

Graduate Technical Writing

CS 200W

Fall 2026 Section 01 In Person 3 Unit(s) 08/19/2026 to 12/07/2026 Modified 08/18/2026

Contact Information

Contact Information

Instructor: Dr. Deborah Choe

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Office: Duncan Hall 282

Office Hours: Tuesdays & Thursdays 12:15PM-12:45PM; Mondays & Wednesdays 4:30PM-5:00PM and by appointment (in person).

Class Days and Time

Section 01 43640 T/Th 10:30 AM-11:45 AM Duncan Hall 415

Section 04 46335 M/W 3:00 PM- 4:15 PM Sweeny Hall 347

Course materials such as the syllabus, handouts, notes, and assignment instructions can be found on the Canvas learning management system course website. You are responsible for regularly checking with the messaging system through Canvas to learn of any course updates.

Course Information

This course, CS 200 W Section 1, will meet in person on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 10:30AM -11: 45AM in Duncan Hall 415. CS 200 W Section 4 is scheduled to meet in person on Mondays and Wednesday from 3:00 PM- 4:15PM in Sweeney Hall 347. This is an **in-person** course, and you are expected to attend all scheduled class meetings.

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.

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

Note(s): This course satisfies graduate-level GWAR in this master's program. This course does NOT satisfy the undergraduate GE Area Z requirement.

Letter Graded

* Classroom Protocols

Attendance and Participation: Because this is a writing course, regular attendance and active participation are essential. Students are expected to arrive prepared, contribute to discussions, and participate in various workshop activities. If you are late or leave early, it can disturb classroom learning progress and cause you to miss instructional material and concepts covered in class. Please make every effort to stay for the entire class. You will be engaged in group projects, such as collaborative writing and other in-class learning activities. You are expected to contribute to the class discussions and responsively communicate your ideas with others in the classroom.

If you are going to be absent, please let me know by email or via your Canvas inbox. Please note that certain in-class assignments that are collaborative in nature, such as discussions, cannot be made up. Participation requires full engagement from the scheduled start of class through the end of the class session, including lectures, discussions, and workshop activities. Participation will be graded based on consistent involvement and the thoughtfulness of contributions.

Respectful Learning Atmosphere: Being respectful and considerate in the classroom environment is essential for effective learning progress to take place. This allows you to focus on lesson materials and participate thoughtfully in critical thinking processes. It also involves listening attentively during instructional time, refraining from unrelated activities, and engaging in class discussions with respect and consideration. Respectful interaction with perspectives shared during lectures, class discussions, and small-group activities is essential. My goal is for everyone to feel comfortable, valued, and empowered during the learning process. A respectful classroom atmosphere is helpful for an optimal learning experience to occur, as it allows everyone to comprehend and absorb the lesson materials being taught.

Assignment Submissions: Canvas and Hard Copies

Assignments can be submitted to Canvas by going to the Modules section for the assignment. Find the assignment, click on the assignment title to open it, and if the assignment requires Text Entry, simply enter your response in the provided text entry box. Due time for each assignment may be 11:59 PM (Canvas time) or before class time for this class.

Proper Submission Format: Proper submission format is expected for this writing course. For all major assignments, hard-copy submissions in addition to Canvas submissions are required, and all hard copies must be properly stapled. Unstapled or folded papers can separate and shift, interrupting the grading process. Handling, aligning, and stapling these papers creates additional manual work and affects instructor workflow, while this remains the student's responsibility.

Stapling Requirement: The hard copies must be stapled to prevent disorganization during the grading process. Unstapled assignments may be considered as not adhering to proper formatting and may affect grading per submission. Clips or folded corners are not acceptable replacements. Proper preparation facilitates efficient and consistent grading for all students. Please refer to the grading section for details on evaluation.

Submission after the due date must not be emailed to the instructor, as all assignments must be submitted through the Canvas Modules/Assignments area where grading and records are properly maintained and entered. All submissions must follow the late assignment policy for grading consideration. Refer to the late assignment policy for full details.

If you experience any technical issues, you can contact eCampus at (408) 924-2337 or visit the eCampus Canvas Help Page for assistance.

Instructional Fairness and Student Support:

All students are welcome to seek help with any assignment in the course. Individual guidance is provided through standard course procedures, with thoughtful instructional judgment applied fairly and consistently to all students. Fairness is a core value of my teaching philosophy and is exercised with careful consideration of each student's unique circumstances. Support is available during office hours or by appointment for in-person meetings, and I can also provide guidance via email or Canvas Inbox. I strive to be responsive to students' academic needs and to provide timely and effective assistance.

