



Course Description

***The Future of Storytelling
(MOOC), #StoryMOOC***

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Project Consortium: University of Applied Sciences Magdeburg-Stendal (Germany); Aalborg University (Denmark); Lapland University of Applied Sciences (Finland); University of Lincoln (United Kingdom); University of Ljubljana (Slovenia); Potsdam University of Applied Sciences (Germany); Tampere University of Applied Sciences (Finland); University of Tampere (Finland); YMCA University of Applied Sciences (Germany)



The Future of Storytelling

#StoryMOOC

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Potsdam University of Applied Sciences, 2017

Abstract

»The Future of Storytelling« is an interdisciplinary massive open online course (MOOC) with a focus on analysing, contextualising, and creating stories and narratives in current media. The course ran two times: as MOOC on iversity.org in 2013; second as an OnCreate collaborative online course in 2016. The course is based on recorded video lectures, quizzes, and creative tasks. All video material is published on Youtube under Creative Common Licence and allows teachers and universities to use this material for their own courses. Due to the course topic it is recommended to all disciplines in the area of film, media, storytelling, and / or design. »TeamMap« as a method for teambuilding was proved successfully to build up local and thematically learning groups. Suggested collaboration modes are parallel assignments (especially for cMOOCs) and asynchronous collaboration for normal (open) online courses. For MOOC courses (massive—with a huge number of participants) it is recommended to run the course on a MOOC-platform. Because of limited resources, University of Applied Sciences Potsdam is not able to offer this MOOC regularly / annually.

Course Description

Course announcement

In this 8-chapter course you learn how to analyze, contextualize, and create stories and narratives in current media: from understanding storytelling basics to discussing new online tools and formats, this course brings together a network of media researchers, creators, and students. This Storytelling-MOOC focus on fictional formats. Are you interested in the mechanics of current fiction formats? Do you want to know how stories are told? Do you want to analyze, understand, contextualize and





create stories and narratives? Then join our MOOC and share our passion for storytelling!

What to expect? Together with a whole network of media researchers, creators and students we will: 1.) learn storytelling basics such as antagonist/protagonist relationships, narrative/narrated time, ... and 2.) have a look at exciting current media projects — analyze how they are designed and executed based on aforementioned basics — and discuss how (and if) new online tools and formats change the way stories are told and perceived.

It offers weekly video material, lessons, interviews and tasks on the following topics (not necessarily in this order): storytelling basics; serial formats (on the TV, web and beyond); storytelling in role-playing games; interactive storytelling in video games; transmedia storytelling; alternate-reality gaming; augmented reality and location-based storytelling; and the role of tools, interfaces and information architectures in current storytelling.

Our goal is to inspire and help understand. To broaden our horizon of what is and might be possible and what has already been attempted, and what has succeeded or even failed – and why. In several little tasks you'll analyze and practice storytelling on your own and in teams. No prior knowledge of storytelling mechanics is needed, but can be helpful. Interest in creative processes and new technologies is welcome and encouraged. – You don't know what an alternate-reality game, RPG or transmedia storytelling is? – Great, you'll learn it here. – You are a storytelling professional? – Great, we hope to inspire you. Please feel free to help us inspire others by sharing interesting links, events and projects on our Facebook page.

Collaboration Mode

Suggested collaboration modes are parallel assignments (especially for cMOOCs) and asynchronous collaboration for normal (open) online courses.

Methodological-didactic approach

The course offers a collection of professionally filmed and edited short video lectures of FHP lecturers and guest lecturers (three to 20 minutes) in English; animated graphics to display the core statements; accompanying quizzes for understanding support; Discussions for





exchanging the students among themselves or with the lecturers;
“Creative Tasks”: weekly homework with creative core, which is therefore uploaded or linked in the discussion forums; source lists for the respective partial capitals; Other materials; e.g. The embedding of trailers via YouTube or free pdfs, websites ... and external communication platforms (Facebook / Twitter / YouTube channel, smaller community-based StoryMOOC learning groups on, among others, blogs).
It is not so much about a lecture-like or dogmatic knowledge dissemination as a guide and a stimulus for dealing with the topics and the continuation of the discourse, which is already guaranteed in the MOOC lectures by the various views of the lecturers.

