

San José State University
Department of Computer Science
CS200W Graduate Technical Writing
Sections 06 & 07 - Fall 2022

Course/Instructor Contact Information

Instructor: Cristin Boyd

Office Location/Hours: Tues 10:00-11:00 am and lots of other times by appointment

[1-1/Office Hours Zoom Link](#) Password: 687916

Telephone: none, please email

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

Class Days/Time: no formal class meetings (asynchronous content delivery); weekly Canvas modules with specific due dates.

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 (under the GWAR requirement) and must maintain a 3.0 or higher cumulative GPA in order to complete MS your program.*

Please note: This main syllabus doc contains "main points" for this course; please read other linked information for more detail.

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.

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 & evenings).

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

PLEASE try to find the answers in Canvas and the syllabus prior to 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 writer's best friend! If you can't find the right answer, contact me and we'll find it together.

Required Materials

Technology Requirements

- Reliable, daily access to Canvas, Google Suite, and Zoom
- **SJSU email** to access Canvas & Google Suite resources
- Word processing software -- Google Docs or Word (both free to SJSU students)
- Cell phones are **not recommended** for writing tasks, peer work & group work
- **Technology issues will not be accepted as an excuse for late work, so please plan ahead to avoid issues.**

[More tech info](#)

Textbooks

This is a zero-cost section. All course materials are available free and through the Canvas course shell. There are both required and optional readings & media. For additional support, please consider these free technical writing textbooks that have been reviewed for quality.

[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

Assignments, Points and CLOs/GLOs

Title	Points	GELO	CLO
Resume (First draft 50 pts./Final draft 50 pts.)	100	1,3	1,2,3
Cover Letter (First draft 50 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 60 pts.)	85		
Final Draft	75		
Literature Review		1-5	1-6, 8
First Draft (Peer review 25 pts./First draft 75 pts.)	100		
Revised/Final Draft	250		
Oral Presentation of Research	100	2	5, 10
Writing Exercises/Knowledge Checks/Quizzes (Grammar Self-analysis TBD)	135 (50)	1-5	1-10
Misc other tasks (online discussions, follow-up tasks/ activities, etc.)	~ 100		
Total	~ 900-1000 (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 or **9 hours weekly**) 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.

Major Course Assignments & Activities

Because this is a writing class and good writing skills are the goal, most points are earned by applying concepts and skills to major writing assignments.

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. *These are specific documents for a specific job; using generic documents will very likely result in low grades.*

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.

Peer Reviews: are required for all major writing assignments because most good writers work with others to improve their writing.

Oral presentation: You will present the findings of your literature review in a 3 min SJSU Grad Slam style presentation. Your audience will be classmates and possibly advisors or other CS faculty. These may be in-person or by video (TBD).

Writing Exercises/Knowledge Checks/Quizzes/Misc Check-in tasks: You will complete brief tasks throughout the semester, such as analyzing an example assignment or testing comprehension of an reviewed grammar topic. These tasks can represent learning opportunities, formative assessments, or both.

Extra credit: None. Please don't ask now or at the end of the semester. Instead, stay up to date on weekly work and ask for help if grades and assessments suggest your may not pass this course.

Grading Information

Guidelines on grading information and class attendance can be found in the following two university Graduate Technical Writing CS200W Fall 2022 - Boyd 4

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. **Keeping in mind that as grad students accepted into the SJSU CS Masters program, you are very likely a high achiever/advanced level student, I strive to grade honestly & authentically; your grades in this class will reflect your ability, skills, and knowledge based on my 20+ years of teaching/writing experience.** Please use these grade descriptors to help you understand expectations and grades.

Grade Descriptors

- An “A” assignment is truly superior work compared to other graduate-level writers. Submissions exemplify highly advanced communication skills and showcase, first and foremost, clear and concise writing and a clear, appropriate understanding of audience needs. High-level creativity, out-of-boxing thinking, and superior interpretation and execution of communication task is executed. Content is fully developed with interesting & relevant details, interesting/astute word choice, syntactic variety & complexity, and high-level coherence and cohesion (fits together very smoothly). Each draft appeals to the audience due to its superior overall character, including: professionally formatted & produced, closely follows IEEE guidelines, and is virtually free of mechanical /grammatical 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 and represents perfectly acceptable graduate-level work. A “B” assignment develops ideas and supports them with clear, appropriate writing though the writer may struggle with concise writing and/or clarity occasionally &/or in minor ways; addressing audience needs may be ineffective at times. Content development is strong with relevant, specific examples, but overall writing may lack sentence variety, creativity, and/or consistently clear coherence/cohesion. A “B” assignment may contain a limited number of minor grammatical or mechanical flaws; however, those errors do not affect reading comprehension. A B paper demonstrates above-average professional/academic communication but lacks the finesse and superiority of an “A” paper in one or more ways.
- A “C” assignment is below-average work for a graduate-level writer. Most often the assignment does not meet one or more assignment standards/guidelines; and/or the assignment suggests poor/careless editing and proofreading, a lack of attention to audience needs/expectations and/or rhetorical situation, and/or a general lack of care with assignment execution.