Return of Assignments and Exams

For assignments and exams submitted by the posted deadlines, I am conscientious about returning work within one week, and no later than two weeks for regular coursework. I am mindful of students' learning progress and view feedback as an essential part of that process, as timely feedback allows students to reflect and improve throughout the term.

However, if students submit assignments late or very late, including revisions beyond students' responsible required submission time, these cannot be returned immediately because they fall outside my normal feedback period. I allow these submissions for learning and credit, but return of such work may be delayed.

As for the final term papers submitted during the last week of class, they cannot be returned immediately because grading continues after the term ends. Students can receive these papers back after the term for learning purposes.

Academic Integrity: Academic integrity is crucial to your success in the course. You are expected to produce your own original work that reflects your critical thinking and analysis. Reading, writing, critical thinking, and analytical skills are fundamental to achieving the learning outcomes of this course. Students are expected to develop intrinsic motivation to complete their own work and to engage in independent learning. The use of artificial intelligence (AI) systems to generate assignment content is not permitted and will be considered a violation of the University's Academic Integrity Policy. This will also be regarded as plagiarism. (For further details, see the policy here: [Academic Integrity Policy](https://sjsu.edu/senate/docs/F15-7.pdf) (<https://sjsu.edu/senate/docs/F15-7.pdf>)).

Academic Achievement: If you have any concerns about your progress, please don't hesitate to schedule an appointment. I am happy to provide the instructor's support for your study and learning. It is best to meet in person for the individual conference.

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 Goals

The course goals are to:

1. Develop effective written communication by producing clear, concise, and well-organized technical documents, ensuring readability for both technical and non-technical audiences.
2. Strengthen proficiency in technical and professional writing, including problem statements, reports, and proposals, while communicating complex information clearly to diverse audiences.
3. Apply research and analytical skills to conduct research and synthesize findings into evidence-based literature reviews, using proper citation and referencing to maintain academic integrity.
4. Engage in peer review and collaboration to improve writing quality through constructive feedback and group writing projects.
5. Develop professional presentation skills by delivering clear presentations, using illustrations.
6. Refine grammar, style, and mechanics to produce effective technical documents that meet industry standards.
7. Adjust writing for different contexts and genres, based on discipline-specific audience and purpose.

Course Learning Outcomes (CLOs)

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 Materials

Course Materials

Textbooks and Technology Requirements

While there is no required textbook, the *Technical Writing Essentials* by Suzan Last will serve as a foundational resource. Additional readings and materials will be provided on Canvas and distributed in class. This open source textbook is available online: [Technical Writing Essentials \(https://pressbooks.bccampus.ca/technicalwriting/?utm_source=chatgpt.com\)](https://pressbooks.bccampus.ca/technicalwriting/?utm_source=chatgpt.com).

Students are expected to have access to a laptop or tablet, Microsoft Word and reliable internet access. It's important to note that technology issues are not accepted as an excuse for late work. For help with technology problems, visit the [SJSU IT Service Desk \(https://www.sjsu.edu/it/\)](https://www.sjsu.edu/it/). To prepare for the course, you should visit SJSU IT Software Installation Page and download Microsoft Word and PowerPoint (available free to SJSU students) by following the [SJSU IT Software Installation Instructions \(https://www.sjsu.edu/it/services/support/desktop/instructions.php?utm_source=chatgpt.com\)](https://www.sjsu.edu/it/services/support/desktop/instructions.php?utm_source=chatgpt.com).

Writing and Research Resources

Writing Center

All students are encouraged to work with the SJSU Writing Center, which offers one-on-one tutoring and workshops on a variety of writing topics. Services are free for all SJSU students. For more information, visit the [SJSU Writing Center website \(https://www.sjsu.edu/writingcenter/\)](https://www.sjsu.edu/writingcenter/).

Writing is a process that includes drafting, feedback, revision and reflection. You are responsible for reviewing assignment guidelines by referring to the Canvas modules.

Library Research

For support with library research contact the SJSU Computer Science Subject Librarian, Anamika Megwalu, at anamika.megwalu@sjsu.edu. She can assist with research strategies, locating relevant resources and using databases for your research project in the course.

Course Requirements and Assignments

Course Requirement

Professional Job Application Materials: Resume and Cover Letter

You will create a professional resume including educational background, work experience, skills and accomplishments. You will also prepare a cover letter in which you will introduce yourself and explain why you're interested in the specific position.

