San José State University
Department of Computer Science
CS200W Graduate Technical Writing
Section 03 & 04 - Spring 2022

(Link to complete syllabus and additional pages)

Course and Contact Information

Instructor: Cristin Boyd

Office Location/Hours: DH282/ 11:30-12 & 2:45 - 3:00 Tues and Th and by appointment.

Telephone: (408) 924- TBA (During on-campus office hours only)

Email: cristin.boyd@sjsu.edu **(email is best mode of contact)**

Class Days/Time: T/Th 12-1:15 (Sec 04) and 1:30-2:45 (Sec 03)

Classroom: MacQuarrie Hall 422 (or online as required due to COVID restrictions)

Prerequisites: Graduate Student Standing

GE/SJSU Studies Category: Satisfies the Graduation Writing Assessment Requirement (GWAR)

Course Description A 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. CS200W satisfies the university's Graduate Writing Assessment Requirement (GWAR). *You must earn a final grade of "C" or higher to receive credit for this course and must maintain a 3.0 or higher cumulative GPA in order to complete your program.*

> **Please note:** This main syllabus page contains course information "high points"; you are still expected to read the other information linked in the more info here links.
>
> It is also recommended that you review the first Module in our Canvas course and then come back to read and/or skim this document. Some content is repeated.

COVID information from the College of Science

All students registered for a College of Science (CoS) class with an in-person component must view the CoS COVID-19 Training slides and the SJSU Phased Adapt Plan website **and acknowledge reading them** according to their instructor's directions (See quiz in Module 1). By working together to follow these county and SJSU safety practices, we can keep our college safer. Students who do not follow COVID-19 Safety practice(s) outlined in the training, the SJSU Phased Adapt Plan, or instructions from their instructors, TAs or CoS Safety Staff may be dismissed from CoS buildings,

facilities or field sites. Please review this training as needed throughout the semester, as updates will be implemented as changes occur (and posted to the same links).

Possible COVID complications (Added 1/25/22)

If you should contract COVID (or a cold/flu-like illness) and need to quarantine, take time off for testing or other appointments, etc., please let me know as quickly as possible so that we can work to support you in meeting due dates, alternative in-class commitments, such as peer review, etc.

Contacting Your Instructor

The best way to reach me is via my sjsu email. I usually respond to emails between 8am – 5pm, Monday through Friday (and intermittently over the weekends).

- Include your course number and section in the subject line (for example, "Ques about proposal, CS200W-03") and include your full name in the body.

PLEASE try to find the answer to your question yourself before contacting me! You'll find the answer to many general course questions in the course syllabus or on Canvas. General writing questions, like those on grammar, punctuation, or capitalization, or questions on formatting and IEEE style can often be answered via a quick Google search. Google can be a student writer's best friend! If you would like to speak with me via Zoom, contact me to set up an appointment during my office hours.

Required Materials

Technology Requirements

- In and out-of-class access to Canvas & Google Suite
- SJSU email to access Google Suite resources
- Cell phone access is NOT recommended for in-class & writing work
- Word processing software -- Google Docs or Word
- A printer for some assignments

Please note that technology issues will not be accepted as an excuse for late work. Plan ahead to avoid issues.

[More tech info](#)

Optional Textbooks

Most content is provided in Canvas. There are required readings and optional readings. This course does not require specific textbook work. For interested students, these are both very good, free technical writing textbooks.

[Technical Writing Essentials: Introduction to Professional Communications in the Technical Fields](#)
[Howdy or Hello?: Technical and Business Communications - Revised Pilot Edition](#)

CS200W Learning Outcomes

GE - Written Communication Learning Outcomes (GELOs):

Students will write complete papers that demonstrate college-level proficiency and will be able to:
1. **Produce** discipline-specific written work that demonstrates upper-division proficiency in language use, grammar, and clarity of expression.
2. **Explain, analyze, develop, and criticize** ideas effectively, including ideas encountered in multiple readings and expressed in different forms of discourse.
3. **Organize and develop** essays and documents for both professional and general audiences. 4. **Organize and develop** essays and documents according to appropriate editorial and citation standards. 5. **Locate, organize, and synthesize** information effectively to accomplish a specific purpose, and to communicate that purpose in writing.

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

You will meet the CS200W GE and Course Learning Outcomes with the following assignments:

Title	Points	GELO	CLO
Quizzes	40	1-5	1-10
Resume (First draft 50 pts./Final draft 50 pts.)	100	1,3	1,2,3
Cover Letter (First draft 25 pts./Final draft 50 pts.)	100	1,3	1,2,3
Research Project Proposal		1-5	1-4, 6

Topic	25		
First Draft (Peer review 25 pts./First draft 50 pts.)	75		
Final Draft	75		
Literature Review		1-5	1-6, 8
First Draft (Peer review 25 pts./First draft 75 pts.)	100		
Revised Draft	250		
Oral Presentation of Research	100	2	5, 10
Writing Exercises	135	1-5	1-10
Misc other tasks (COVID quiz, small inclass activities, etc.)	~ 50		
Total	~ 1050		

CS200W requires students to write a minimum of 6000 words.
All work in CS200W is expected to be original work and produced individually unless otherwise instructed.

