

Graduate Technical Writing

CS 200W

Fall 2026 Section 02 In Person 3 Unit(s) 08/19/2026 to 12/07/2026 Modified 08/26/2026

Contact Information

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Office Hours (SPX 170)

Friday, 3:00-5:00pm, or by appointment

Course Description and Requisites

Graduate technical writing workshop to develop advanced communication skills that will meet the professional needs of computer scientists, along with research methodologies and proper documentation for the master's thesis project.

Satisfies CGGWAR: Campus Graduate Graduation Writing Assessment Requirement.

Prerequisite(s): Graduate standing. Allowed Declared Major: Bioinformatics, Computer Science, Data Science, Mathematics, or Statistics. Or instructor consent.

Grading: Letter Graded

Note(s): This course satisfies campus graduate-level GVAR in this master's program.

* Classroom Protocols

Course Format

This course is in-person. You will complete your course work through a series of Canvas modules and will have tasks and assignments due on a regular basis throughout the semester. Dropboxes for all assignments will be made available in the "Assignments" section on Canvas.

Canvas Website

[Go to one.sjsu.edu](https://one.sjsu.edu) to begin your Canvas login.

I send group communications to my students through Canvas Announcements, so I suggest that you adjust your Canvas Notifications settings so announcements are forwarded to the device you check most frequently. To do this:

Go to Canvas

Click on your Account tab, and then on the Notifications tab

Navigate to the Announcements bar and make the appropriate selections.

You may also use this procedure to have Canvas notify you of approaching assignment due dates. For Canvas help, call eCampus at (408) 924-2337 or [go to the eCampus Canvas help page.](#)

Textbook and Technology Requirements

There is no course textbook; however, the following text is highly recommended: Markel, M. *Technical Communication*. (13th Edition) Macmillan Learning. Spartan Bookstore. Second-hand earlier editions are generally usable as well – check with your instructor. You may also wish to consult J. Swales and C. Feak, *Academic Writing for Graduate Students: Essential Tasks and Skills*, 3rd ed. Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press. 2012. All readings and other materials will be found on Canvas.

Submitting Assignments to Canvas

Assignments are considered to be submitted when they are fully uploaded to Canvas, so you should not wait until the last minute to submit, as uploads may take some time and you might miss the submission deadline.

Also note that on Canvas, a due time of 11:59pm means 11:59:00 - any assignment submitted after that time will be marked late.

Assignments are graded as uploaded to Canvas, and incorrect, blank, or unreadable files will receive no points. You can avoid this by clicking on the "View Submission" option after uploading your work to ensure you have submitted a correct and readable file. It is recommended that you do this every time you upload an assignment.

If necessary, you can re-submit assignments as many times as you would like before a deadline; I will grade your last file you submit.

Late Policy

Late work is accepted up to 48 hours after a due date, except where otherwise indicated (typically, the final assignments of the semester must be submitted by the specified due date/time and no late submissions are accepted).

Work submitted up to 24 hours late will receive a 10% penalty, and work submitted from 24 to 48 hours late will receive a 20% penalty. These penalties are based on the total points possible. **After 48 hours, no late assignments are accepted.** Exceptions are made to this policy only in rare circumstances; for example, for a long illness. Please contact me regarding this.

Plagiarism and Cheating

I place a high value on the honest pursuit of knowledge and have zero tolerance for plagiarism and cheating. Submitting a writing assignment that contains text that is **not your original written work** is a violation of the SJSU policy on cheating and plagiarism, which reads as follows:

[Your own commitment to learning, as evidenced by your enrollment at San José State University and the University's](#)

[Academic Integrity Policy \(Academic Senate Policy S07-2\)](#), requires you to be honest in all your academic course work. Faculty members are required to report all alleged violations of the Academic Integrity Policy to Student Conduct and Ethical Development.

Plagiarism or cheating on a written assignment will result in a score of zero and administrative sanctions by the University. For this class, all assignments are to be completed by the individual student unless otherwise specified. **Also, note that all texts produced partly or in full by an AI text generator such as ChatGPT fall under the definition of 'not your original work.'**

If you would like to reuse any written work that you have previously submitted or plan to submit for another class, please speak with me before doing so. Should you be tempted to cheat because you find an assignment challenging, the better course of action is to contact me for help.

All CS200W assignment submissions will be checked for plagiarism/AI generated content by Turnitin.com.

Writing in CS200W/Getting Help with Writing and Research

If you find writing a challenge, I encourage you to work with the SJSU Writing Center, which offers one-on-one tutoring services [and workshops on a variety of writing topics. For more information, visit the Writing Center website: Visit the SJSU Writing Center.](#) Note that the services provided by the Writing Center are **free** to all SJSU students.

To obtain help with the library research you will be conducting for this class, please contact the SJSU Computer Science Subject Librarian Anamika Megwalu via email: anamika.megwalu@sjsu.edu.

Program Information

Diversity Statement - At SJSU, it is important to create a safe learning environment where we can explore, learn, and grow together. We strive to build a diverse, equitable, inclusive culture that values, encourages, and supports students from all backgrounds and experiences.