Technical Communication Documents: Technical Article analysis, Problem Statements, Paraphrasing, Grammar Conventions for Technical Writing and Citation

You will complete a series of technical communication writing exercises designed to strengthen your technical writing skills. The assignments will include analyzing scholarly and technical articles, drafting problem statements, and paraphrasing source material while practicing grammar rules for technical writing. You will also practice proper citation and learn to avoid plagiarism. Citation instruction introduces the practice of giving credit and paraphrasing sources. This will prepare you for formal research writing later.

Research Project Proposal: Topic Description and Full Proposal

You will develop a research project proposal in two stages: First, you will write a one-page topic description for a non-technical audience to clarify the purpose and significance of your project. This initial draft helps you to refine your ideas and communicate them clearly. Secondly, you will write a full proposal for a discipline-specific audience, including the project purpose, importance, and potential challenges. You will submit one draft of the topic description and two drafts of the full proposal. Revision is required.

Literature Review: Analysis and Synthesis of Scholarly Research

You will write a literature review using your approved research topic. The review is an essential component of your research project. It involves analyzing and synthesizing scholarly and technical articles and papers as well as conference proceedings, to communicate findings effectively to a discipline-specific audience. The review should include a title page, abstract, table of contents and technical illustrations. You will also include a reference list in IEEE format, ensuring that all sources are properly credited. Peer review will be a part of the process to help you refine your paper. The goal of this assignment is to learn how your research contributes to the field by providing new insights, perspectives or solutions.

Presentation of Research

In this section, you will prepare and deliver an oral presentation of your research. The goal is to communicate your findings clearly and effectively to your audience, using visuals to support your message. This presentation will focus on summarizing the key points of your research and literature review, showing how your work contributes to the field.

Grading Information

Grading Policy:

Grades are based on the assignments, projects, participation, and assessments outlined in the syllabus. Each component contributes to the final grade according to its designated value, which is listed in the Breakdown table and in Canvas Modules. All grades reflect consistent application of these criteria, including the late assignment policy. No extra work beyond the existing course assignments will be considered to improve a grade. Final grades are determined by all components of the grading criteria.

Grades are evaluated and feedback is completed within the stated grading timeline (typically one to two weeks for regular assignments). All grading is completed in a timely manner according to the syllabus policy.

Grades are recorded in Canvas after students submit documentation of their graded work (such as a photo of the completed assignment with instructor feedback) into Canvas Text Entry, when required. This submission step serves as verification of completed work and ensures an accurate record of student submissions and grading.

Any delay in Canvas score entry reflects the submission verification process and does not indicate a delay in grading or feedback.

Grade Distribution: Your final grades are distributed according to the following grading guidelines:

100-98 A+	97-94 A	93-90 A-
89-87 B+	86-83 B	82-80 B-
79-76 C+	75-73 C	72-70 C-
69-66 D+	65-63 D	62 and below F

Passing Grade for the course is C or better. No incompletes will be given for the course.

Grading and Assignment Submission Procedure:

Grading Procedure:

I will enter your grades in Canvas after you submit a copy of your graded paper (hard copy with my feedback) into Canvas Text Entry, in order to prevent misunderstanding or inaccuracy. Online assignments submitted directly in Text Entry do not require you to paste a photocopy.

Submission Requirements:

After receiving feedback on the graded assignment, paste a photocopy of the work plainly into Canvas Text Entry so it is immediately visible; not links only to view, as they often require extra accounts or steps. Your grades are entered into Canvas after you complete this procedure. This helps maintain a complete record of your progress, my feedback, and grades. Written assignments are typed for major assignments and handwritten for smaller assignments. Typewritten hard copies are required for all major assignments, which also have to be submitted to Canvas at the same time.

Assignments must be submitted in the format specified by the instructor. If an assignment is designated as handwritten, a typewritten version submitted afterward will not be accepted as a substitute. Likewise, assignments that require a typewritten submission must be submitted in typewritten form. Work submitted in an incorrect format may receive no credit and will not be eligible for partial credit.

Assignments submitted in an incorrect format (including links, attachments, or PDFs when Text Entry is required, or typewritten work submitted in place of required handwritten in-class work) may receive no credit and will not be eligible for partial credit. Exceptions may be granted only when explicitly approved by the instructor.

Late Assignment Policy:

Deadlines and Late Work:

All assignments must be submitted by the deadlines. Late assignments are acceptable with proportionate penalties. I consider two types of late assignments: *late* and *very late*. Assignments submitted one day late will receive a 10% penalty in Canvas or on the hard copy, two days late will receive a 20% penalty, and one week late will receive a 30% penalty. Very late assignments are after one week and up to one month past the deadlines. I will accept very late assignments only for the purpose of your learning and to give a little credit toward passing which will help you achieve the Course Learning Outcomes (CLOs). I strongly encourage you to submit all assignments on time.