Success in this course is based on the expectation that students will spend, for each unit of credit, a minimum of 45 hours over the length of the course (normally three hours per unit per week) for instruction, preparation/studying, or course related activities, including but not limited to internships, labs, and clinical practica. Other course structures will have equivalent workload expectations as described in the syllabus.

Description of Major Course Assignments

Quizzes: On random days throughout the semester, usually at the beginning of class meetings, you will be given short 'pop' quizzes based on prior class content. Each will be worth 10 points. If you are not in class when the quiz is distributed, you forego any points available; quizzes cannot be made up.

Resume & Cover letter: You will prepare a current résumé highlighting your education, accomplishments, and relevant job experience, and a cover letter or an email using professional "U.S./western" conventions & norms.

Project proposal: At the beginning of the semester, you will select a topic of interest and later will write a research 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 for a non-technical audience and then you will write the full project proposal for a discipline-specific audience. You will submit one draft of the topic description and two proposal drafts.

Literature Review: Using your selected topic, you will write a literature review (LR) using scholarly and technical resources (peer-reviewed journal articles, refereed professional conference proceedings, maybe even books!) which survey previous research about your topic. You will follow IEEE editorial standards and include a title page, an abstract, a table of contents, the review itself, and a list of references. You will submit three drafts of the LR.

Oral presentation: You will present the findings of your literature review in a TED-style, 3-minute long presentation using minimal slides (SJSU Grad Slam style). Your audience will be classmates and possibly advisors or other CS faculty.

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

Extra credit: None.

See the individual assignments for more information and details.

Grading Information

Your final grade will be assigned based on the following scale:

980+ pts = A+	940 - 979 pts = A	900-939 pts = A-	870-899 pts = B+	840 - 869 pts = B	800-839 pts = B
770-799 pts = C+	740-769 pts = C	700-739 pts = C-	670-699 pts = D+	640-669 pts = D	600-639 pts = D

Guidelines on grading information and class attendance can be found in the following two university policies: *University Syllabus Policy S16-9* and *University Attendance and Participation policy F15-12*

Please note that grade inflation is a very real issue in U.S. universities. Yet, in the real world, your work will be seen and assessed based on real world standards (i.e. uninflated assessment). If you do average work, you won't likely get a raise. If you write an average cover letter, you won't get an interview. Thus, I strive to provide grades which reflect more authentic definitions of ability, skills and knowledge.

Please use these grade descriptors to help you understand expectations and grades.

Grade Descriptors

- An **"A"** assignment is truly superior work. Such an assignment exemplifies advanced communication skills and showcases creativity, out-of-boxing thinking, and the ability to view assignment instructions as *design constraints only*. Content is fully developed with interesting details, interesting/astute word choice, syntactic complexity, graceful transitions, and a clear take-home message. The assignment appeals to the reader, looks professionally produced, and is virtually free of mechanical errors. *If you have serious challenges with English grammar, please do not expect to receive As on assignments without significant editing.*

- A "B" assignment is above average work. It develops ideas and supports them with vivid, specific examples, but it may lack sentence variety, graceful transitional phrases, a clear take-home message, or technically astute content that characterises an "A" assignment. The "B" assignment may contain a limited number of minor grammatical or mechanical flaws; however, those errors do not affect reader comprehension. A B paper demonstrates above-average prefessional/academic communication competence.

- The "C" assignment is average. It is the work that most students submit most of the time. The assignment is organized, but usually general, bland, and perhaps unpolished. The content may need more control and/or specific examples. The vocabulary and syntactical complexity is less mature, making the assignment less effective for the audience. The assignment may contain a distracting and/or higher frequency of mechanical and grammatical flaws.

- A "D" assignment is poorly organized, developed, and executed. It is generally unclear and has inappropriate or inadequate examples, is noticeably superficial and simplistic, and/or it contains serious mechanical and grammatical problems in terms of number and type.

- An "F" assignment is generally unclear and shows little real effort, or the assignment does not follow required guidelines. The assignment appears to have little or no proofreading and/or editing.

Late Assignments

You will turn in two kinds of assignments in CS200W: in-class assignments and Canvas assignments. Some in-class work and writing assignments may be on paper (though I will try to protect trees!).

