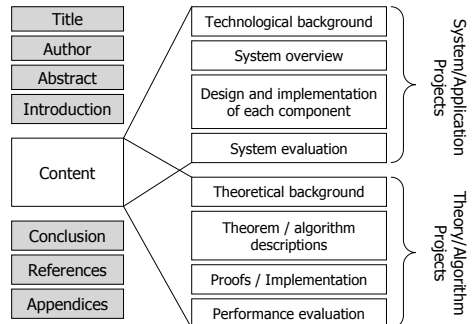


CS491A Software Design Lab Writing Project Report

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Outline of a Project Report



What is a Project Report?

- ◆ Project report != documentation
- ◆ A project report should tell
 - What is your project?
 - Why did you choose the project?
 - How did you conduct the project?
 - What are the results/products/lessons of the project?
- ◆ A way to evaluate your technical writing skills

Title

- ◆ Don't be too generic

Abstract

- ◆ Tell the whole story in 100 to 200 words
- ◆ A good abstract
 - Let people know you've done good work
 - Make people want to read more

Introduction Section

- ◆ A more elaborated version of the abstract
- ◆ Focuses on
 - Motivation
 - Project highlights

Technological Background

- ◆ Introduce the tools/libraries/platforms you used to build your project
- ◆ The purpose is to help people understand your project, i.e. *not advertisement for the technologies*
 - Assume your readers are students who just took CS202
 - Be clear about the connections between different pieces

System Overview

- ◆ The *Big Picture* of your project
- ◆ Descriptions of the interaction between different components, overall work flow etc.

Design and Implementation ...

- ◆ Design (or feature design), is how things should be
 - E.g. The system support several types of users ...
- ◆ Implementation is how things are done
 - E.g. Each user type is implemented as a subclass of a User class ..

... Design and Implementation

- ◆ Writing about design and implementation is not easy
 - Choose the right *level of details*
- ◆ Topics that are usually interesting and/or important
 - Performance
 - Security
 - Improvement of user experience
- ◆ Insights, insights, insights

System Evaluation

- ◆ Results produced
- ◆ Comparison with other systems
- ◆ Load testing

Conclusion Section

- ◆ Reiterate your achievements
- ◆ Emphasize lessons learned and insights gained

Appendices

- ◆ API documentation
- ◆ Database schema
- ◆ User manual
- ◆ Source code
- ◆ ...

Some Technical Writing Do's and Don'ts

- ◆ Use formal language
- ◆ Use diagrams and figures
- ◆ Use tables
- ◆ Don't overuse pictures and screenshots
- ◆ Don't overuse bullets
- ◆ Don't overuse passive voice
- ◆ Use "We" instead of "I"

Past CS491 Reports

- ◆ All CS491 project reports are available at <http://cs.calstatela.edu/abet/cs491/index.htm>
- ◆ Some good reports
 - Matthew's *ProgFest 2005 Platform*
 - Chris's *Deep Space 2*
 - Andrew's *CodeSimian*
 - Cheralyn's *Cupboard 2.0*
 - Christopher's *LemGen*
 - Kelly's *Content-based Image Organization*

More Good Reports

- ◆ Andres's *3D Surface Explorer*
- ◆ Eugene's *Project Black Widow*