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

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

Title

◆ Don’t be too generic
Technological Background

- Introduce the technologies/tools/platforms you used to build your project
  - Be clear about the connections between the pieces
- Assume your readers are students who just took CS202
  - E.g. how do you describe a J2EE project?

System Overview

- The Big Picture of your project
- Descriptions of the interaction between different components, overall workflow etc.

Design and Implementation ...

- Design (or feature design), is how things should be
  - E.g. The system supports 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://sun.calstatela.edu/~abet/cs491/index.html
- 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