Please be sure to avoid assumptions and read all directions carefully and completely! Follow directions for all assignments including format, due date AND time. Late assignments = lower grades.

There is a 48 hour window for late assignments. Assignments turned in up to 24 hours late receive a 10% penalty; up to 48 hours a 20% penalty. After 48 hours, assignments will not be accepted. These penalties and limits are controlled in Canvas.

[More info assignments](#)

Academic Integrity

It should go without saying that as a graduate student, your writing and research should be perfect/near-perfect in terms of citation and documentation. Your writing assignments will be automatically submitted to Turnitin.com (TII) to check originality against published sources and previously submitted student work. Turnitin is a fabulous resource to help you revise and improve your citations if used appropriately. You can submit your assignments up to three times (prior to the due date & time) and get a quick report from TII. After 3, submissions will be returned after 24 hours.

As a writer-researcher, you should check your Turnitin originality score and report. Any scores greater than 10% should be revised and resubmitted prior to the assignment deadline. As a student enrolled at SJSU, you are committed to following our academic integrity policy.

Please note that **I have very strong feelings about plagiarism**; if you commit any acts of cheating or plagiarism, you will very likely receive a zero on the assignment and a report with the Office of Student Conduct will be filed. This report follows you throughout your degree program at SJSU.

See the SJSU library plagiarism site for more info. Also, ask me if you have any questions!

Mode of Instruction

This seminar-style course is intentionally student-centered and not a lecture course. You will complete several peer reviews, work in small groups, and meet with me for at least one mandatory 1-1 meeting.

It is your #1 job to continuously revise and improve your writing. #2? Support classmates in the same process.

More info Mode

Classroom Protocol/Policies, Rights, Expectations, etc.

- *Follow all COVID-related directives as provided by SJSU Administration.*
- *Practice the Golden Rule: Do unto others as you would have done unto you (a.k.a treat others as you like to be treated).*
- Don't be late! Avoid disrupting others including your instructor!
- Missing class does not change due dates.
- Occasionally assignments change with notice.
- PLEASE, please talk to me about any concerns, questions, fears, etc.

More info class protocols

Class Community

While scheduled as an in-person course, we may likely have periods of remote learning, so we all need to be flexible and supportive. Experience has shown me that students are most successful when they develop a close community, so please, please set up a Discord server, exchange contact info with each other, and become friends.

University Policies

This link contains university-wide policy information relevant to all courses, such as academic integrity, accommodations, religious holidays, etc.

If you have a disability, you are legally entitled to protections and, in many cases, accommodations such as increased time for exams, audio books, etc. There are certain procedures that must be followed to access these free accommodations and resources. Please visit SJSU's Accessible Education Center for more information and please do speak with me directly about your needs and concerns.

Student Resources

Library Liaison

CS students have a dedicated librarian! She is paid to help you! Please use this free resource for class & project research. Anamika Megwalu, Phone: 408-808-2089, Email: anamika.megwalu@sjsu.edu

The Writing Center, located on the second floor of the King Library, offers one-on-one tutoring services and workshops on a variety of writing topics.

Peer Connections, located in the Student Services Center on the first floor of the 10th Street garage, offers tutoring and mentoring services. To make an appointment, call the Welcome Desk at (408) 924-2587 during office hours or visit the website.

Canvas student guide

Other Canvas help: each other!! and IT Service Desk or call the SJSU IT Help Desk at (408) 924-1530

Student health center

Student mental health resources (many, many people are having increased issues with COVID restrictions, please do not hesitate getting support; please let me know if I can assist you in any way.

CalHope.org The state of California recogonizes that many people are struggling emotionally and mentally these days due to COVID restrictions. There is a lot of helpful information and a 24 hour help line if you need support related to COVID issues.

Career Center You have FREE career help and assistance as a SJSU student. Please do not miss the great support and help you can get from these professional career counselors.

Course Schedule - CS200W Section 03 & 04 Spring 2022

This is a tentative schedule & may change with sufficient notice.

Course Schedule

Week	Class Date/Day	Topic	Related Work/Assignments
1	**1/27 Thursday**	Introduction to CS200W **No Zoom class meeting (Asynchronous work only)**	**Complete all work in Week One Module** *Please email me w/ any quesitons.*
2	**2/1/22 Tuesday (via Zoom)**	Writing Resumes; keywords & phrases	**Assignments Due:** Review module and complete assigned readings before class > Bring job ad to class
	2/3/22 Thursday (via Zoom)	Writing Resumes/STAR Statements	**Assignment Due Sunday, 2/6/22:** > Resume, First Draft (for Instructor and Peer Review – submit twice)
3	**2/8/20 Tuesday (via Zoom)**	Resume Peer Review **(draft submitted online; PR work done IN class)**	**Assignment Due (To be completed in class):** > Peer Review Resume draft > Review module and complete assigned readings before class
	2/10/22 Thursday (via Zoom)	Writing Cover Letters	**Assignment Due Sunday, 2/13/22:** > Cover Letter, First Draft (for Instructor and Peer Review – submit twice)
4	**2/15/22 Tuesday**	Proposal Topic Check-In Cover Letter Peer Review	**Assignment Due :** > Peer Review of Cover Letter **to be completed in class**

