributes to the development of an economically sustainable society. The goal to make cultural heritage available to all online, with adaptations for different target groups, adds to this further.

Making cultural heritage an integrated part of global information structures, contributes to promoting cultural diversity, intercultural understanding, and other aspects of social sustainability.

Gender and diversity are incorporated into discussions about access to and searches for information, as well as interactions between humans and machines. The programme deals with specific challenges concerning equal treatment in today's world through relevant modules and related course literature, for instance, through a discussion on different digital interfaces for a variety of end user groups, in order to provide equal treatment for users accessing cultural heritage.

Throughout the course of the programme, there will also be focus on leadership and organisational development in collaboration with the surrounding society, with adaptations to the conditions that characterise the public and private sectors that work with digital humanities, in particular the cultural heritage sector.

Widened knowledge perspective

The idea of the programme is to mediate knowledge and skills that professionals and researchers in humanities are in need of today. The programme strengthens the student's ability to use subject-specific and general digital humanities, social sciences, and technology, and also strengthens the student's ability to understand, compare, and evaluate various theoretical traditions and emerging approaches in the work with current and future problems within the field. Through formulations of problems and theories with their basis in humanities and social sciences (which today are transforming and expanding as a result of digital transformations), students learn how to produce new knowledge and solutions also within areas such as information and computer science.

The emphasis of the programme is on the current and future role of cultural institutions' social significance and usability in the digital era. The aim of the programme is to provide the students with the knowledge and skills needed for collective work with complex societal challenges in interdisciplinary groups at their future workplaces.

Entrepreneurial approach

Digital humanities has a strong collaboration component with external sectors: libraries, archives, and museums are frequent actors in research and development within the field. Also companies that carry out services with connection to digital cultural heritage are involved. Through the independent thesis project, 30 credits, each student gets the opportunity to work directly with the needs of these institutions and companies. Professionals from the cultural heritage sector and companies are invited to contribute to the research-based teaching with authentic challenges from the field of work.

How these perspectives are integrated into the programme and examined is described in the syllabus for each course.

Quality Development

The Faculty of Arts and Humanities has a quality-assurance system for follow-up and development of its programmes. An education council prepares programme syllabi and other matters that concern quality issues, like degree-awarding powers and selection of courses and programmes offered, before decisions are made by the faculty board. Revised and new course syllabi are prepared by the Syllabus Committee before a decision on ratification is made by head of department or dean.

Reviews of the selection of courses and programmes offered are carried out on a continuous basis within the frame of the faculty's systematic quality-assurance work.

Degree Certificate

After completion of studies that correspond to the requirements stated in the Higher Education Ordinance and those stated in the local degree ordinance at Linnaeus University the student can apply for a degree.

Students who have completed the programme Digital Humanities, master programme, 120 credits, may obtain the following degree:

Master of Arts (Main field of study: Digital Humanities)

The degree certificate is bilingual (Swedish/English). The degree certificate will be accompanied by a Diploma Supplement (English).

Other Information

Students are responsible for finding an institution or private business for their final thesis project, anywhere in the world, in consultation with the teachers on the programme. Any costs for travel arrangements to and from the workplace are paid for by the student.

Any expenses in connection with excursions and possible studies and practice placements abroad are paid by the student. Certain modules may also be part of other courses and programmes.