Duration, Intensity & ECTS

Duration & Intensity

This MOOC started on October 25th, 2013 and ran for eight weeks until December 20th, 2013 for the first time. All video material were available for another year for those enrolled prior to the course closing date on December 20th 2013, however, the StoryMOOC team was not be consistently present on the discussions boards after December 20th 2013. To make tasks count for the course, given tasks could be worked on for a week and they were due the following Friday, again 10 am CET. From just watching the video lessons (about 20 to 60 minutes per week) to engaging in discussions and tasks (about 2 to 4 hours per week), exploring the reading list, and even presenting the own current projects via essays or video link on the Facebook page, the involvement was entirely up to participants.

»The Future of Storytelling« ran as OnCreate online course in 2016 on in-com.org, the learning management platform of the department of design / Potsdam University of Applied Sciences.

ECTS:

No ECTS; Statements of Participation (Certificates) were available for any participant who has completed the course by 80% or more.

Lecturers & StoryMOOC Co-Creator:

Christina Maria Schollerer (Research Associate & Freelance Writer); Prof. Constanze Langer, Professor for »Visual Interface Design«; Prof. Winfried





Gerling, Professor for »Concepts & Aesthetics of New Media«; Julian van Dieken (Filmmaker & Director); Bernadette Klausberger (Project Management); Jannes Schwentuchowski (Student Assistant | Content Management); Alexandra Schulz (Community Management)

Guest Lecturers:

Rebecca Ahlen – Head of Digital | Ufa Serial Drama (Chapter 2/3); Dr. Mark Butler – Media Theorist & Futurologist | Digital Games Research Center, University of Potsdam (Chapter 5); Prof. Dr. Jan Distelmeyer – Professor for History and Theory of Technical Media, University of Applied Sciences Potsdam (Chapter 3/4); Des Doyle – Director of the documentary »Showrunners« (Chapter 2); Cornelia Funke – Best-selling Author of the Mirrorworld and Inkheart Series (Chapter 1/7/8); Maria Grau Stenzel – Project Manager at Honig Studios | Co-Creator of »Milli – a little, big journey around the world« (Chapter 1/4/7/8); Prof. Dr. Hans-Christoph Hobohm – Professor for Library Information Science, University of Applied Sciences Potsdam (Chapter 1/4); Patrick Möller – Freelance Transmedia Storyteller | Social Media Experience Designer (Chapter 7/8); Robert Pratten – Transmedia Storyteller | Founder of www.tstoryteller.com/ (Chapter 1/4/7/8); Grit Schuster – Game Developer | Interaction Designer (Chapter 5); Michael Straeubig – Lecturer | Game Designer | Creator of »Secret City« (Chapter 4/6); Mark Wachholz – Author & Screenwriter | Co-Author of »The Dark Eye« RPG universe (Chapter 4)

Platforms

MOOC-Platform:

<https://iversity.org/de/courses/the-future-of-storytelling>

Methods

Used OnCreate Methods: »TeamMap« for TeamBuilding

<https://www.zeemaps.com/map?group=695139>

**see also: experience report*

Here you can see where all the other #StoryMOOC participants come from. Participants were free to add their own entry via the “add” button in the top right corner. They could add their address, but they didn’t had to. There was also a “details” tab with three short questions. These should help to get to know one another a bit better.



Curriculum & weekly tasks

The topics of the eight teaching units range from “classic storytelling” in film, TV and web series to “storytelling in games” and the creation of “story universes” in transmedia projects.

Week	Topic of the unit	Creative Task Description
01	Introduction to Storytelling	
02	Serial Storytelling on TV	<p>YOUR TASK IN GENERAL</p> <p>Please pick any existing serial protagonist that you know very well, and use the attached PDF/the form below to create a character profile. This profile should include his or her most important traits. Please post the ANSWER below this question post. This is helpful because ...</p> <p>a) ... you can compare this profile to that of other protagonists.</p> <p>b) ... you can learn how serial characters are built and why some characters work better than others.</p> <p>YOUR TASK IN DETAIL:</p> <p>Whether it is desires, enemies, professions, hobbies, religions, behaviorisms or else: Please copy and fill out the form with all the info you got from watching the show. (the list is also downloadable via pdf) Maybe it helps to rewatch one of the episodes first. Think about what makes this protagonist worth following through a whole series of episodes. What is it that HOOKed you?</p>
03	Storytelling on the Web: Web Series & beyond	<p>YOUR TASK IN GENERAL</p> <p>Last week we have dealt with character profiles for characters that already exist. This week we build on exactly this task by using your knowledge about how to create fictional characters to create a new fictional one. This character can be entirely your own creation, for example created for a story you’ve already written or a character that you’re just inventing – or – if that’s too difficult – you can vaguely base it on a classic fictional character from Lady Macbeth to Sherlock Holmes – ... it doesn’t matter as long as the character is unique and yours, with it’s own original name.</p> <p>YOUR TASK IN DETAIL</p> <p>1 Whether it is desires, enemies, professions, hobbies, religions, behaviorisms or</p>



