



## Faculty Review of Open eTextbooks

The [California Open Educational Resources Council](http://www.cool4ed.org) has designed and implemented a faculty review process of the free and open etextbooks showcased within the California Open Online Library for Education ([www.cool4ed.org](http://www.cool4ed.org)). Faculty from the California Community Colleges, the California State University, and the University of California were invited to review the selected free and open etextbooks using a rubric. Faculty received a stipend for their efforts and funding was provided by the State of California, the William and Flora Hewlett Foundation, and the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation.

Textbook Name:

### Handbook of Independent Journalism



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Find it: [eTextbook Website](#)

Textbook Authors:

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Institution:

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Title/Position:

Professor

Format

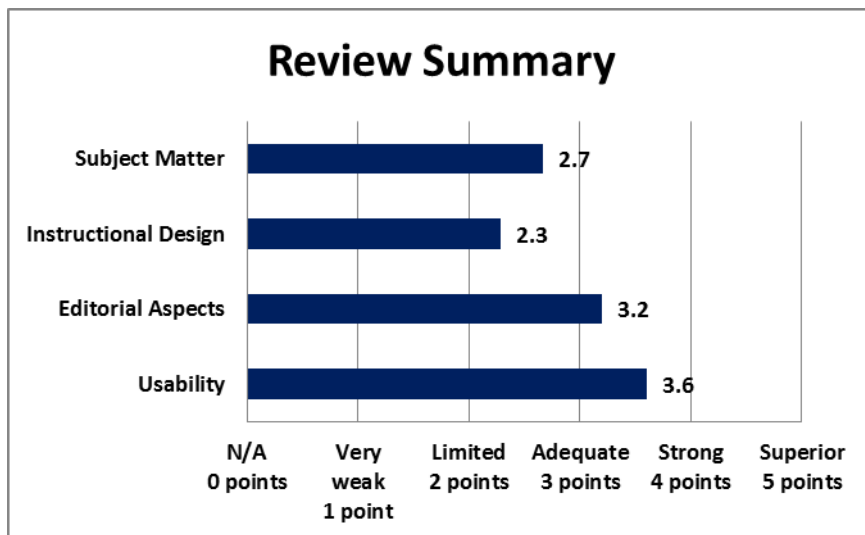
Reviewed:

[Online](#)

A small fee may be associated with various formats.

Date Reviewed:

August 2015



### California OER Council eTextbook Evaluation Rubric

CA Course ID: [JOUR 110](#)

| Subject Matter (30 possible points)   | N/A (0 pts) | Very Weak (1pt) | Limited (2 pts) | Adequate (3pts) | Strong (4 pts) | Superior (5 pts) |
|---|-------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|----------------|------------------|
| Is the content accurate, error-free, and unbiased?  |             |                 |                 |                 | X              |                  |
| Does the text adequately cover the designated course with a sufficient degree of depth and scope? |             |                 |                 | X               |                |                  |
| Does the textbook use sufficient and relevant examples to present its subject matter?             |             |                 | X               |                 |                |                  |
| Does the textbook use a clear, consistent terminology to present its subject matter?              |             |                 |                 | X               |                |                  |

|  |  |  |   |  |  |  |
|--|--|--|---|--|--|--|
| Does the textbook reflect current knowledge of the subject matter?   |  |  | X |  |  |  |
| Does the textbook present its subject matter in a culturally sensitive manner? (e.g. Is the textbook free of offensive and insensitive examples? Does it include examples that are inclusive of a variety of races, ethnicities, and backgrounds?) |  |  | X |  |  |  |

Total Points: 16 out of 30

Please provide comments on any aspect of the subject matter of this textbook:

- The text provided all the important definitions relevant to journalism; however, needed more real life current examples to illustrate points. Students nowadays need links to what they are familiar with in order to understand material. In addition, some areas needed to be expanded upon with more detailed explanation so those new to the field are able to fully grasp content.
- Pictures of real life people would have broken up the text and helped those students that are visual learners. Also, discussion questions or a test bank seem necessary.

