

Writing Competency

All graduate students at SJSU (in all majors) must meet the "competency in written English" requirement. There are several ways to meet this requirement.

SJSU Catalog

Competency in Written English

All graduate students are required to demonstrate their competency in written English as a requirement for graduation. At San José State University, university policy requires that English competency shall be a requirement of classified graduate students as a condition necessary for advancement to candidacy for the award of the master's degree. Students may satisfy this requirement in one of five ways:

- Satisfactory completion of the CSU baccalaureate graduation requirement of competency in written English; or
- Satisfactory completion as a graduate student of the SJSU undergraduate upper division writing requirement by passing the writing workshop waiver examination¹ or completing satisfactorily a writing workshop (100W); or
- Satisfactory completion of a graduate course, which has been approved by the Associate Vice President for Graduate Studies and Research, of at least three units in which a major report is required and that report is at least 30 percent of the course grade. Approved courses are listed at www.sjsu.edu/gradstudies; or
- Approval by the Associate Vice President for Graduate Studies and Research of a professional (peer-reviewed) publication for which the candidate was the sole author; or
- Satisfactory completion of an upper division writing course at another university judged by the Associate Vice President for Graduate Studies and Research to be equivalent in content and writing requirements to the SJSU 100W.

Candidates should be aware that each department may establish its own criteria within these policy guidelines and candidates must abide by the department decision.

For the College of Engineering, ENGR 200W is one of the courses that meets this requirement.

Grades are: A/A-/B+/B/B-/C+/C/No Credit

Some departments will accept a C if the student's overall GPA remains at 2.0 or higher. Other departments require at least a B. MSE students are required to obtain a grade of B or better or a grade of CR in order to pass 200W. To earn a B some students need extra practice in English, and may end up taking the course more than once. About 10% of the students take ENGR 200W twice. The extra four months of writing can make a huge difference in their future communication skills, which can affect their careers, promotions, etc.

¹ The examination "IS" the writing skills test (WST)

If a student thinks he or she might receive a grade less than B, and would rather have a No Credit in order to improve their writing skills, the student may request **IN WRITING** to the teacher **NO LATER THAN THE DAY OF THE FINAL EXAM** a NO Credit in the class. The student is then required to re-take ENGR 200W.

For MSE students, the writing competency requirement must be satisfied BEFORE enrolling in MSE project (ENGR 281, ENGR 298) and thesis (ENGR 281, ENGR 299) courses.