else: Please think about who your character is, where he/she is coming from. Feel free to enlist the help of the profile sheet from last week. (that is also available as a pdf on the right)

2 Find a „home“ for your fictional character. Meaning: give him a place to be, a blog, a Facebook account, a career on LinkedIn, a twitter account or else. Create his or her identity.

3 To clarify that this is a fictional StoryMOOC character, make this character state somewhere that he/she’s a friend/acquaintance/enemy/fan of (...well, give him ANY relation to...) a certain „Aunt Renie“ (a friendly, old, world-traveling lady from Potsdam, and a character we’ll meet later in our MOOC).

4 If you like: Connect your character to other new characters.

04	Storytelling on the Web: Web Series & beyond	<p>YOUR TASK IN GENERAL Get inspired, and inspire others.</p> <p>YOUR TASK IN DETAIL Take a camera, be it you mobile phone, a webcam, ... , and introduce yourself to the other StoryMOOCers, telling us</p> <p>who you are where you are from and most importantly: which works inspired your interest in storytelling most up to know. Pick out 1-3 works of art, literature, film, TV, game, a website or else and tell us what’s so special about it that you think it might help inspire somebody else anywhere on this planet. If you don’t want to be in the video, and/or don’t want us to know where you’re from, that’s fine as well. Then please make it just about your piece of inspiration.</p> <p>Please create a new video as a response to this task (and don’t upload image films of your company, ads, ...). A very nice first example is offered here by our StoryMOOCer Nicola from Adelaide.</p>
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05	Storytelling in Digital Games	<p>YOUR TASK IN GENERAL</p> <p>Your Creative Task of The Week this time is: Please think about which digital game fascinated or impressed you most up to now and tell us why!</p> <p>No matter whether it's the story, the interface, the design, the game mechanics, or else ... tell us.</p> <p>And keep in mind: you're not restricted to text as an answering medium. Either use whatever you feel most comfortable in. Or: use the exact opposite, try some new media form if you like.</p> <p>YOUR TASK IN DETAIL:</p> <p>Please think about and write down/film/tape/...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- a short introduction/summary/abstract of the game- and what impressed you most (interface, story, gameplay, characters, ...)- and think about what story it told/how this story was interwoven/used in the game.
06	Entering Reality: The Extended Screen	<p>Create a simple location-based story!</p> <p>YOUR TASK IN DETAIL</p> <p>The Basics:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Pick 3-5 locations in a two mile radius that you know very well. (e.g. a tree, a building, a church tower, ..., whatever you like)2. Take the character you created in Chapter #3 (or create a new one if you prefer).3. Use both, the locations and characters to tell a little site-specific, location-based story. (One example is shown below.) <p>The Complete Package:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">4. Go out and lay out the traces at your chosen locations.5. Just post a logline (a summary of your game in just 1 line/sentence) here/on the web together with a description of your starting point, so others can actually find and play/follow your location-based story/game.





07	Transmedia Storytelling I	<p>YOUR TASK IN GENERAL</p> <p>Go transmedia! Go wild! We are a huge community, so let's make use of that and do some collaborative storytelling. Let's create a transmedia project together.</p> <p>HOW? Meet Aunt Renie.</p> <p>Renie is a little, elderly lady, who's always enjoyed lots of company. When her best friend dies, she decides to not be sad but instead use the time left to travel the world and explore as many new countries and cultures as she can.</p> <p>YOUR TASK IN DETAIL</p> <p>Help Renie travel the world:</p> <p>Write, draw, compose, film, design Aunt Renie little adventure in your neighbourhood. Tell a day in her life in your hometown, write down a recipe she has collected, or paint the contents of her suitcase.</p> <p>You are absolutely free in regard to what medium or format you use to tell your story. Just make it about Aunt Renie and her adventures.</p>
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08 Transmedia Storytelling II