Submissions made after the one-week late period may receive reduced credit, up to a maximum of 50%, if submitted within one month of the original deadline. This credit is intended to recognize completion and effort toward learning outcomes. Very late assignments may be assessed only for partial credit toward passing and may not include detailed feedback. Submissions more than one month late cannot be accepted as they affect the instructional process.

One important note: there are no make-up opportunities for in-class activities or assessments, as these are designed to support in-class engagement. Assessments such as tests and midterms cannot be made up. Exceptions may be granted only in cases of documented medical or emergency circumstances (e.g., physician documentation, hospitalization, or bereavement). Please contact me to explain the circumstance.

Partial Credit: This course does not offer specific extra credit assignments, and as noted, partial credit is based on very late assignment circumstances to give credit toward passing. Please refer to the late assignment policy. Recognition of attitudinal aspects, such as respect, cordiality, and consistent effort, can positively influence your overall participation grade.

Revision Policy:

Required revisions must clearly show the instructor's original feedback. Students may either attach the original graded paper or submit photographs/scans in which all instructor comments and feedback are fully visible and legible. Revisions submitted without the original feedback being clearly shown may not be considered for review. Students are responsible for retaining copies of graded work and instructor feedback throughout the term.

For any assessment, such as midterms or tests, regrading will not be considered for scores of C or above, except in rare cases where a student clearly failed to follow directions. Minor adjustments may be made to maintain consistency with other students, solely to support the learning experience, but only for one part that was missed or misunderstood, not for the entire test. Any requests for grade improvements through revisions will not be accepted unless the revision was a centralized requirement for the class.

Participation Policy:

Participation consists of all course-related activities, including in-class and homework assignments, anchor activities, required conferences and library workshops for the research project, and final exam review activities. Attendance is not graded separately. However, regular attendance is necessary for students to participate in in-class activities, discussions, workshops, and other course activities that contribute to the participation grade. The 3 C's Contribution, Consistency, and Communication are assessed through a qualitative and holistic evaluation of student performance in class. Contribution refers to thoughtful participation in class activities; consistency refers to sustained presence, punctuality, and preparedness; and communication refers to constructive engagement in the instructional environment.

This policy aligns with SJSU guidelines, emphasizing the importance of both presence and participation.

Participation credit is earned through consistent engagement in class activities that occur in class. Students who are absent miss the in class engagement for that learning and therefore cannot receive full participation credit. However, if students choose to complete the written portion of a missed in class assignment or activity, a fixed credit of 1 point will be awarded; in class engagement, discussion, or other interactive components cannot be made up. This 1 point submission must be completed through the Canvas assignment in the module where grades are entered and must not be sent via email, inbox message, or as an attachment to the instructor.

Plagiarism and Cheating:

I value the honest pursuit of knowledge and expect students to strive for academic achievement with integrity. Submitting work that includes the ideas, words, or work of another person without proper credit is considered plagiarism and violates San José State University's Academic Integrity Policy (Academic Senate Policy S07-2). It's very important that all students complete their own assignments unless working together is specifically permitted. If you would like to include material you have submitted or plan to submit for another course, please speak with me first.

Plagiarism or cheating may result in a score of zero on the assignment and administrative sanctions by the University. For this class, each assignment should be completed by the individual student, unless collaboration is specifically allowed for that task. Faculty members are required to report all alleged violations of the Academic Integrity Policy to Student Conduct and Ethical Development.

If you are having difficulty with an assignment, the best approach is to reach out to me for guidance. I am here to help you understand the material, strengthen your skills, and successfully complete your work. Asking for help when needed is part of the learning process and shows your commitment to academic achievement with integrity.

AI Policy

AI technology is a developing resource that can assist with research, brainstorming, and learning, but students in this course are expected to produce their own work and demonstrate critical thinking. Using AI to generate assignments, papers, or answers is considered a violation of academic integrity. Your work should reflect your own understanding and effort, and you are encouraged to work on your writing processes of drafting and revision with my support. Class workshops are designed to provide this practice

and feedback, and they should be used to develop and refine your ideas rather than rely on the AI-generated content. The goal of this course is to build your skills, deepen your understanding, and produce your original work that demonstrates your learning. For additional support, you may also visit the Writing Center to access resources and guidance for improving your writing.

