

**San José State University**  
**Lucas Graduate School of Business**  
**Master of Science in Transportation Management**  
**MTM 290: Capstone – Report Writing**  
**Spring-B 2022**

**Course and Instructor Contact Information**

<b>Instructor:</b>	Dr. Hilary Nixon
<b>Office Location:</b>	Mineta Transportation Institute, 210 N. 4 <sup>th</sup> St., 4 <sup>th</sup> Floor
<b>Telephone:</b>	408-924-7564
<b>Email:</b>	<a href="mailto:hilary.nixon@sjsu.edu">hilary.nixon@sjsu.edu</a> (preferred contact method)
<b>Office Hours:</b>	By appointment
<b>Class Meetings:</b>	Thursdays, 5:30 – 9:30 pm, on March 24, April 7, and May 26
<b>Classroom:</b>	Online (Zoom link provided in Canvas)
<b>Course website:</b>	Canvas ( <a href="http://sjsu.instructure.com">http://sjsu.instructure.com</a> )
<b>Writing support:</b>	Dr. Sian Sloan ( <a href="mailto:sian.sloan@sjsu.edu">sian.sloan@sjsu.edu</a> )

**Course Format**

Students must have regular access to email and the internet in order to communicate with the instructor, submit assignments through Canvas, and engage in other class activities.

Students attend class sessions online using Zoom, SJSU’s online meeting application.

Plan to join class at least ten minutes before 5:30 pm, to make sure you are ready when class begins. (The very first time you join from a computer or device, allow extra time for set-up.)

You can join class using SJSU Zoom from any location, as long as you:

- Are in a quiet room without distractions (e.g., no family members or colleagues walking through or asking questions). Please do not join the class while driving; you need to be in a location where you can take notes, speak, etc.
- Have stable internet access
- Use a video camera and good quality microphone so that you are seen as well as heard. (Students should keep cameras on during classes.)
- Follow good “meeting etiquette” principles (one such list: <https://blog.gotomeeting.com/7-rules-virtual-meeting-etiquette-every-professional-know/>). Remember that many of your fellow students are also your colleagues (or may be one day). Therefore, you want to maintain as professional an environment as

possible. Although it can give a bit of a “floating head” appearance, Zoom does allow for virtual backgrounds which you are welcome to try out.

Also, you’ll find tips on looking your best online in the MTM Student Canvas site, here:  
<https://sjsu.instructure.com/courses/1369100/pages/looking-your-best-online-tips-from-asha>

### **Notification about Class Recordings:**

All class sessions are audio and video-recorded through Zoom. The Zoom recordings will be available to registered students, on request, for personal use only. Recordings may not be shared.

## **Course Description**

Provides the second part of a culminating experience in which students design and carry out an individual, comprehensive policy or program evaluation. Students complete a Policy or Program Evaluation following the proposal design they developed in MTM 283. The final report demonstrates their capacity to do independent research, analysis, and writing about a complex transportation management problem. Prerequisite: MTM 283

## **MSTM Program Learning Goals:**

(*Note:* Not all program learning goals are covered in every course)

- Goal 1: Transportation Systems and Society:** Craft management decisions that integrate knowledge of multi-modal transportation, social, and, environmental systems
- Goal 2: Innovation:** Develop innovative solutions to transportation management challenges
- Goal 3: Leadership:** Develop high-impact leadership styles and competencies (traits, skills, behaviors)
- Goal 4: Communications:** Communicate effectively with a diverse workforce and citizenry
- Goal 5: Analytical skills:** Identify and evaluate transportation management issues using appropriate data and methods

## **Course Learning Outcomes**

MTM 290 is the second part of the capstone experience for students in the MSTM program. Students draw upon the material they have learned from coursework and professional experience to demonstrate their ability to:

1. Conceptualize problems from complex, real world situations so the problems are meaningful to clients and research-worthy. In particular, students will be able to:
  - a. Define and clearly state an evaluation question;
  - b. Design a methodology appropriate to answer the evaluation question.
2. Collect, analyze, and synthesize information. In particular, students will be able to:
  - a. Collect data of sufficient quality and depth to answer the evaluation question;
  - b. Perform direct, competent, and appropriate analysis to answer the evaluation question;
  - c. Draw sophisticated conclusions based on the results of the analysis, that are a logical extension of the findings;
  - d. Show how the analysis and findings fit into the larger context of the literature and/or current professional practice.
3. Communicate effectively in writing and in visual terms. In particular, students will be able to:
  - a. Organize material logically, so that a reader can easily follow the writer’s train of thoughts;

- b. Write text that is grammatically correct and free of typos;
- c. Create and integrate into the report tables and figures that add useful/important information for readers;
- d. Design reports that are attractive and professional in appearance;
- e. Include citations where appropriate, and format footnotes/in-text references and bibliographies properly.

## **Required Texts/Readings**

### **Textbook**

Students must purchase one required text: Kate L. Turabian's *A Manual for Writers of Research Papers, Theses, and Dissertations*, 9<sup>th</sup> ed (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2018). New copies can be purchased for about \$15.00.

There also will be short readings in electronic format that are provided to students by email or in Canvas or are available through the SJSU library.

### **Library Liaison**

The Library Liaison for the Lucas Graduate School of Business is Christa Bailey ([christa.bailey@sjsu.edu](mailto:christa.bailey@sjsu.edu)).

## Course Requirements and Assignments

Success in this course is based on the expectation that students will spend, for each unit of credit, a minimum of 45 hours over the length of the course for instruction, preparation/studying, or course related activities.

Assignments	Due Date	Grading	Learning Objectives Addressed
Detailed outline of report following template provided	March 31	CR/NC	1,2
Draft #1 of policy/program evaluation (ONLY program description/detailed background, evaluation design/methods, and evaluation findings chapters required, NOT introduction and conclusion)	April 14	CR/NC	1,2,3
One-on-one check-in with Sian (must pre-schedule)	April 18 – 29 (sign up for one 30 min. session by April 14)	CR/NC	3
Draft #2 of policy/program evaluation with rubric self-evaluation (all parts of the final report should be complete)	May 9 (note, this is a Monday, not a Thursday)	CR/NC	1,2,3
One-on-one check-in with Hilary (must pre-schedule)	May 12 – 20 (sign up for one 30 min. session by May 9)	CR/NC	1,2,3
Lightning talk on final policy/program evaluation	May 26 ( <b><u>lightning talk video to be sent in advance by Monday, May 23</u></b> )	CR/NC	3
Final policy/program evaluation	June 2	Letter graded, min. B- to earn credit	1,2,3

### Final Examination or Evaluation

The final culminating experience for MTM 290 will be the lightning talk on your final policy/program evaluation AND your final policy/program evaluation.

### Grading Information

Your grade for the course will be based on the assignments and other activities listed above. This course is graded Credit (CR)/No Credit (NC). **In order to receive CR, students must complete ALL assignments/activities listed above AND receive a grade of B- or better on the final policy/program evaluation.** A detailed rubric for the capstone report will be provided for all students. **A minimum passing grade of 35 (B-) on the rubric must be obtained.**

## Determination of Grades

To successfully complete MTM 290, a student must receive a passing grade (B- or better) on their final policy/program evaluation in order to receive credit. A B- grade is the equivalent of 35 out of 50 on the evaluation rubric. Grading: Letter grade. The late penalty on the final report will be one “step” (e.g. from A- to B+, B to B-, B- to C+, etc.) for each 24 hours that passes after the due date.

