

San José State University
Justice Studies
FS 100W
Forensic Science Writing Workshop
Fall 2022

Course and Contact Information

Instructor:	Samantha Peek
Instructure Email:	Samantha.peek@sjsu.edu
Canvas Website	https://sjsu.instructure.com/
Office Hours:	Tuesdays 11:00AM-1:00PM, Zoom Appointments Only email or chat to schedule appointment
Class Days/Time:	Mondays and Wednesdays – 4:30pm – 5:45pm
Classroom:	Boccardo Business Center 221
Prerequisites:	FS 11, GE Area 3, WST, upper division standing, FS or JS declared major.
JS & FS Library Liaison	Nyle Monday nyle.monday@sjsu.edu
FS LibGuide	http://libguides.sjsu.edu/c.php?g=230074&p=1526987

Course Description

Effective written communication skills are vital to success in any career, and are particularly important to the criminal justice professional. This is an integrated writing and research course designed to develop advanced communication skills, both written and oral, with emphasis on laboratory and crime scene report writing, and court testimony. A scholarly paper, written in APA format and informed by research, is also required. Students must earn a grade of “C” or better to pass this course. Satisfies SJSU Studies Area Z. Declared major: FS or JS. Note: Must be passed with C or better to satisfy GWAR.

General Education Learning Objectives (GELO), Area Z

GELO1: Students shall be able to produce discipline-specific written work that demonstrates upper-division proficiency in:

- language use
- grammar
- clarity of expression

GELO2: Students shall be able to explain, analyze, develop, and criticize ideas effectively, including ideas encountered in multiple readings and expressed in different forms of discourse

GELO3: Students shall be able to organize and develop essays and documents for both professional and general audiences

GELO4: Students shall be able to organize and develop essays and documents according to appropriate editorial and citation standards

GELO5: Students shall be able to locate, organize, and synthesize information effectively to accomplish a specific purpose, and to communicate that purpose in writing

Course Learning Outcomes (CLO)

CLO1 : Students will demonstrate the essential steps in the writing process (pre-writing, organizing, composing, revising, and editing). They will demonstrate their ability to (explain, analyze, develop, and criticize) ideas effectively by offering peer reviews.

CLO2 : Students will write papers that use correct grammar (syntax, mechanics, and citation of sources) at a college level of sophistication. They will write papers that demonstrate their proficiency in writing for different audiences (both specialized and general).

CLO3 : Students will express (explain, analyze, develop, and criticize) their ideas effectively, including ideas encountered in multiple readings and expressed in different forms of discourse.

CLO4 : Students will organize and develop essays and documents for both professional and general audiences, including appropriate editorial standards for citing primary and secondary sources.

Required Texts/Readings

- Gilpin, A. A. & Patchet-Golubev, P. (2000). *A guide to writing in the sciences*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press.
- Strunk, W. I. (1999). *The Elements of Style* (4th ed.). Pearson.
- Feder, H. A. & Houck, M. M. (2008). *Succeeding as an expert witness*. Boca Raton, FL: CRC Press.
- NIJ Legal Guide for the Forensic Expert
- Links to additional readings will be posted on the Canvas class website. It is the student's responsibility to check the website frequently for new postings, and download and print documents as needed for class.

Other Readings

- APA Tutorial: <http://www.apastyle.org/learn/tutorials/basics-tutorial.aspx>
- Owl at Purdue: <http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/560/01/>
- APA Manual, 6th edition

Course Requirements and Assignments

1. Report writing exercises (25%): Students will write scientific/lab reports and crime scene reports that use appropriate terminology and style, are clear and free from mechanical error, and that meet the standards of the profession. (CLO1)
2. Mock court and expert testimony (25%): Students will analyze rules of testimony, develop critical questions for cross examination, and participate in mock court exercises. (CLO2,3)
3. Research paper (25%): Students will write a research paper in APA format on a forensic science topic. (CLO4,5)
4. Exams/quizzes (25%): There will be one quiz for each major component of the course (crime scene reports, lab reports, court testimony, and research/APA). (CLO1-5)

Grading Scale for All Assignments

A plus	97-100
A	94-96.9
A minus	90-93.9
B plus	87-89.9
B	84-86.9
B minus	80-83.9
C plus	77-79.9
C	74-76.9
C minus	70-73.9
D plus	67-69.9
D	64-66.9
D minus	60-63.9
F	<60

All assignments are graded based on adherence to directions, thoroughness, thoughtfulness, effort, accuracy, clarity, and logic.

Extra Credit

Extra credit opportunities may be available throughout the semester and will be used to augment the final grade up to 3%.