Course Learning Outcomes (CLOs)

By the end of the course, students will be able to:

1. **Compose** with a clear focus on purpose, scope, and audience.
2. **Critically observe and discuss** the composing processes of self and peers.
3. **Write** using a variety of technical writing formats.
4. **Organize and produce** papers and documents according to discipline-based editorial and citation standards, using IEEE style.
5. **Create** appropriate graphics to accompany a report.
6. **Effectively use** library resources and electronic databases pertaining to their discipline to carry out research.
7. **Distinguish** between scholarly and non-scholarly published literature as well as **define** the characteristics of good scholarly writing in terms of content, format, and style.
8. **Organize, analyze and synthesize** information from various sources to **develop** a literature review.
9. **Determine** the difference between plagiarized and non-plagiarized text.
10. **Organize and deliver** an effective oral presentation for a professional audience.

Course Requirements and Assignments

Job-related correspondence: You will prepare a targeted résumé highlighting your education, accomplishments and relevant job experience, and will also practice writing job application materials (e.g. a cover letter or email) using the established conventions and protocol of professional communication.

Project proposal: At the beginning of the semester, you will select a research topic of interest and later will write a project proposal that includes a description of the project's importance, how the project will be implemented, a work plan for carrying out the project, and a description of possible challenges presented by the project. This assignment has two parts: first, you will write a one-page description of your topic and then you will write the full project proposal. You will submit one draft of the topic worksheet and two drafts of the proposal.

Literature review: Using the topic you selected for your proposal, you will write a literature review of scholarly sources (books, peer-reviewed journal articles, refereed professional conference proceedings) that describe work already completed in your research area. The review will be written following IEEE editorial standards and will include at a minimum a title page, an abstract, a table of contents, the review itself, and a list of references in IEEE format. You will submit two drafts of the literature review.

Oral presentation: During the semester you will present and record the topic of your project proposal in a 6-minute long presentation that includes a title slide and reference slide.

Knowledge checks: You will complete brief exercises throughout the semester focusing on various aspects of academic writing, including grammar, editorial style, and formatting.

Schedule of Assignments/Points Possible

Assignment/Learning Outcomes		Points
Orientation Activities		25
Writing Exercises (CLO 1-10)		150
Resume (CLO 1-3)		100
- Peer Review of Resume		25
Proposal Topic Worksheet (CLO 1-4, 6)		50
Project Proposal (CLO 1-4, 6)		200
- Peer Review of Proposal		25
Literature Review (CLO 1-6, 8)		300
- Peer Review of Literature Review		25
Presentation (CLO 5,10)		100
Total		1,000

University Policies

Per [University Policy S16-9 \(PDF\)](http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/S16-9.pdf) (<http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/S16-9.pdf>), relevant university policy concerning all courses, such as student responsibilities, academic integrity, accommodations, dropping and adding, consent for recording of class, etc. and available student services (e.g. learning assistance,

counseling, and other resources) are listed on the [Syllabus Information](https://www.sjsu.edu/curriculum/courses/syllabus-info.php) (<https://www.sjsu.edu/curriculum/courses/syllabus-info.php>) web page. Make sure to visit this page to review and be aware of these university policies and resources.

Course Schedule

This course schedule is subject to change, with fair notice.

Date	Topics, Readings, Assignments, Deadlines
8/20	Introduction to the course
8/25	Orientation to technical writing Assignment set: Who Are You? (Orientation Activity) (due on Canvas 8/27/26)
8/27	Cover letters and resumes I Assignment set: Writing Exercise #1 (cover letter) (due on Canvas 9/3/26)
9/1	Cover letters and resumes II Assignment set: Resume (first draft ready for peer review 9/3/26)
9/3	Plagiarism, and how to avoid it (Resumes to be peer-reviewed in this class)
9/8	Transferable skills: Logical fallacies/critical thinking (Resumes due on Canvas on this day, 9/9/26)
9/10	Presentations I: Do's and don'ts Assignment set: Presentation (to be submitted to Canvas, same day as presentation is given)
9/15	Presentations II: Slide design, delivery, and questions
9/17	Research skills I: Finding what you want Assignment set: Writing Exercise #2 (due on Canvas 9/24/26)
9/22	Library skills and resources II: Going beyond Google

9/24	Capitalization, italicization, abbreviation
9/29	Presentation session I Assignment set: Writing Exercise #3 (due on Canvas 10/6/26)
10/1	Presentation session II
10/6	Presentation session III
10/8	Presentation session IV
10/13	Headings, organization, formatting Assignment set: Proposal Topic Worksheet (first draft ready for peer review 10/20/26)
10/15	Paraphrasing & citation
10/20	Writing style I: Continuity, topic sentences, transition devices (Proposal Topic Worksheets to be peer-reviewed in this class)
10/22	Writing style II: Developing your thesis (Topic Proposal Worksheets due on Canvas on this day, 10/22/26)
10/27	Developing and testing verbal and visual information Assignment set: Project Proposal (first draft ready for peer review 10/29/26)
10/29	Writing style III: Writing an introduction (Project proposals to be peer-reviewed in this class)
11/3	Crafting a persuasive argument (Project proposals due on Canvas on this day, 11/3/26)
11/5	Writing correct and effective sentences Assignment set: Literature review (first draft ready for peer review 11/19/26)
11/10	TBA
11/12	Group communication

11/17	Corresponding in print and online Assignment set: Writing Exercise #4 (due on Canvas 11/24/26)
11/19	Organizing your information and emphasizing important information (Literature reviews to be peer-reviewed in this class)
11/24	Collaborating: further steps Assignment set: Writing Exercise #5 (due on Canvas 12/1/26)
11/26	NO LECTURE – THANKSGIVING
12/1	Writing informational reports
12/3	Avoiding bias (Literature review due on Canvas on this day, 12/3/26)