## Plagiarism and Citing Sources Properly

Plagiarism is the use of someone else's language, images, data, or ideas without proper attribution. It is a very serious offense both in the university and in your professional work. In essence, plagiarism is both theft and lying: you have stolen someone else's ideas, and then lied by implying that they are your own

**Plagiarism will lead to grade penalties and a record filed with the Office of Student Conduct and Ethical Development. In severe cases, students may also fail the course or even be expelled from the university.**

**If you are unsure what constitutes plagiarism, it is your responsibility to make sure you clarify the issues before you hand in draft or final work.**

Common types of plagiarism that you should be careful to avoid include:

- Using a sentence (or even a part of a sentence) that someone else wrote *unless* you identify the language as a quote by (1) putting the text in quote marks and (2) referencing the source.
- Paraphrasing somebody else's theory or idea without referencing the source.
- Using a map, picture, or table without referencing the source.
- Using data without referencing the source.

The University of Indiana has developed a helpful website with concrete examples about proper paraphrasing and quotation: <https://plagiarism.iu.edu/index.html>.

You are encouraged to use TurnItIn.com as a tool to help confirm that there is no plagiarized text in your assignments, so that you can fix any potential problem text *before* formally submitting the assignment. When you submit writing assignments to Canvas, TurnItIn.com will generate a “Similarity Report” that highlights all text that TurnItIn.com identifies as *possibly* plagiarized. The report will also give you a “score” that shows how much text has been flagged. Please note that the TurnItIn.com similarity reports are helpful but not perfect – they tend to highlight lots of material that is not actually plagiarized, and the reports can also potentially miss problematic text. Therefore, I strongly recommend that you completely ignore the numeric score and instead carefully review all text that is highlighted in the Similarity Report to check if any of these sections need revision.

Be sure to submit draft papers to Canvas before the assignment due date, so that you can check the TurnItIn.com similarity report and make any needed revisions before the assignment is due. It may take a few hours for the Similarity Report to be produced. If you submit a draft for this purpose, add a note in Canvas that says something like “draft only – not for review.”

For instructions on how to find your TurnItIn.com reports in Canvas, see <https://help.turnitin.com/feedback-studio/turnitin-website/student/the-similarity-report/accessing-the-similarity-report.htm>.

If you still have questions about citing sources and paraphrasing appropriately after using these online resources, make an appointment to discuss your questions. There is nothing wrong with asking for help, whereas even unintentional plagiarism is a serious offense.

## University Policies

Per [University Policy S16-9](http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/S16-9.pdf) (<http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/S16-9.pdf>), information relevant to all courses, such as academic integrity, accommodations, dropping and adding, consent for recording of class, etc. is 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/>." Make sure to visit this page, review, and be familiar with these university policies and resources.

## Course Schedule

Students complete most work for this course independently, with feedback and discussion from the instructor. In addition, students will attend three in-person class sessions, plus participate in several one-on-one or small group sessions scheduled throughout the semester.

*Schedule subject to change with advanced notification (via email)*

<b>Date</b>	<b>Class Activities, Readings, &amp; Assignments</b>
Mar. 24	In-class meeting (Zoom) Course Overview, Introductions, Analyzing Qualitative and Quantitative Data, Writing Tips and Techniques with Sian
Mar. 31	Submit detailed outline of report following template provided through Canvas
April 7	In-class meeting (Zoom) Formatting Reports and Presenting Information (guest speaker: Eileen Hsu), Review of Final Report Rubric, Planning for Lightning Talk Presentations
April 14	Draft #1 of policy/program evaluation (background, methods, and findings chapters required, NOT introduction and conclusion). Submit through Canvas.
Apr. 18-29	One-on-one check-in with Sian (must pre-schedule by April 14)
May 9 (Monday, not a Thursday)	Draft #2 of policy/program evaluation with rubric self-evaluation (all parts of the final report should be complete). Submit through Canvas.
May 12-20	One-on-one check-in with Hilary (must pre-schedule by May 9)
May 23	Lightning talk video due. Submit through Canvas.
May 26	In-class meeting (Zoom) Lightning talk on final research paper
June 2	Submit final policy/program evaluation research paper through Canvas