Instructions and guidelines for term paper and presentation – Fall 2026

The term paper in this course is an essay in which you reflect on how one or more selected theories could be used as a basis for your doctoral research project. The theory or theories may be selected from the course syllabus, but you can also choose to bring in other theories as long as these have been applied to some extent in former IS research.

In the essay you should

- summarize the selected theory/theories and how this/these have been applied in IS research. In your summary, you should also discuss the nature of the selected theories according the taxonomy defined by Gregor (2006).

- discuss and argue how and why the theory/theories selected are relevant for the research problem(s) addressed in your research.

- discuss how the concepts and relationships specified by the theory may be applied as a basis for the research design of your research project.

A good way to develop the term paper during the semester is to reflect on what you have learnt and understood in the sessions in the course and record your reflections in a journal. Take a hermeneutic approach (and thus your journal becomes a "hermeneutic diary"). Simply put, hermeneutics is understanding a concept (a "whole") in terms of its constituent parts while at the same time understanding the parts in terms of your increasing understanding of the whole. This requires continuous tacking (going back and forth) between the whole and the parts. For you, the "whole" can be your own topic area. The parts are then the various theories that will be discussed in the class. Framing the whole as your specific topic area will help you to understand how the theories help you to refine the research question(s). Simultaneously, the specifics of your topic (context, issues) can help you to flesh out the concepts of the theories and thus help you to understand the theories. We can spend some time at the beginning of each session to discuss your journals.

The paper should be formatted in 12 pt font size with 1,5 line spacing, and should not exceed 5000 words excluding references.

You are encouraged to discuss this with your PhD supervisors prior to submission. You may also discuss the term paper with fellow students or other faculty, as long as the essay remains an individual contribution.

The completed term paper is due on December 14th (Monday).

The term paper will be graded as *pass* or *fail*, where *pass* is equivalent to a grade B or better.