

*Digitale Medien und  
Geschichtswissenschaften*  
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Bern

Tapio Onnela:  
*E-learning history in Europe. An overview*

Tapio Onnela

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HAKU  
UUTTA!

# Agricola

Suomen  
historiaverkko

KARTTA  
HAKEMISTO

historian äärelle

tutkimus, opetus, seurat

arkistot, kirjastot, museot

ajankohtaista

*Uutiset ja keskustelu  
Tapahtumakalenteri*

*Ennen&Nyt Historian tietosanomat  
Kirja-arvostelut*

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Historian äärelle | Tutkimus, opetus, seurat | Arkistot, kirjastot, museot | Ajankohtaista  
Agricolan kartta | Haku Agricolasta | Hakemisto | Uutta!  
Tekijät | Palaute ja yhteystiedot | [Etusivulle](#)



In this presentation I will discuss:

experiences in using e-learning for teaching history in:

- Finnish Virtual University of History
- findings from *eHistory Learning Environment Evaluation* (eHLEE) and other international projects



# Finnish Virtual University of History

- started in 2000
- 10 departments from 8 universities
- international partners
- co-ordination: Department of History, University of Turku

Historian valtakunnallinen verkko-  
opetus  
Nordiskt virtuellt nätverk för historia  
Finnish Virtual University of History



- Ajankohtaista
- Yleistä hankkeesta
- Syyshätkä 2009
- Kooste kaikista verkkokursseista
- Ilmoittautuminen kursseille
- Pelisäännöt, yhteystiedot, linkit
- Hankkeen organisaatio
- Yhteyshenkilöt, tulosten ilmoittaminen

## SYYSLUKUKAUSI 2009

Historian verkkojulkaisemisen 3-6 op  
Hyötyliikuntaa ja kilpailua, marginaalilajeja ja viihdettä. Verkkokurssi liikuntahistorian muutoslinjoista 3 op  
Identities in European History 4-5 op  
Keskiajan symboliikan harjoituskurssi 4 op  
Keskiajan uskontohistoriaa 4 op  
Sukupuoli ja teknologia 4 op  
Sukupuoli, politiikka ja kansalaisuus autonomian ajan Suomessa 4-6 op  
Sukupuolihistoria 4-6 op  
Suomalaisuus populaarimusiikissa 2-4 op  
Tiedon haku ja hallinta – Tietoverkot historiantutkimuksen apuna 3 op  
Yhdyskuntien kehitys ja vesi - vesihuollon historiaa 3 op

Lisätietoja Tapio Ornela  
 Suomen virtuaalioyliopisto  
Suomen virtuaalioyliopisto, Turku, Suomi

# Locations of member departments



# Finnish Virtual University of History

## **Objectives:**

- enhance cooperation between history departments by using of e-learning
- diversify and improve the supply of history teaching

## **Outcomes:**

- 51 different virtual courses to offer
- in the academic year 2007-2008 it offered
  - 24 courses
  - 507 students participated

**Funding:** Ministry of Education until 2006, history departments

# eHistory Learning Environment and Evaluation (eHLEE)

Duration: Sept. 2004 - June 2006

Prime objectives:

- enhance the use of e-learning in history departments
- enhance cooperation between history departments

□ Means:

- evaluation of prior experiences in e-learning in history
- exploring the possibilities of e-learning in practice with pilotcourse
- disseminating the best practices

Funding: E-learning initiative of the European Commission



# Thematic toolkit for evaluating e-learning in history

- pedagogy
- materials
- platforms
- administration
- quality issues
- assessment
- intercultural issues
- language



20 cases: organisations pedagogical experiments and materials.



## Pilot course: *Identities in European History*

- 5 ECTS credits
- October 2005 - January 2006
- About 50 students finished the course
- International interaction for both students and teachers





## Identities in European history

### Course Menu

- Homepage
- Study guide
- Course calendar
- Discussions
- Chat
- 1. Getting acquainted
- 2. Concepts of identity
- 3. Exploring identities
  - Alcalá: The Jews in I
  - Bologna: Roman An
  - Hannover Siegen: T
  - Pisa: The Mediterrar
  - Turku & Virtual Univ
  - Uppsala: Us and the
  - Cork & BSRS: The J
- 4. Presentations from
- 5. Analyzing identities
  - Gender and Collecti
  - Identity through reli
  - Language in the forr
  - Migration and nation
  - Religion, otherness
  - European Unificator
- 6. Presentations from
- 7. Debating identities
- Local additions

### Homepage



Study guide



Course calendar



Course Map



Start here

### Noticeboard [Jan 16, 2006]

Dear Students, Tutors and Course planners,

We have had three months full of work but simultaneously very interesting and inspiring cooperation! It has been great to follow the enthusiasm in the numerous forums and study groups of our pilot course. We wish the experience has been rewarding also to You students and tutors of this course.