Final Examination or Evaluation:

“Faculty members are required to have a culminating activity for their courses, which can include a final examination, a final research paper or project, a final creative work or performance, a final portfolio of work, or other appropriate assignment.”

Breakdown

CS200W Assignments, Points, and CLOs/GLOs

Topics	Assignments	Points	CLOs / GLOs
1. Professional Documents		200	CLOs: 1, 3, 2 / GLOs: 3
	Resume		CLOs: 1, 3, 2 / GLOs: 3
	Cover Letter		CLOs: 1, 3, 2 / GLOs: 3
	Relevant Assignments		
2. Applied Technical Communication		180	
	Problem Statement		CLOs: 1 / GLOs: 4, 5
	Article Analysis		CLOs: 1 / GLOs: 4, 5
	Paraphrasing & Summarizing		CLOs: 1 / GLOs: 4, 5
	Grammar (structure and mechanics)		CLOs: 1 / GLOs: 4, 5
	Citation/Referencing Practice		CLOs: 1 / GLOs: 4, 5

Topics	Assignments	Points	CLOs / GLOs
3. Research Project		400	
	Preliminary Project Assignments: Topic Selection	170	CLOs: 1-4 / GLOs:1-5 4, 6
	Project Proposal		CLOs: 1-4 / GLOs: 1-5, 4, 6
	Peer Review		GLOs: 4, 6
	Drafts		
	Literature Review	230	CLOs: 1-6,8/ GLOs: 4, 6
	Related Assignments		GLOs: 4, 6
	First & Final Draft		CLOs: 1 / GLOs: 4, 6
4. Presentation of Research			
	Presentation of Research	100	CLOs: 2 / GLOs: 5, 6. 10
	Outline Participant Peer Review & Reflection		CLOs: 2 / GLOs: 5, 6
5. Participation	In-class Assignments, Homework, Workshops, Conferences, 3 C's Unit Reflections	120	CLOs: 1 / GLOs: 5, 6
Total		1000	

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

Course Schedule – Fall 2026

Week	Dates (Tu/Th)	Topics	Assignments Due
1	Aug 20	Course Introduction	Syllabus, Course Overview, Introduction to Professional Writing
2	Aug 25, 27	Professional Career Documents	Resume Workshop
3	Sep 1, 3	Professional Career Documents	Cover Letter Workshop; Career Portfolio Overview
4	Sep 8, 10	Professional Career Documents	In-class Peer Review & Feedback on Resume & Cover Letter Career Center Guest Speaker: Carrie McKnight
5	Sep 15, 17	Professional Career Documents	Resume & Cover Letter Submission Due Thursday, Sept. 17; Career Portfolio Workshop; mini exercises (intro essay/reflection)

Week	Dates (Tu/Th)	Topics	Assignments Due
6	Sep 22, 24	Applied Technical Communication	Introduction to Technical Communication: Scholarly and Technical Article Analyses, Paraphrasing, Citation Exercises and Grammar Rules
7	Sep 29, Oct. 1	Applied Technical Communication	Drafting Problem Statements, Plagiarism and Executive Summary (Midterm Assessment)
8	Oct 6, 8	Research Project	Introduction to Research Writing; Research Topic Selection Due Thursday, Oct. 8
9	Oct 13, 15	Research Project	Research Proposal Drafting Guest: Librarian Anamika Megwalu – Library Workshop (Tentative);
10	Oct 20, 22	Research Project	Research Proposal Due Thursday, Oct. 22; Peer Review in Class
11	Oct.27, 29	Research Project	Research Project Literature Review Revision; Individual/Peer Feedback
12	Nov 3, 5	Research Project	Literature Review Workshop; Organizing and Synthesizing Sources; Writing Abstracts Rough Draft of Literature Review Due Thursday, Nov. 5: Outline, Source Summary in progress Peer Review
13	Nov 10, 12		Writing and Revising Literature Review: Integrating Feedback:
14	Nov 17, 19	Research Project	Final Paper Workshop

Week	Dates (Tu/Th)	Topics	Assignments Due
15	Nov 24	Research Project	Class Presentations; Finalizing Reports Thursday, Nov. 26: Thanksgiving Holiday — No Class
16	Dec 1, 3	Research Project / Presentations	Class Presentations Literature Review Due Thursday, Dec. 3; Class Presentations -----
17	Dec. 9- 16	Final Exam/Culminating Activities	Section 01 (TR 10:30–11:45 AM): Thursday, December 10, 2026, 10:45 AM–12:45 PM Section 04 (MW 3:00–4:15 PM): Friday, December 11, 2026, 3:15–5:15 PM In-Class Final Exam/Culminating Activity