- Attend a workshop or private tutoring session at the Writing Center (126 Clark Hall) and provide proof of attendance.

Class Policies

- No cell phones in class: Turn them off and put them away. If you must use your phone during class, please step outside of the room to do it.
- Plagiarized work and/or cheating on assessments will result in a 0 grade on the assignment, and the incident will be reported to the Office of Student Conduct.
- Late work will be marked down 10% every week that it is late.
- Make-ups for exams will generally not be possible unless extraordinary, documented circumstances exist.
- Handle personal business before you begin an exam. A student who leaves the classroom *for any reason* during an exam will be presumed finished with the exam.

ACCESS Success Center

The Academic Counseling Center for Excellence in the Social Sciences (ACCESS) provides General Education advising for undergraduate students majoring or intending to major in any of the departments in the College of Social Sciences (CoSS). ACCESS Academic Advisors are committed to helping you develop a clear path to graduation and supporting your academic success. Office Hours: Monday-Thursday 8:00 AM - 5:00 PM and Friday 9:00 AM-4:00 PM. You can schedule an appointment and find more information at sjsu.edu/access.

University Policies

Per University Policy S16-9, university-wide policy information relevant to all courses, such as academic integrity, accommodations, etc. will be available on Office of Graduate and Undergraduate Programs' [Syllabus Information web page](http://www.sjsu.edu/gup/syllabusinfo/) at <http://www.sjsu.edu/gup/syllabusinfo/>

FS 100W Forensic Science Writing Workshop Fall 2019 Course Schedule

Schedule is subject to change.

Week	Date	Topics, Readings, Assignments, Deadlines	Homework and Assignments
1	8/22 8/24	Introductions, class overview Research paper assignment overview Types, purpose, audience, sections, style of forensic reports	Review docs on Canvas Start thinking about research topic
2	8/29 8/31	Crime report types (face pages, continuation pages, etc.), Note-taking and observations Report writing rules: first person, past tense, active voice, Facts, opinions, inferences Report writing rules	Research topic and research question Extra credit: Grammar worksheets
3	9/5 9/7	No Class	
		Content and format of evidence lists, scene descriptions, and narrative summaries Practical exercises Review research topic and research questions	Submit tentative research topics and questions
4	9/12 9/14	Practical exercises Quiz #1	Extra credit: Grammar worksheets.
5	9/19 9/21	Science, protocols & methodology, notes Admissibility of scientific evidence (case law: <i>Frye, Daubert, Kumho Tire</i>)	Read GWS Ch 1 Read “Confirmation Bias in Forensic Science”
6	9/26 9/28	Ethical issues: Certainty, uncertainty competency, bias, selective reporting, error objectivity vs. subjectivity Practical exercises	Read “Minimizing Contextual Bias in Forensic Casework” Quiz #2 Finalize research topic and research question

Week	Date	Topics, Readings, Assignments, Deadlines	Homework and Assignments
7	10/3 10/5	Court players, processes, and terminology Types of witnesses, Federal Rules of Evidence	Feder & Houck readings FRE 701-706
8	10/10 10/12	Subpoenas, pre-trial and evidentiary meetings and hearings, preparing court exhibits Court room demeanor, credibility and competence, direct and cross examinations, do's and don't of testifying	Feder & Houck readings Read "Defense Challenge to Fingerprints" Canvas: Locate videos of forensic science expert and crime scene testimony
9	10/17 10/19	Critique forensic testimony: overconfidence (Michael West) and uncertainty, misspeaking, weighting evidence, truthfulness and perjury	Feder & Houck readings Prepare defense questions
10	10/24 10/26	Mock court exercise: Student presentations Quiz #3	Feder & Houck readings
11	10/31 11/2	Role and purpose of research in forensic science, APA format Annotated bibliography Thesis statements	Read GWS Ch 2 & 3 Read "Importance of Research Culture in FS" Locate and read articles on your research topic: Complete CRAAP sheets and annotated bibliography)
12	11/7 11/9	Due: AB & CRAAP sheets Thesis statement workshop Writing a literature review Writing and introduction and conclusion	Refine thesis statement Complete first draft of lit review
13	11/14 11/16	Thesis Statement Workshop Lit Review Workshop	Complete first draft (intro, thesis, lit review, conclusion) in APA format
14	11/21 11/23	APA Quiz Introductions and conclusions workshop Peer review exercise (first draft)	Complete abstract

Week	Date	Topics, Readings, Assignments, Deadlines	Homework and Assignments
15	11/28 11/30	Individual meetings	Complete Final Essay
16	12/5 12/7	Quiz #4 Final Paper Due	Prepare Case Study Presentation and for Moot Court. Prepare Case Study Presentation and for Moot Court.