

Graduate Technical Writing

CS 200W

Summer 2026 Section 01 In Person 3 Unit(s) 06/01/2026 to 08/07/2026 Modified 05/30/2026

Contact Information

Contact Information

Instructor: Dr. Deborah Choe

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Office: Dunken Hall 282

Office Hours: Tuesdays 3:45 PM-4:45 PM & Thursdays 4:00 PM-5:00 PM; and by appointment (in person; must be scheduled in advance).

Class Days and Time

Section 01 30114 TuTh 1:00 PM-3:00 PM

Canvas and MYSJSU Messaging:

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 1:00 PM–3:00 PM in MacQuarrie Hall 225. 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

Required Course Materials

Textbook

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).

Class Preparation Materials

Students are expected to bring a pen, notebook, and folder or binder for organizing course materials. Written work should be completed in ink unless otherwise directed, as pencil can be difficult to read and evaluate. Students are strongly encouraged to have access to a stapler for preparing hard-copy assignments that require stapled submission. Proper preparation helps ensure that submissions are organized and ready for grading.

Technology

Students are expected to have access to a laptop or tablet, Microsoft Word and reliable internet access. Please 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 thing to note is that there are no make-ups for in-class activities, as these are designed to support participation and in-class engagement. Assessments, such as tests, will not be eligible for a make-up under any circumstances. Exceptions in individual cases may be considered, such as for serious illness or long-term injury (with a doctor's note), family tragedy (e.g., death of a close relative), or other extraordinary circumstances. 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. Within the participation grade, the 3 C's Contribution, Consistency, and Communication account for 10% of the participation score and are assessed through a qualitative and holistic evaluation of student performance in class: contribution refers to thoughtful contribution to 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

Breakdown- Assignments, Points and CLO's/GLOs

Topics	Assignments	Points	CLOs / GLOs
1. Professional Documents		200	CLOs: 1, 3 / GLOs: 3
	Resume		CLOs: 1, 3 / GLOs: 3
	Cover Letter		CLOs: 1, 3 / GLOs: 3
	Relevant Assignments		CLOs: 1, 3, 4 / GLOs: 3
2. Applied Technical Communication		180	CLOs: 1, 4, 7, 9 / GLOs: 4, 5
	Problem Statement		CLOs: 1, 3 / GLOs: 4, 5
	Article Analysis		CLOs: 1, 7 / GLOs: 4, 5
	Paraphrasing & Summarizing		CLOs: 1, 8, 9 / GLOs: 4, 5
	Grammar Practice		CLOs: 1, 3 / GLOs: 4, 5
	Citation Practice		CLOs: 4, 9 / GLOs: 4, 5
3. Research Project		420	CLOs: 1–9 / GLOs: 1–6
	Topic Selection		CLOs: 6, 7 / GLOs: 1–6
	Proposal		CLOs: 1, 3, 6 / GLOs: 1–6
	Literature Review		CLOs: 6, 7, 8 / GLOs: 1–6
	Synthesis of Sources		CLOs: 7, 8 / GLOs: 1–6
	Peer Review		CLOs: 2 / GLOs: 1–6
	Drafts		CLOs: 1, 2, 3, 4, 8, 9 / GLOs: 1–6
	Final Draft		CLOs: 1, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9 / GLOs: 1–6
4. Presentation of Research		100	CLOs: 5, 10 / GLOs: 5, 6
	Presentation Components		CLOs: 5, 10 / GLOs: 5, 6
	Presentation Activities		CLOs: 10 / GLOs: 5, 6
5. Participation		100	CLOs: 1, 2 / GLOs: 5, 6

Topics	Assignments	Points	CLOs / GLOs
	In-Class & Homework; Anchor Activities		CLOs: 1, 2 / GLOs: 5, 6
	Conferences & Workshops		CLOs: 2, 6 / GLOs: 5, 6
	Unit Reflection Summary		CLOs: 2 / GLOs: 5, 6
	3 C's (Contribution, Consistency, Communication)		CLOs: 2 / 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

Week	Dates (Tu/Th)	Topics	Assignments Due
1	Jun 2, 4	Course Introduction	Syllabus Overview; Introduction to Professional Writing
2	Jun 9, 11	Professional Documents	Resume Workshop; Cover Letter Workshop
3	Jun 16, 18	Professional Documents	Resume & Cover Letter Due ; Career Portfolio Overview
4	Jun 23, 25	Applied Technical Communication	Article Analysis; Paraphrasing; Citation & Grammar Exercises; Problem Statement; Research Topic Selection Due
5	Jun 30, Jul 2	Applied Technical Communication	Research Question Refinement & Preliminary Source Identification & Research Proposal Due

Week	Dates (Tu/Th)	Topics	Assignments Due
6	Jul 7, 9	Research Project	Literature Review Workshop & Source Organization & Synthesis of Sources & Writing Abstracts
7	Jul 14, 16	Research Project	Literature Review Drafting; Synthesis of Sources
8	Jul 21, 23	Research Project	Literature Review Rough Draft Due Outline, Source Summary & Peer Review (In-Class)
9	Jul 28, 30	Research Project	Writing and Revising Literature Review; Integrating Feedback; Final Paper Drafting
10	Aug 4, 6	Research Project & Presentation of Research	Research Project Final Paper Workshop Final Research Paper Due; Research Presentations
Final Exam	Aug 6, 1:00–3:00 PM	McQuarrie Hall 225	Culminating In-Class Final Exam Activity