CSCI 10
Untangling the Web: A Social Analysis of the Internet

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Class Meeting Times:	Mon, Wed, Thurs: 1:00pm - 3:00pm
Class Meeting Location:	Thompson Chemistry Lab (TCL) 206 or 217a

Course Description

Do BitTorrent and YouTube violate copyright laws? Should you be held accountable for incriminating pictures that your friends post on Facebook or MySpace? The Internet, which began in the late 1960s as a small government-funded project connecting four computers, now connects billions of computers world-wide. It has undoubtedly become an integral part of our lives, and has provided new ways for people to communicate and share information. Certainly any network with billions of computers requires some centralized control in order to function. So who controls the Internet? Or more importantly, who should control the Internet? This class will examine the complex public policy issues involved in answering these questions from both a technical and social standpoint, and discuss how the decisions we make today will impact the design of the future Internet. Topics covered will include a brief history of the Internet, net neutrality, Internet governance and control, copyright and patent law, peer- to-peer file sharing legality, privacy and security, spyware and phishing, and the future of the Internet.

Format and Evaluation

Class meetings will consist primarily of discussions and debates based on reading assignments. Students will write a short (1 page) summary of the assigned readings before each class, and will take turns leading discussions. Assignments will include creating a simple personal webpage, writing a short (2 page) position paper, and a longer (8-10 page) research paper on a topic of the student's choice. Class attendance and participation will be mandatory to receive a passing grade.

Reading summaries: Before each class, students will post a "journal" entry on their personal webpage that summarizes the assigned readings. These summaries should not only summarize the contents of the assigned readings, but also include a brief, concluding statement indicating the student's personal opinions on the topic. Estimated length of each summary: Approx. 1 page.

Position paper: Each student will become our "resident expert" for a single assigned topic (see class schedule for topics). Students will lead the class discussion on the day that their assigned topic is covered. In addition, the students will write a position paper (instead of the reading summary) on their assigned topic. The position paper will describe the topic in more detail than the reading summaries, and elaborate on the student's opinions about the topic. A minimum of two additional sources plus the assigned readings are required. Estimated length of paper: Approx. 2 - 3 pages.

Research paper: Each student will pick a topic of their choice related to the course and write an 8-10 page research paper on the topic. The research paper will describe both the technical and social aspects of the chosen topic. Project option: As an alternative to the research paper, research projects will be accepted. Project and paper topic proposals must be discussed and approved by the instructor in advance in order to receive a passing grade. Projects and papers are to be completed individually.

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Computer Lab

Room 217A in Thompson Chemistry Lab (TCL) is the primary computer lab for CSCI 10. You can use these computers for any assignment related to this course.

Computer Science Honor Code

The Honor Code is outlined in the Student Handbook. The Department of Computer Science takes the Honor Code seriously. Violations will be dealt with promptly.

Computer Ethics

Students should be aware of the Computer Ethics outlined in the Student Handbook. Violations including uninvited access to private information and malicious tampering or theft of computer equipment or software are subject to disciplinary action.

Class Topics and Readings

The table below shows the topics we plan to cover in each class. We may adjust the schedule slightly depending on student interest and feedback. Students should consult the course web page for updates to this schedule and for the readings that should be completed for each topic. Readings should be completed prior to class meeting times so that students are able to participate in discussions.

	Date	Topic
1.	1/3	Course Overview
2.	1/7	Internet History and HTML
3.	1/9	Net Neutrality
4.	1/10	Internet Governance and Control
5.	1/14	Copyright and Patent Law
6.	1/16	Peer-to-peer File Sharing Legality
7.	1/17	Privacy and Security
8.	1/21	Privacy and Security (continued)
9.	1/23	Spyware and Phishing
10.	1/24	Future of the Internet