Assignments fall 2025

General information

4 assignments: 2 individual, 2 group assignments.

You are assigned groups in the first seminar, and you will stay in your group the whole semester, both for discussions and tasks in the seminars as well as for solving the group assignments.

When writing, aim to use your own words and whole sentences (not bullet points). If you use LLMs (AI), then declare how you have used it as an appendix.

Remember that we are less interested in the "right" answer and more interested in personal reflection, discussion, and argumentation. Showing some personality in the writing is good 😊

You may choose to write in English or in Norwegian (or other Scandinavian languages).

If you need to translate any information, we recommend using online tools such as dedicated translators or LLMs (e.g., ChatGPT or others). You can also ask for help from Vetle/Maja or your co-students.

All due dates are Fridays @23:59 in Devilry (https://devilry.ifi.uio.no)

Case + curriculum

- Along with assignment 2, 3 and 4 is a case that you'll use. See the full case description in a separate document on the course page.
- You can treat the case description as a starting point. That means that you are free to be creative, find more information from the internet and/or make own assumptions.

Requirements and recommendations

- In group assignments, we recommend that everyone **read the paper on their own first**, **then meet the group to discuss** and answer the questions.
- If you are unsure or have differing perspectives in the group, then **feel free to share from your discussion** when answering the assignment.
- When writing about a paper, follow proper referencing practices and styles (APA is a good example). However, you don't need to add a citation for **every** sentence you write – use common sense. Always provide a reference list.
- You may use and refer to other papers in the curriculum when answering questions (that is good exercise).

Assignment 1 – Group

Theme: Understanding research articles - identifying the problem and key concepts
Due: September 12th, 23:59
Readings: Bygstad (2017): Generative innovation: a comparison of lightweight and heavyweight IT
Word limit: ~ 400-600 words

Questions to answer:

1. What is the problem that the paper is addressing?
2. Which academic debate/discussion are they communicating with?
3. What is/are the key concept(s) in the paper, and why?
4. What is/are the main contribution(s) that the paper is making?

Note: When we say, "key concepts," we mean the concept that the paper is studying and/or developing as part of its contribution.

Assignment 2 – Individual

Theme: Socio-technical perspective
Due: September 26th, 23:59
Readings: Li (2024): Challenging the "IS" in ISD: From Software to Sociotechnical Systems Design and Development + Barthel & Hess (2020)?
Word limit: ~ 600-800 words

Questions to answer:

In this assignment, your task is to reflect on the DGM case in relation to the paper from Li (2024) by discussing the arguments from the paper.

1. What is the main argument of the paper?
2. What do you see as potential consequences (i.e., pros and cons/possibilities/constraints) for the DGM project if the "object of design" is treated as technical products and software?
3. What do you see as potential consequences for the DGM project if the object of design is a sociotechnical system?

Note: We recommend providing a very short explanation of how you understand the lenses.

Assignment 3 – Individual

Theme: Digital platforms and infrastructures
Due: October 10th, 23:59
Readings: Bygstad & Øverlid (2020), Bygstad & Hanseth (2018), and Gawer & Cusumano
Word limit: ~ 600-800 words

Questions to answer:
The case of the Digital Gravferdsmelding (DGM) system built on the Altinn platform offers an opportunity to explore how digital innovations can be interpreted both as *platforms* and as *infrastructure*. These concepts share overlapping features, but they also have distinct theoretical implications and histories that can highlight different aspects of DGM.

Your task in this assignment is to analyze and argue:

1. Can DGM be understood as a platform? If so, in what way?
    - *One way to answer is to use relevant literature (e.g., Gawer & Cusumano, Bygstad & Hanseth) to identify platform characteristics and determine whether and how they apply to DGM.*
2. Can DGM be understood as digital infrastructure? If so, in what way?
    - *One way to answer is to use insights from Bygstad & Hanseth (2018) and Bygstad & Øvrelid (2020) to discuss infrastructure properties in the case of DGM.*
3. Which interpretation (platform or infrastructure) do you find most useful to understand what DGM is and does—and why?
    - No correct answer, but you need to provide an argument for your choice.

Notes:

- *The key here is to train not only in understanding the concepts of platforms and infrastructure, but also to apply them, discuss them, and understand that they highlight different aspects of reality.*
- *We recommend jumping straight into answering the questions without much introduction. E.g., "DGM can be understood as a platform because… argument1,2,3, etc.*