Experience Report Topic of the course

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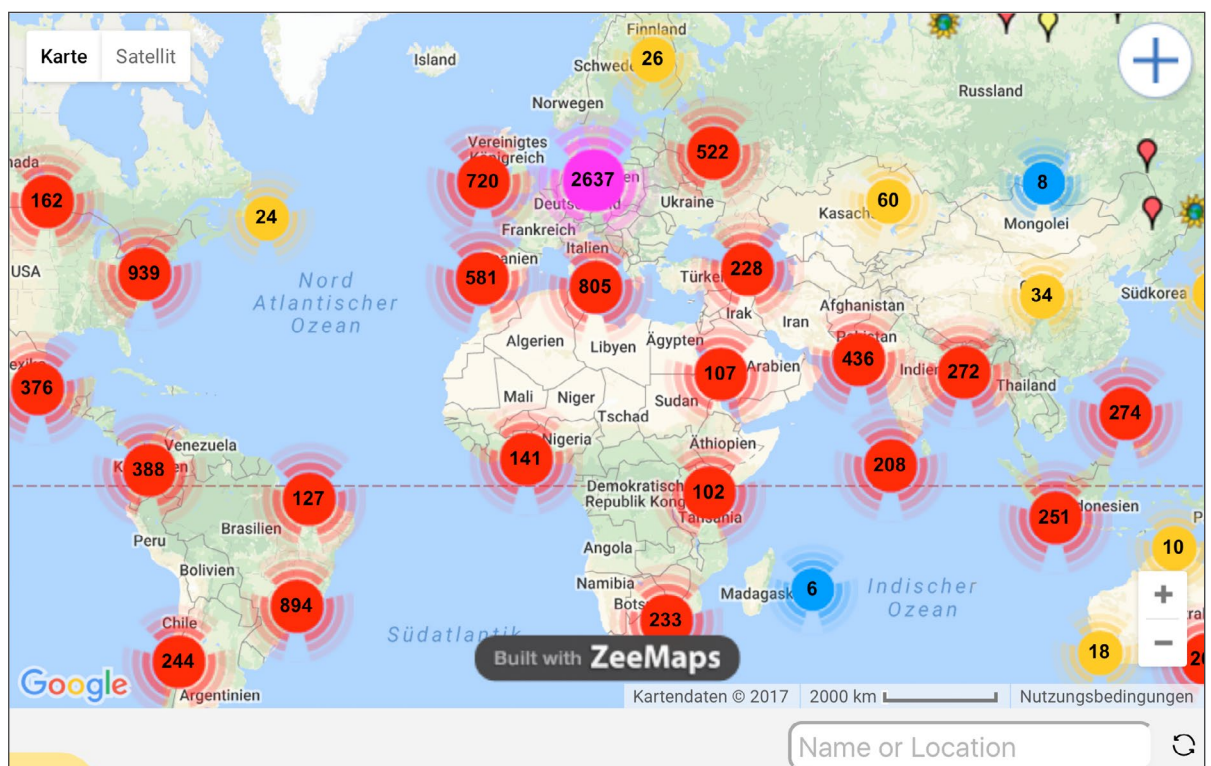
While conception and implementation of the MOOC it was our goal to inspire and broaden students' horizon of what is and might be possible and what has already been attempted, and what has succeeded or even failed – and why; in the field of storytelling. As this MOOC has no measur-



able examination or assessed coursework, it is advised to formulate your own tasks — adapted to your own subject are.

Teambuilding: »TeamMap«

»TeamMap« as a method for teambuilding was proved successfully especially while running the MOOC with 60.000 participants. Local groups all over the world formed themselves; even thematically learning groups appeared based on three additional questions. The participants were free to answer these questions, that were on motivation, interests, and experience in the field.



Material & Links

Project Description — University of Applied Sciences Potsdam

https://www.fh-potsdam.de/forschen/projekte/projekt-detailansicht/project-action/the-future-of-storytelling-mooc/?no_cache=1&cHash=c796c0d5659b808d9c3ce8dab38ff6dc

YouTube Channel with StoryMOOC-Video-Lectures:

<https://www.youtube.com/user/officialStoryMOOC>

Facebook:

<https://www.facebook.com/TheFutureOfStorytellingMooc>

Results from Inspirational Week-Task:

<https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLC91qyoSyKZVEv97c9dSXMAO-2baNMXUZF>

