



University  
of Victoria

# POLI 456 Politics of the Internet (Seminar)

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**Instructor Summer 2023:** Dr. Simon Carroll

**Course delivery:** In the Summer 2023 term, this course will be delivered on campus and face-to-face.

## **Course description:**

This seminar addresses political economy of the Internet, and combines theoretical discussion with contemporary political, social and legal issues. The overriding question is to what extent the Internet can still be arena for democratic engagement and free speech, or whether governmental and corporate interests have now overwhelmed the essential and original potential of the medium. The course is situated within some broader theories of technology and politics. We address the historical evolution of the Internet and its current governance structures and political-economic context. A series of global, interrelated policy issues are then discussed; censorship and free speech; surveillance and privacy; and intellectual property and the intellectual commons; the internet and social movements; misinformation as political strategy; and, the rise of authoritarian politics.

**Prerequisites:** None.

## **Course outcomes/objectives:**

- Compare how different jurisdictions are integrated into a global digital political economy and have responded to challenges posed by the Internet.
- Understand how states attempt to manage and govern technological change
- Explore the impact of information and communications technologies on civil liberties, human rights and social justice struggles.
- Develop written and verbal communication through essay writing and discussion

## **Topics may include:**

Online free speech and censorship  
Behavioural advertising  
Hacking and cybersecurity  
Privacy and surveillance  
Intellectual property  
Intellectual commons  
Hegemony and digital culture  
Financial capital and the internet  
Silicon Valley as the global hub of digital economy

*This summary provides an overall sense of the course and is not an official course outline. Detailed course outlines will be available for all registered students on the first day of class.*