Late assignments

“Some” late assignment submissions are allowed up to 48-hour after the due date. 24 hours late receive a 10% penalty; up to 48 hours late, a 20% penalty. After 48 hours, assignments will not be accepted. These penalties and limits are controlled in Canvas. Late acceptance often depends on task; group/peer task work generally can not be accepted late.

Do not wait until the last minute to submit assignments. **Technology issues & poorly timed submissions will not be accepted as an excuse for late assignments.**

Please be sure to avoid making assumptions about requirements; read all directions carefully and completely and follow directions for all assignments including format, due date AND time.

Assignment submissions

Canvas assignments should be submitted as indicated in Canvas; often as a pdf, .doc, or .docx format and by the specified due date/time. Commonly, due dates are Sunday at 11:59:00 pm (based on the Canvas clock not your cell phone). However, other assignments can be due on other days. Please *always* check due dates to confirm the date and time. You alone are responsible for submitting the correct file to the correct assignment, and all assignments will be graded as submitted.

****Note that when the Canvas deadlines at 11:59 pm = 11:59:00 pm. Planning at least an hour or two before deadlines should be your common practice.**

****Please click “View Submission” after every assignment to verify correct submission!!**

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 of sources. 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 documentation skills** if used appropriately. For most assignments, you can submit up to three times prior to the due date & time and receive a quick TII report. After three submissions, drafts will be returned after 24 hours.

As a good writer-researcher, you should review your TII originality report and revise improperly documented sources. Scores greater than 10% should be carefully reviewed for possible plagiarism. As a student enrolled at SJSU, you have agreed to follow 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. Please ask me if you have any questions! Please manage your time well. Poor time management often leads to copied/falsified work.

As per CS department guidelines, any incident of plagiarism will be reported to the department and university.

Mode of Instruction

This section of 200W is delivered asynchronously/online; all content is available via Canvas, and we will not have in-person/weekly class meetings. Each week, course work will be delivered and must be completed by due dates. You are expected to meet with Cristin, your instructor, several times over the semester in 1-1 meetings and/or in small groups during office hours/appointments. These meetings

will mainly be via Zoom though there may also be options to meet at SJSU. Final presentations may also be in person (TBD at a later date).

Your #1 job in 200W is to improve your writing skills! You will do this by practicing a writing process. That is, writing multiple drafts of assignments – with each draft showing improvement based on instructor and peer feedback. *Students who write more than the required drafts often write better.*

Class Protocol/Policies, Rights, Expectations, etc.

- You are capable of writing excellence, and I will challenge you to achieve that excellence. I will also offer all students support in meeting their own unique challenges. That said, this course is challenging, and writing is time-consuming. Don't expect an A grade unless you are willing to work hard for it.
- PLEASE, please talk to me (Cristin) about any concerns, questions, fears, etc. I am here to help you but am not a mind reader. Asking for help/assistance is especially important in an asynchronous course where we are not interacting on a weekly basis.
- Peer Review/evaluation is a fundamentally important part of improving your skills. Thus, you will complete peer reviews of all major writing assignments.
- *Follow all COVID-related directives as provided by SJSU Administration for any in-person interactions.*
- *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).*
- Be your own boss and manage your time and responsibilities as you would in a professional job.
- Occasionally assignments/due date may change with notice.
- As members of the SJSU academic community, students accept both the rights and responsibilities incumbent upon all members of this institution. Students are encouraged to familiarize themselves with SJSU's policies and practices pertaining to the procedures to follow if and when questions or concerns about a class arise. See [SJSU Rights & Responsibilities](#).
- In general, if there are serious concerns about course assignments/protocols/grades, it is recommended that students begin by first seeking clarification or discussing concerns with their instructor. If such a conversation is not possible, or if it does not address the issue, it is recommended that the student contact the Department Chair as a next step. Dr. Melody Moh is the current Chair of the CS Department.

