

HIST 216: *From Gutenberg to Zuckerberg: A (Long) History of the Internet*
Online Course Details – for planning and informational purposes only
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Course Description

The Internet has enabled global connection on an unprecedented level. To live and innovate in a society dominated by network communications requires understanding from where we have come. Yet, as Google executives Eric Schmidt and Jared Cohen have noted,

"the Internet is among the few things humans have built that they don't totally understand." (Schmidt & Cohen)

While the technological story of the rise of the Internet and the Web today is important – our course touches on early computing, theories of hypertext, the ARPANET, and the networking revolutions of the 1980s and 1990s – the longer human story is equally critical. How has the concept of information evolved? How has print media emerged and evolved? How have humans communicated over time and space? How have common standards evolved, allowing people across the globe to communicate with each other?

Topics include:

- the invention and impact of the printing press,
- nineteenth century communications technology (or why it turns out early fights around telephones can shed a lot of light on net neutrality!),
- the Emergence of Hypertext from Unlikely Places,
- Cold War Research Networks and the Rise of the Modern Internet,
- how the 'net developed around the world, from BBSes in Taiwan to Minitel in France,
- the rise of memes, Spam, and the Dark Web, and
- much more!

Learning Outcomes

By the end of the course, you should be able to:

- define the basic concepts of historical thinking,
- explain the factors that led to the historical development of the Internet,
- analyze contemporary policy debates through an understanding of historical context by producing critical readings of news coverage and opinion pieces,
- apply historical thinking resources and an understanding of new research methodologies to produce a novel research project using archived Internet sources, and
- develop and apply your communication skills through critical readings and synthesis of secondary sources and archived documents.

Grade Breakdown

Activities and Assignments	Weight (%)
Participation: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Group Discussion Activities• Individual Activities	20%
Assignment 1: Impact of the Printing Press	15%
Assignment 2: The Early Web (Essay Proposal)	10%
Assignment 3: The Early Web (Final Essay)	25%
Final Examination	30%