



Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences
English

Syllabus

Narrative in video games: A historical overview

Course Code:	ENGAM3
Course Title:	Narrative in video games: A historical overview <i>Berättande i datorspel: En historisk översikt</i>
Credits:	7.5
Degree Level:	Undergraduate level
Progressive Specialisation:	First cycle, has only upper-secondary level entry requirements (G1N)

Major Field of Study:

Course Approval

The syllabus was approved by the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences 2025-09-05, and is valid from the Spring semester 2026 at Karlstad University.

Prerequisites

General admission requirements and upper secondary level English 6 or English level 2, or equivalent

Learning Outcomes

Upon completion of the course, students should be able to:

1. give an account of different forms of narrative that have been used in the history of English-language video games,
2. reflect upon and discuss the relationship between video games and their paratexts as well as the role of paratext in narrative, and
3. carry out basic analyses of narrative in video games from historical perspectives.

Content

The course treats narrative and narrative technique in digital games (video and computer games) from English-language contexts, and provides an overview of a historical period,

approx. 1970-2020, when digital games have emerged as an important domain of cultural expression and narration. Digital games offer narrative in many different ways, through texts, images, and other modalities, and through the gamer's interaction with gaming systems and game worlds as well as paratexts and related material. Through examples from the history of games and study visits to a historical archive, students encounter a broad range of gaming materials that represent various narrative techniques and modalities.

Instruction is in the form of lectures, seminars, and study visits. The course includes mandatory meetings which can be found in the online schedule and in the study guide.

Reading List

See separate document.

Examination

All learning outcomes are assessed based on individual oral and written presentations. Learning outcomes 1 and 2 are also assessed based on active participation in seminars.

If students have a decision from Karlstad University entitling them to Targeted Study Support due to a documented disability, the examiner has the right to give such students an adapted examination or to examine them in a different manner.

Grades

One of the grades Distinction (VG), Pass (G), or Fail (U) is awarded in the examination of the course.

Quality Assurance

Follow-up relating to learning conditions and goal-fulfilment takes place both during and upon completion of the course in order to ensure continuous improvement. Course evaluation is partly based on student views and experiences obtained in accordance with current regulations and partly on other data and documentation. Students will be informed of the result of the evaluation and of any measures to be taken.

Course Certificate

A course certificate will be provided upon request.

Additional information

The local regulations for studies at the Bachelor and Master levels at Karlstad University stipulate the obligations and rights of students and staff.