****Class Community**

Experience has shown me that student cohorts are the most successful when they develop close relationships and a tight community. Thus, I strongly, strongly recommend that one person in each section set up a Discord server for your section. You should also exchange contact info with classmates and become friends/colleagues in order to help and support each other in this and other classes. Zoom and Canvas messaging can also be used student-to-student.

University Policies

[This link](#) contains university-wide policy information, such as academic integrity, accommodations, religious holidays, etc. By accepting admittance to SJSU as a student, you agree to follow all policies and regulations.

If you have a disability, you are legally entitled to protections and, in many cases, accommodations, such as increased time for exams, use of audiobooks, 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. I am more than happy to accommodate your documented educational needs to help you be successful in this course. If you are unfamiliar with special education resources, I am also happy to talk with your about them in confidence. Both my son and husband have legal accommodations and I have been an advocate as well.

COVID & Monkeypox Policies

Students registered for a College of Science (CoS) class with an **in-person** component should view the [CoS COVID-19 and Monkeypox Training](#) slides for updated CoS, SJSU, county, state and federal information and guidelines, and more information can be found on the [SJSU Health Advisories](#) website. By working together to follow these safety practices, we can keep our college safer. Failure to follow safety practice(s) outlined in the training, the SJSU Health Advisories website, or instructions from instructors, TAs or CoS Safety Staff may result in dismissal from CoS buildings, facilities or field sites. Updates will be implemented as changes occur (and posted to the same links).

Student Resources

[Library Liason](#). 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 Other specialist librarians are available for each department/discipline (such as Math and Statistics).

[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 recognizes that many people are struggling emotionally and mentally these days due to COVID climate/reality. Free helpful information and a 24 hour help line are available should you need support.

[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 06/07 Asynchronous Delivery, Spring 2022

This section of 200W is self-paced and completely asynchronous. You alone are responsible for completing all tasks by due dates and “with sufficient support.” All students are expected to meet with their instructor regularly for individual support and coaching. *Please notice the fast pacing of main writing assignments & multiple revisions. You will be writing & revising weekly.* This schedule is subject to change with fair notice.

Week	Class Date/Day	Topic	Assignments/Due Dates
0	8/19/22	Introduction to CS200W	Online Learning Activities: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Module 0 · Course & Canvas introduction · Course syllabus Assignments Due Sunday, 8/28/22 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · <i>Say Hello! Welcome Discussion (yours & response to others); early submission strongly suggested.</i> · <i>more items under next week</i>
1	Week Ends 8/28/22	Job Ad	Online Learning Activities: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Module 1
		Resumes/Keywords	Assignments Due Sunday, 8/28/22 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Quiz, <i>Introduction 200W-Boyd</i> · Quiz, <i>COS COVID</i> · <i>Job Ad</i>
2	Week Ends 9/4/22	Resumes- Star/Accomplishment statements	Online Learning Activities: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Module 2
			Assignments Due Sunday, 9/4/22 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · <i>Star Statement, Discussion (do early! for best benefit!)</i> · <i>Quiz - CL/Resume Keywords</i> · <i>Resume draft due next week!</i> · <i>Do you have a research topic idea yet?</i>
3	Week Ends 9/11/22	Resume peer review Cover letters Concise Writing (Sci Wrt Part III)	Online Learning Activities: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Module 3
			Assignments Due Friday 9/9/22 <i>Resume Draft for PR</i> Assignment Due Sunday, 9/11/22 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · <i>Peer Review Feedback of classmates' resumes</i> · <i>Cover Letter Exercise</i> · <i>Knowledge Check- Concise Writing/Sci Writ III</i> · <i>CL due next week</i> · <i>Topic check next week</i> · <i>(last time for reminders of upcoming due dates)</i>
4	Week Ends 9/18/22	Proposal Topic Check-In Cover letter peer review Revised draft Resume	Online Learning Activities: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Module 4
		Sci Writing Intro/Part I	Assignments Due Friday 9/16/22 <i>Cover Letter Draft for PR</i> Assignment Due Sunday, 9/18/22 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -<i>Resume Due to Instructor</i> -<i>Peer Review Feedback of classmates' Cover Letters</i> -<i>Research Topic check in</i>