		(upload draft to assignment b4 class)	
	2/17/22 **Thursday**	IEEE Formatting	**Assignments Due Sunday, 2/20/22:** > Resume, Final Draft > Knowledge Check: IEEE Formatting and Citation (quiz)
5	**2/22/22** **Tuesday**	IEEE Citation/Writing Research Questions	TBA
	2/24/22 **Thursday**	Plagiarism and Paraphrasing	**Assignments Due Sunday, 2/27/22:** > Cover Letter, Final Draft > Knowledge Check: Paraphrasing/Plagiarism/Research Questions (begun in class)
6	**3/1/22** **Tuesday** **(via Zoom)**	Library Orientation	**March 3, 1:30-2:45pm - Sec 3** Join from PC, Mac, Linux, iOS or Android: https://sjsu.zoom.us/j/84459019079?pwd=NFJwRn hqU0FZZTdScFlBbU5TQW54QT09 Meeting ID: 844 5901 9079 Password: 767008 **March 3, 12:00-1:15pm - Sec. 4** Join from PC, Mac, Linux, iOS or Android: https://sjsu.zoom.us/j/87353008467?pwd=aExOaxl CWW84bzNNUEJYUzBCNmZKdz09 Meeting ID: 873 5300 8467 Password: 703712
	3/3/22 Thursday	Introductions to Project proposal	**Assignments Due Sunday, 3/6/22:** Proposal - Topic Fact Sheet
7	**3/8/22** **Tuesday**	Scientific Writing Skills Part I	
	3/10/22 **Thursday**	Scientific Writing Skills Part II	**Assignment Due Sunday, 3/13/22:** Knowledge Check – Scientific Writing Skills

8	3/15/22 Tuesday	Scientific Writing Skills Part III	
	3/17/22 Thursday	How to do an oral presentation/Oral presentation practice	**Assignment Due Sunday, 3/20/22:** Project Proposal – First Draft (submit twice for instructor and peer review)
9	3/22/22 Tuesday	Peer Review of Proposal	**Assignment Due (Completed in class):** Peer Review of Proposal
	3/24/22 Thursday	Oral Presentation of Proposal (small group presentations)	**Assignment Due Sunday, 3/27/22:** Knowledge Check - Reflection on Presentation
10	3/29/22 and 3/31/22 Tues/Thurs	Spring Break	**Assignment Due Sunday, 4/3/22:** Project Proposal – Final Draft
11	4/5/22 Tuesday	Writing the literature review –Introduction to the Project/Analyzing a Lit Review	
	4/7/22 Thursday	Writing the literature review/Introduction to the Project/Analyzing a Lit Review	**Assignment Due Sunday, 4/10/22:** Knowledge Check - Analyzing a Lit Review
12	4/12/22 Tuesday	Writing the literature review/Synthesizing and Organizing Literature	
	4/14/22 Thursday	Writing the literature review/Introducing the Lit Review	**Assignment Due Sunday 4/17/22:** Knowledge Check - Organizing and Synthesizing Literature Literature Review First Draft (Submit twice for instructor and peer review)
13	4/19/22 Tuesday	Peer review of literature review	**Assignment Due (Completed in class):** Peer Review of Lit Review
	4/21/22 Thursday	Writing a literature review – illustrating a lit review/writing abstracts/IEEE formatting review	

14	**4/26/22** **Tuesday**	Individual conference day - No class meeting	
	4/28/22 **Thursday**	Individual conference day – No class meeting	**Assignment Due Sunday 5/1/22:** Literature Review Revised Draft
15	**5/3/22** **Tuesday**	Workshop: Giving a TED talk	
	5/5/22 **Thursday**	Preparing effective Power Point Presentations	**Assignment Due Sunday 5/8/22:** Knowledge Check - Designing Effective PowerPoint Slides
16	**5/10/22** **Tuesday**	CS200W Grad Slam!	**Assignment Due Monday 5/9/22:** 5/10 Presenter Upload of Presentation Slides
	5/12/22 **Thursday**	CS200W Grad Slam!	**Assignment Due Wednesday 5/11/22:** 5/12 Presenter Upload of Presentation Slides **Assignment Due Sunday, 5/15/22:** Literature Review Optional Second Revised Draft