General Instructions

1. For each page, synthesize the reading and research by writing in complete sentences in essay format.
   a. Use the green instructions in the notes below each page to focus your research and writing.
   b. Write about each question, prompt, or process provided in those notes.
   c. Write a full page of text with lots of detail (about 250 words).
      i. Don’t generalize so much that your writing is devoid of detail.
      ii. Don’t repeat yourself.
   d. Cite each source by adding a hyperlink in the Title of the Article or law.
   e. Do not change the template:
      i. Text must be 14 point Lato left-justified type.
      ii. Refrain from adding extra margins or double spacing.
      iii. Do not bullet the paragraphs. Write in essay format only.
   f. Add additional pages if you need more room.

2. Add all sources to the Bibliography page.
   a. Include author, year, title, publisher, and URL.
   b. Number or bullet them using the list button.

When in doubt, write to the instructor for clarification using the Canvas Inbox.
The Federal Communications Commission is perhaps one of the better known commissions in the United States after recent threats to net neutrality and although these recent threats and shown the FCC in a bad light, the objective purpose of the commission is just that — objective. The commission’s website describes this purpose well in an article What We Do — where the FCC’s mission is described as “facing economic opportunities and challenges associated with rapidly evolving advances in global communications”. This purpose manifests itself several ways in nurturing competition between broadband services in America, revising and updating web regulations and defending and strengthening America’s communications. Though the current FCC chairman Ajit Pai has been the only FCC commissioner under the spotlight, the FCC has 5 commissioners in total. Each are to not have an economic interest in their policies and must of varying political parties (with at most 3 commissioners being of the same party at the same time). The President is burdened to choose these commissioners with the approval of the U.S. Senate afterwards. Though the FCC is generally considered its own entity, the commission is actually made up of many bureaus and offices whose functions vary but often interweave. Part of the FCC’s responsibility to live out it’s purpose manifests itself in creating rules for the public and companies to follow. The many FCC rules are highlighted in Title 47 of the CFR (Code of Federal Regulations) and many have been created as rules through a process of the FCC proposing a rule, listening to public feedback, adjusting and finally creating that rule — though this process is not mandatory and the objectivity of the commission’s rules has been in questions with the recent net neutrality threats.
Digital Divide

For many of us on the west coast high speed internet has never been considered a commodity. Whether we move to a different west coast state or between houses it seems it’s a simple phone call away to get back our blazing internet — but for many, especially in the south, high speed internet has been a gem only the rich or the lucky few have managed to obtain. In a 2017 article by Rani Molla of Vox News titled How many people in your neighborhood have high-speed internet? An interactive map is given of the various zones of internet speeds across the U.S and the clear abundance of high-speed internet in the west/north compared to the east/south can not be skewed or hidden. Though there could be a movement to improve the internet speed in the east/south, Rani makes a point to say that the more permanent solution to our internet needs is to have better competition among network providers. According to Rani, most counties in the U.S only have access to one internet provider — despite their opinion of them or their service. Capitalism has shown that the greater the competition in a good/service the better service and the better prices consumers receive. They’re household names, Comcast and CenturyLink — but any other network provider options would have better odds winning the lottery than to be recognized by name by the masses. Rani in his Vox article doesn’t describe a possible solution to the scarcity we see in network providers other than to suggest that we could use more competition — a fairly unremarkable comment after having taken the time to write an article about the subject. Rani seems to have written the article to address these issues but did not take the time to propose a possible solution for them. Competition is obviously needed but currently exists many small network providers without any fame — and perhaps this is the issue.
For many years defamation has been a, for the most part, clearly identifiable offense whether in the form of libel or slander (written or spoken) — though in the digital age the rules have changed as well as the difficult of proving defamation in court. The Electronic Frontier Foundation's' article Online Defamation Law describes in detail each aspect of the digital world’s truths and defenses to online defamation. Defamation is described by the EFF to be a false statement stated such that it is commonly believed to be true that comes as a harm to an individual or public figure. This could harm the individual or public figure monetarily, reputationally or otherwise. From the very nature of a defamation claim, proposing and proving the truth is an easy defense against defamation — though often in the online world knowing what is true is a privilege not often granted to the masses. Even reporters can be fooled by other reporters who knowingly defamed a person and those reporters might end up copying that defamed work. In the digital world, though, this reposting of defamatory material without knowing it’s defamatory nature is protected under Barrett V. Rosenthal of California, a case protecting intermediary’s distribution of defamatory materials without knowing. Beyond this new online protecting of distribution, many insurance companies are known for offering media liability insurance that protects a company from online defamation claims. The gist of defamation in the digital age is that a statement of fact or opinion that appears in a way that the majority would interpret as fact must be true or otherwise there must be an effort to advise readers/listeners that these false facts are opinions. Despite taking these precautions it’s important in the digital age to know distribution rights and insurances available if starting a news outlet or other information distribution company.
Recently near the end of 2017 the battle for net neutrality lost against the major telecom and networking companies fighting to take away net neutrality. The idea of net neutrality as described in Tim Willingham's article [15 Facts About Net Neutrality](https://www.dailyinfographic.com/15-facts-about-net-neutrality/) on Daily Infographic guarantees consumers fair and equal internet access to any site and competing websites at equal speeds to the one they’d receive, for example, viewing their internet providers website. Though many thought it was a scare tactic supporters of net neutrality used, describing the dreaded fast and slow lane architecture telecom and networking companies might implement once net neutrality is repealed — this exact architecture has been discussed by Google and Verizon, the sole companies prepared to launch such a project. Net Neutrality has often been described as a protective shield for competition and open internet technology but the arguments against net neutrality have been mute. Tim describes that without net neutrality, phone and cable companies are encouraged to invest in better networks and the government is given more control over these phone and cable companies — though as a consumer it's obvious that the “benefits” to a net neutrality free world are really drawbacks as the clear connection between a non-open and free internet and encouragement to build better lines are purely that the fast lane architecture will potentially require these faster lines. The “benefits” to a net neutrality free internet are hinging on the implementation of the drawbacks and for many consumers the drawbacks outweigh any of these benefits. The FCC were also under fire from the public after several closed door meetings with these cable and phone companies — a question to the FCC’s real agenda described in the previous slides.
The Hated One's YouTube video on net neutrality takes the focus away from net neutrality legislation towards the root of the issue. The Hated One proposes that the lack of competition for ISP's actually causes the unfairness in the U.S, giving the ISP's unprecedented legislative power as well as monopoly characteristics in the market. The proposed solution is to allow multiple telecom companies to use the same lines, allowing small town companies to start up and use reliable lines provided by large telecom companies, increasing ISP competition in the U.S.

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