

Reading the classics in computer science

In the rush to learn the newest frameworks and languages, we often lose sight of the foundational insights that make modern computing possible. This course follows the "Great Books" tradition: we will read the original papers that defined the field. By studying the primary sources of Turing, Shannon, and others, students will learn to see past the syntax of today to the timeless principles of the discipline.

The class is designed as a seminar-style course. It focuses on original papers that didn't just solve a problem, but changed the way we think about computation.

Each student will be required to

1. Read a classic paper (of his/her own choice) and present it.
2. Attend all presentations