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Geology 100W: Technical Writing Workshop
Spring 2006
Course Number 26350

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Office Hours: Mon. 11:30 – 12:30; Wed. 1:30 – 2:30, by appointment, and online.
Course Home Page: <http://sjsu.webct.com/public/geol100wsp06pm/>

*E-mail is my preferred method of communication. Thanks!

Catalog Description

Advanced writing, including planning and preparation of scientific reports. Improvement of skills needed for writing scientific reports, project proposals and resumes through practice and evaluation. Prerequisite: Engl 1B (with a grade of C or better); Completion of core GE, satisfaction of Writing Skills Test and upper division standing.

Grading A, B, C, NC **Units** 3 **General Education** Z

Course Objectives:

The purpose of this course is to improve your written communication skills through a variety of writing, revising, and editing assignments, and through discussion of the general principles of literary style and English grammar. College-level writing and current research methodologies will be developed for both technical- and popular-audience works. The course concentrates on written and oral communication conventions for the geological sciences using the conventions adopted by the USGS, GSA, and other professional geologic organizations.

It is a requirement of the University that students of 100W courses write a cumulative total of 8,000 words of text; this translates into roughly 32 typewritten pages in all.

Orientation Session & Semester Wrap-Up:

An orientation session will be held on Monday, January 30, time and location to be arranged. A final face-to-face session will be scheduled during the last week of classes.

Required Texts:

Glenn, et al. *Hodges' Harbrace Handbook* : Thompson Wadsworth, 15 Ed. (2004).
In addition, several online readings will be assigned.

Other readings:

Our WebCT discussion board has a “resources” section, with other useful references.

Required materials:

You must use a computer with Internet access to access this course. *A high-speed broadband connection is strongly recommended.* Materials and assignments for all written assignments will be available for download through the WebCT interface. You will need to upload all written assignments through the WebCT interface as well.

Prerequisites:

To get credit for this course you must have passed the writing skills test.

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Virtual Attendance:

Active participation in discussions and online assignments are course requirements (worth 25% of your course grade) so regular logins are expected. One assignment (Paper IV) requires that you attend one of the Geology Club talks (or pre-approved equivalent*) this semester. Most talks are scheduled on Mondays at 12:30, but some will be held at other times.

*Alternates to this series of talks will be accepted, but must be approved in advance.

Grading:

All written assignments will be assessed for organization, correctness, and clarity. Rubrics for specific assignments will be provided in advance. Some assignments will be peer reviewed by an anonymous member of the class. Since students enter Geology 100W with a range of writing talents, consideration will be given to the amount of improvement demonstrated over course of the semester.

The written assignments will be weighted unequally, as follows:

Paper I – first draft (due February 12, 2006)	5%
Paper I – second draft (due February 26, 2006)	5%
Paper I – final draft (due March 12, 2006)	5%
Preliminary bibliography for Paper III (due Feb. 19, 2006)	2%
Outline for Paper III (due February 26, 2006)	3%
Paper II – first draft (due March 5, 2006)	5%
Paper II – second draft (due March 19, 2006)	5%
Paper II – final draft (due April 9, 2006)	5%
Paper III – first draft (due March 24, 2006)	7.5%
Paper III – final draft (due April 16, 2006)	7.5%
Paper IV – first draft (due April 23, 2006)	5%
Paper IV – final draft (due May 7, 2006)	5%
Résumé – first draft (due April 30, 2006)	5%
Résumé – final draft (due May 14, 2006)	5%
Comprehensive Course Evaluation (due May 22, 2006)	5%
Online assignments/peer-evaluations/ discussion/participation	25%

In order to calibrate the grading rubrics and peer review exercises, the exact point range required for each of the course grade equivalents will be determined at the end of the semester, when grades are normed. The maximum possible ranges for letter grades A, B, and C are listed below.

