6.1800 DP Prep Assignment, Spring 2025

Due: February 28 2025, 11:59pm
Length: 750-1000 words
Submit: On Canvas

Introduction

The DP Prep assignment is the first Design Project deliverable. This assignment is an opportunity for you to engage with the DP Spec. You won't be proposing your own design yet, but instead getting familiar with the requirements of the project.

This is an individual assignment, which means that your writing should be your own. But you are encouraged to discuss these issues with your DP teammates once they're assigned.

Late policy: Like all assignments in 6.1800, if you reach out to your TA in advance of the deadline, we will give you a 24-hour extension, no questions asked. Beyond that, if you submit late, we will penalize you one letter grade per 48 hours, starting from the time of the deadline. If you feel you have circumstances that warrant a longer extension, please reach out to S3.

Assignment Description

In this paper you will summarize key facts and definitions from the DP Spec, analyze that information to explain the design priorities, and identify questions you have about the proposal to better inform your design.

- The introduction should explain the purpose of your document, which is to summarize key elements of the DP Spec and explore areas for further questioning. You should also outline the structure of your paper for the reader.

- The body of the paper should summarize the desired system; overview its most important use cases, system behaviors, and desired properties; and discuss the potential impact(s) of the system. Evidence from the DP should be used and cited for each of these elements.

    - Evaluate the priorities of the system as you understand it. Which use cases and behaviors are most crucial? Why? Which properties matter and which are less important?

    - Evaluate the impact(s) of the system as you understand it. Who is impacted by this system? Would some groups or communities be impacted more than others? It's natural to consider the users of the system, but you should also consider people who *don't* use the system. For example, citizens of Kyrgyzstan don't use the system directly, but are certainly impacted by it in the case of a landslide.

- At minimum, include the desired impact(s) of the system, 1-2 negative impact(s) you can imagine, and at least one type of non-user who is impacted (other than citizens of Kyrgyzstan).
- Can you identify any unintended outcomes — that is, outcomes that aren't part of the plan — that might have a positive or negative impact?

- Finally, you should provide a list of evidence-led inquiries about the DP. These should be robust questions that utilize facts and definitions from the DP description to ask for additional information and clarification. (We'll post an FAQ by 3/7/2025 that answers many of these questions.)