This course is about how the Internet changes politics and how politics shape the Internet. 'Politics' is broadly defined to include identity, organization, and power. The Internet is the main focus, but other new media will be considered. We start with a theoretical and historical introductions. Subsequent topics include the impact of the Internet on the economy, society, and politics and the problems of international property, privacy, censorship, the global digital divide, and security and crime. Many topics will entail careful examination of one or more well-known websites. This will be a seminar-style course requiring students' active participation in classroom discussions. Students are also required to undertake and present original research. The learning objectives for this class are: 1) Gain an understanding of how media in general and the Internet in particular have shaped politics; 2) Gain an understanding of the major issues involved in regulating the Internet; 3) Become more effective at sending and receiving information and ideas via the Internet; and 4) Improve liberal arts skills, including the ability to do original research.

Assignments and Assessment

1. Present an effective and an ineffective web page to the class (10%). This will be a 10 minute presentation and will be conducted in groups of 2. Your presentation should present an analysis of what makes these web pages effective or ineffective and the general lessons that we can learn.

2. Group research project (30%). Conducted in groups of 3. Research is to involve both secondary reading and gathering original data. Create a web page, present it to the class, and revise it. Projects will be assessed according to extent to which they address important questions, find pertinent new data, develop rigorous arguments, advance our understanding, and effectively communicate their findings. Creativity will help.

3. Write a ‘term web page’ on a topic relevant to the politics of the Internet. (20%). This paper may not be on the same topic as the student's group research project. Grading criteria are the same as for the group research project.

4. Short essays on topics covered in readings and lectures (20%). Students will write four essays. Due dates are on the schedule below. Questions for these essays will be distributed approximately a week before they are due. Topics will be taken from lectures and readings. Essays will be assessed based on their mastery of the lectures and readings as well as their ability to find persuasive answers to the question.

5. Class Participation (20%). As this is a seminar-style class, students' critical engagement in class discussion is important.

Notes

Students should pay attention to the email account listed under their name on D2L as updates on assignments and requirements may be sent to that account. Students who miss deadlines will only be allowed to make-up the work if the circumstances are truly exceptional, tragic and/or beyond their control. Some leniency may be shown if problems are discussed in advance. Regular attendance is expected as specified by university policy and failure to attend regularly may be sanctioned as specified by university policy. Academic dishonesty may receive the harshest sanctions allowed by
university policy. Students who would like to improve their grade may do extra assignments or revise their papers, but must first consult with the instructor. Students seeking honors credit and graduate students will be required to complete additional assignments and should consult with the instructor.

**Tentative schedule of topics and readings:**
Readings marked with an asterisk (*) are recommended. All others are required.

I. January 13 & 15       Introduction

II. January 20 & 22   Thinking and Communicating in a Digital Culture
*39-70, 71-113.

III. January 27 & 29  Origins/History I

IV. February 3 & 5  Origins/History II
*Howard Rheingold, “Introduction,” from The Virtual Community.*
John Perry Barlow, “A Declaration Of Independence of Cyberspace.”
[http://homes.eff.org/~barlow/Declaration-Final.html]

V. February 10 & 12       Open or Closed? 1st Essay/Feb. 12
Politics of the Internet

VI. February 17 & 19  Economics: New Age or Bubble?

*Randall Stross, Planet Google: One Company's Audacious Plan to Organize Everything We Know (New York: Free Press, 2008).

VII. February 24 & 26  Society: New identities and organization?


VIII. March 3 & 5  Power: online politics and reason?  2nd Essay/Mar. 5

Zephyr Teachout, Thomas Streeter, “The Legacies of Dean’s Internet Campaign” ibid 233-43.

(Spring Break)

IX. March 17 & 19  Intellectual Property: Who pays who for what?


X. March 24 & 26  Surveillance or privacy?

Jonathan Zittrain, The Future of the Internet, ibid. 200-34.
XI. March 31 & April 2  Global Internet I: Overwhelmed by censorship?


XII. April 7 (Easter Break)/TBA 3rd Essay/Apr. 7

XIII. April 14 & 16  Global Internet II: Digital divide & Who governs?


XIV. April 21 & 23  Unstoppable crime wave?


*John Arquilla (ed.) and David Ronfeldt (ed.), *Networks and Netwars* (Santa Monica, C: Rand Corporation, 2001).

XV. April 28 & 30  The Future?

*Neal Stephenson, *Snow Crash* (Bantam, 1992)

*Daniel Suarez, *Daemon* (Dutton, 2009)

4th Essay/the day of the final