Numeric total	90 - 100	80 – 89.9	70 - 79.9	Below 70
Course grade	A	B	C	NC

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Week	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
	3/20	3/21	3/22	3/23	3/24	3/25	3/26
9	Peer evaluation exercises; mid-semester questionnaire				Paper III (first draft) due to peer reviewer Paper II (peer review) due		
Spring break							
10	4/3	4/4	4/5	4/6	4/7	4/8	4/9 Paper II (final draft) due; Paper III (peer review) due
	Peer evaluation exercises; <i>Common Mistakes in Usage</i>						
11	4/10	4/11	4/12	4/13	4/14	4/15	4/16 Paper III (final draft) due
	<i>Note-taking, and Narrative Writing; Elements of Style</i> , online quiz #7						
12	4/17	4/18	4/19	4/20	4/21	4/22	4/23 Paper IV (first draft) due to peer reviewer
	<i>Effective Résumé Writing</i> , online quiz #8						
13	4/24	4/25	4/26	4/27	4/28	4/29	4/30 Résumé (first draft) due to peer reviewer; Paper IV peer review due
	Peer-evaluation exercises; <i>Elements of Effective Oral Communication</i>						
14	5/1	5/2	5/3	5/4	5/5	5/6	5/7 Paper IV (final draft) due; Résumé peer review due
	Peer-evaluation exercises; <i>Effective field notes</i>						
15	5/8	5/9	5/10	5/11	5/12	5/13	5/14 Résumé (final draft) due
	<i>Professional Conference Presentations</i> , online quiz #9 (format TBA)						
16	Wrap-up (TBA) 5/15	5/16	5/17	5/18	5/19	5/20	5/21 Written course evaluation due
	Semester Wrap-up						

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Note: All assignments (except for Paper III's first draft and Paper II's peer review) are due at midnight Pacific time on the Sundays specified (i.e., the first assignment is due on Sunday February 5, 2006 at midnight; one minute before this due date/time is 11:59 PM on Sunday February 5; one minute after the deadline is 12:01 AM on Monday February 6). Barring a written medical excuse, late assignments will not be accepted. See also "General Guidelines" on p. 6.

- ▶ There are no extra credit options in this class.
- ▶ Every assignment has a specific date/time that it must be completed and submitted to the WebCT interface. Late assignments will not be accepted. There will be no exceptions to this rule, unless a medical emergency prevents an assignment's prompt completion. In such cases, verifiable medical notes must be obtained and presented to the professor within one week of the missed event(s).

Geology 100W's writing assignments cumulatively satisfy the 8000-word minimum required for Area Z General Education certification. Writing assignments require significant library research; they must use primary sources of material which must be cited properly. Specifics on appropriate types of sources and how to cite them are included as part of the assignment.

University Add/Drop Policy:

It is the policy of the University and this Department that a course may not be dropped after February 6, 2006. After February 6, dropping a course is permissible only for serious and compelling reasons. See Schedule of Classes for details.

Policy on Students with Disabilities:

If you need course adaptations or accommodations because of a disability, or if you need special arrangements in case the building must be evacuated, please make an appointment with me as soon as possible, or see me during office hours. Presidential Directive 97-03 requires that students with disabilities requesting accommodations must register with DRC to establish a record of their disability.

General Guidelines for Formal Written Assignments

Formatting

All assignments are to be posted through the course Website. Margins should be one inch on all sides of the page. Double space the body of the text, and use a standard 12-point font.

A simple header should appear on the top of the first page: Single space your name, “Geology 100W,” and the assignment number or title. Please do not include a cover page.

All pages should be numbered consecutively (bottom center).

Originality

The paper must be original work, and can not have been submitted for any previous assignments in any prior or concurrent courses.

Attribution

All sources, whether in print or online, must be appropriately cited. Refer to Hodges' Harbrace Handbook.

Plagiarism

Plagiarism is a serious matter at SJSU and in the real world. The university maintains a strongly-worded policy regarding academic dishonesty, and it interprets plagiarism to include the use of five (5) consecutive words without proper citation. Present material in your own words, and cite a source if the idea isn't original or if it isn't common knowledge. Plagiarism will earn you an F on a paper, and will endanger your chances of passing the course. Punishment on the university-level may be even more extreme.

Turnitin.com will be used to ensure adherence to ethical guidelines and university policy.

Policy on Academic Honesty

Plagiarism and cheating on any portion of any assignment will not be tolerated. The university interprets plagiarism to include the use of five (5) consecutive words without proper citation. Plagiarism will earn you an F on an assignment and will be reported to SJSU's Office of Judicial Affairs. Written assignments will be checked for plagiarism through *Turn-it-in*, a Web-based application that checks for word string duplication from Internet-published sources.

Your own commitment to learning, as evidenced by your enrollment at San José State University, and the University's Academic Integrity Policy requires you to be honest in all your academic course work. Faculty members are required to report all infractions to the Office of Judicial Affairs. Student responsibilities regarding academic integrity may be found at: http://sa.sjsu.edu/judicial_affairs/students/index.html. In addition, the university's policy on academic integrity can be accessed at <http://www2.sjsu.edu/senate/S04-12.pdf>.