Week	Class Date/Day	Topic	Assignments/Due Dates
			<i>Quiz, Sci Writ Part I</i>
5	Week Ends 9/25/22	Library Research/Writing a Research Question	Online Learning Activities: · Module 5
		Sci Writing Part II	Assignment Due Sunday, 9/25//22 · <i>Cover Letter to Instructor</i> · <i>Library-research Knowledge Check</i> · <i>Sci Writing Part I Knowledge Check/Quiz</i>
6	Week Ends 10/2/22	Project Proposal Intro/Proposal Fact Sheet Intro Paraphrase Well/Avoiding Plagiarism/Using TII for great! citation	Online Learning Activities: · Module 6
			Assignment Due Sunday, 10/2/22 · <i>Paraphrase Well/Avoiding Plagiarism Knowledge Check/Quiz</i> · <i>Sci Writing Part II Knowledge Check/Quiz</i>
7	Week Ends 10/9/22	Proposal: Writing Problem Statements	Online Learning Activities: · Module 7
		Paraphrase Well/Avoiding Plagiarism/Using TII for great! citation (cont.??)	Assignments Due Sunday, 10/9/22 · <i>Revised Resume to Instructor</i> · <i>Proposal Fact Sheet (with problem statement) ONE DRAFT only; no revision!!</i>
8	Week Ends 10/16/22	IEEE formating Proposal Introduction	Online Learning Activities: · Module 8
		IEEE Citation Cristin out of town (no internet) 10/21 to 10/23	Assignment Due Sunday, 10/16/22: · <i>Knowledge Check: IEEE Quiz</i> · <i>Revised Cover Letter due to Instructor</i> · <i>Knowledge check paraphrase/avoid plagiarism</i>
9	Week Ends 10/23/22	Other Key Proposal Sections	Online Learning Activities: · Module 9
		Peer Review of Proposal	Assignment Due Friday, 10/21/22: <i>Draft of Proposal for PR</i> Assignment Due Sunday, 10/23/22: <i>Peer feedback on classmates' Proposals</i> <i>Final Cover Letter due to Instructor</i> <i>Knowledge Check Writing Self Analysis</i>
10	Week Ends 10/30/22	Introduction to the Literature Review assignment (Analyzing a LR)	Online Learning Activities: · Module 10
			Assignment Due Sunday 10/30/22 <i>Project Proposal, First Draft to Instructor</i> <i>Writing Exercise - Analyzing a Literature Review</i>
11	Week Ends 11/6/22	Organizing and Synthesizing Source Information (Matrix)	Online Learning Activities: · Module 11
		Writing a LR Introduction Developing Illustrations	Assignment Due Sunday, 11/6/22: <i>Writing Exercise - Organizing and Synthesizing Literature</i>

Week	Class Date/Day	Topic	Assignments/Due Dates
			<i>Sources Matrix</i>
12	Week Ends 11/13/22	Peer Review of the Literature Review	Online Learning Activities: · Module 12
		Writing and Revising LR	Assignment Due Wed, 11/09/22: <i>LR Draft due for PR</i> Assignment Due Friday, 11/11/22 : <i>Peer Feedback due to classmates</i> Assignment Due Sunday, 11/13/22 : <i>Literature Review, First Draft (for instructor review)</i>
13	Week Ends 11/20/22	Grad Slam Presentation Assignment Designing Effective PowerPoint Slides	Online Learning Activities: · Module 13
			Assignment Due Sunday 11/20/22 <i>Writing Exercise Grad Slam Presentation Analysis Project Proposal Final Draft (for instructor review)</i>
14	Week Ends 11/27/22	Mandatory 1-1 conferences for LRs Writing an Abstract	Online Learning Activities: Module 14
	Thanksgiving Holiday	Writing and Revising LR	Assignments to work on: <i>Grad Slam work?? LR Revisions</i>
15	Week Ends 12/4/22	Grad Slam Peer Reviews LR Revisions	Online Learning Activities: · Module 15
			Assignment Due Monday 11/28/22 <i>Grad Slam Presentation for PR</i> Assignment Due Wed. 11/30/22 <i>Peer Feedback for assigned Grad Slams</i> Assignment Due Sunday 12/4/22 <i>Final Grad Slam Presentation Due</i>
16	Week Ends 12/6/22	Final 1-1 meetings w/ Cristin LR Revisions	Online Learning Activities: · Module 16
		Grad slams in person?? (TBD)	Assignments to work on: <i>LR Revisions</i>
Finals Week	Th-Fri 12/8 - 12/9 Mon -Wed 12/12 -12/14	Final Draft LR (250 points!) Due	Online Learning Activities: · <i>Module 17/last week of class</i> Assignment Due Friday 12/9/22: <i>Literature Review Final Draft to Instructor</i>

[SJSU Academic Schedule Link](#)