| Instructional Design (35 possible points)   | N/A (0 pts) | Very Weak (1pt) | Limited (2 pts) | Adequate (3pts) | Strong (4 pts) | Superior (5 pts) |
|---|-------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|----------------|------------------|
| Does the textbook present its subject materials at appropriate reading levels for undergrad use?  |             |                 |                 | X               |                |                  |
| Does the textbook reflect a consideration of different learning styles? (e.g. visual, textual?)   |             |                 | X               |                 |                |                  |
| Does the textbook present explicit learning outcomes aligned with the course and curriculum?  |             |                 | X               |                 |                |                  |
| Is a coherent organization of the textbook evident to the reader/student?   |             |                 |                 | X               |                |                  |
| Does the textbook reflect best practices in the instruction of the designated course?   |             |                 | X               |                 |                |                  |
| Does the textbook contain sufficient effective ancillary materials? (e.g. test banks, individual and/or group activities or exercises, pedagogical apparatus, etc.) | X           |                 |                 |                 |                |                  |
| Is the textbook searchable?   |             |                 |                 |                 | X              |                  |

Total Points: 16 out of 35

Please provide comments on any aspect of the instructional design of this textbook:

- The design of the text is practical but no necessarily visually appealing. The use of bullets and lists helped one to group key ideas together; however, pictures/graphs/images along with them would have made ideas stick/link better.

| Editorial Aspects (25 possible points)  | N/A (0 pts) | Very Weak (1pt) | Limited (2 pts) | Adequate (3pts) | Strong (4 pts) | Superior (5 pts) |
|---|-------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|----------------|------------------|
| Is the language of the textbook free of grammatical, spelling, usage, and typographical errors?   |             |                 |                 |                 | X              |                  |
| Is the textbook written in a clear, engaging style?   |             |                 |                 | X               |                |                  |
| Does the textbook adhere to effective principles of design? (e.g. are pages laid out and organized to be clear and visually engaging and effective? Are colors, font, and typography consistent and unified?) |             |                 |                 | X               |                |                  |
| Does the textbook include conventional editorial features? (e.g. a table of contents, glossary, citations and further references)   |             |                 |                 |                 | X              |                  |
| How effective are multimedia elements of the textbook? (e.g. graphics, animations, audio)   |             |                 | X               |                 |                |                  |

Total Points: 16 out of 25

Please provide comments on any editorial aspect of this textbook.

- The quotes/statements within each chapter were consistent and did apply to the content. Many of the quotes were outdated and the statements didn't have a name cited along with it. Students find more meaning when someone that they know has made the statement.
- The author should have included a glossary at the end of each chapter so students could review they key terms of each chapter.

| Usability (25 possible points)  | N/A (0 pts) | Very Weak (1pt) | Limited (2 pts) | Adequate (3pts) | Strong (4 pts) | Superior (5 pts) |
|---|-------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|----------------|------------------|
| Is the textbook compatible with standard and commonly available hardware/software in college/university campus student computer labs? |             |                 |                 |                 | X              |                  |
| Is the textbook accessible in a variety of different electronic formats? (e.g. .txt, .pdf, .epub, etc.)                               |             |                 |                 |                 | X              |                  |
| Can the textbook be printed easily?   |             |                 |                 |                 | X              |                  |
| Does the user interface implicitly inform the reader how to interact with and navigate the textbook?                                  |             |                 | X               |                 |                |                  |
| How easily can the textbook be annotated by students and instructors?   |             |                 |                 |                 | X              |                  |

Total Points: 18 out of 25

Please provide comments on any aspect of access concerning this textbook.

- The text is very reader friendly and accessible for students.
- In addition, students will like how it is limited to 68 pages. It is concise and just as the title states, a handbook. This would be a good handbook for students to have on hand throughout their college career.

| Overall Ratings                                  | Not at all (0 pts) | Very Weak (1 pt)           | Limited (2 pts)             | Adequate (3 pts) | Strong (4 pts)           | Superior (5 pts)                 |
|--|--------------------|----------------------------|-----------------------------|------------------|--------------------------|----------------------------------|
| What is your overall impression of the textbook? |                    |                            |                             | X                |                          |                                  |
| How willing would you be to adopt this book?     | Not at all (0 pts) | Strong reservations (1 pt) | Limited willingness (2 pts) | Willing (3 pts)  | Strongly willing (4 pts) | Enthusiastically willing (5 pts) |
|  |                    |                            | X                           |                  |                          |                                  |

Total Points: 5 out of 10

## Overall Comments

If you were to recommend this textbook to colleagues, what merits of the textbook would you highlight?

- The definitions and concepts are accurate and to the point. The author does a good job of keeping things short and simple.

What areas of this textbook require improvement in order for it to be used in your courses?

- In order for me to adopt this text it would need to have more real life/current examples to illustrate points.
- In addition, there would need to be activities/discussion questions at the end of each chapter for students to work on.

We invite you to add your feedback on the textbook or the review to [the textbook site in MERLOT](#)  
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For questions or more information, contact the [CA Open Educational Resources Council](#).



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