# International E-learning projects

”Spinoffs” from eHLEE-project

- *Nordiskt virtuellt nätverk för historia* (2006-)  
Scandinavian cooperation between Finland, Island, Sweden, Denmark, Norway
- different small scale compositions of partners, at the moment “Identities in European history” with Bologna, Siegen, Köln, Finnish universities



Small scale questionnaire from 2008 to Cliohnet members at the meeting in Trabzon:

1. Do you have a web-based history course on the master level?
2. If yes, what theme/period it is covered?
3. If no, have you any plans to create a web-based masters history course?
4. Would you be willing to allow your masters students to participate in a web-based course offered by a Cliohnet member university? Would they receive credit for the course?
5. Would you be willing to participate in a network of web-based master-level history courses either as a provider of a course or as a provider of students?

26 departments answered from 17 different countries

- \* 5 universities offer web-based courses covering a variety of topics and time periods.
- \* 6 are planning to create such courses.
- \* 19 would be willing to allow their students to participate in a course offered by a ClioNet member and
- \* 18 thought (with various reservations) that their students would receive credit for the course.
- \* All but one were willing to participate in a network of courses by providing a course, students or both.

# Strengths of e-learning in history

*Internationality, co-operation, flexibility, diversity*

- \* Student mobility can be increased by giving students possibilities of studying in international context.
- \* Possibility to deal with materials of several languages is a great asset to critical thought in study of history.
- \* Study of history is mainly based on national traditions: e-learning can illuminate different historical traditions



# Strengths of e-learning in history

e-learning can...

- create teaching and research cooperation in departments of history: nationally and internationally
- improve writing skills and scientific argumentation
- give opportunities for diversifying teaching by giving possibilities to form co-operative teaching groups for more marginal sub-disciplines or rare special courses of history



# Strengths of e-learning in history

e-learning can...

- increase student mobility by giving students possibility to study in international context.
- familiarize students with digitized materials





# Challenges

- changing academic teaching traditions takes time: academia is conservative
- combining academic traditions and practices is difficult
- language problems in international groups
- e-learning is still a new phenomenon, there is lack of institutional structures and financial support



# Challenges

- e-learning is not institutionalized in the structure of history departments. This causes a low level of understanding the possibilities of e-learning
- to start an e-learning course is expensive and time consuming
- access to digital literature and research databases varies very much between universities
- e-learning courses tend to cause too big workload for planners, teachers and students



## Conclusions

- our environment is destined to become ever more digitized and the internet is playing an ever-greater role, historians have to follow
- tools of the digital revolution are not used in teaching and researching history as much as they could, they are too important to be left only to the 'hard sciences' and to the commercial world



## Conclusions

- prime importance is **not** the technology itself but **content**, and **communication between people** within the institutions
- digitized content and communication technology are the most valuable and cost-effective tools to promote co-operative teaching within universities, **especially in international context**
- historians are needed, again, to understand changes in digital world



# Contacts and further information

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**Thanks!**





Introducing the book

## *Identities in European History*

- 5 ECTS credits
- October 2005 - January 2006
- About 50 students finished the course
- International interaction for both students and teachers
- □





# Courses in English offered by Finnish Virtual University of History

- \* 19th Century Europe: A Cultural History
- \* Finland in the Cold War international economy
- \* Identities in European History
- \* Nordic Identities in History
- \* North and south as dimensions of thought
- \* Perspectives on the Nordic Countries in the Middle Ages
- \* The History of Consumption
- \* The Key Texts on Nordic Welfare State
- \* The State of Sound: Popular Music and Nationality



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## Cliohnet questionnaire in Trabzon 2008

1. Do you have a web-based history course on the master level?
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