Faculty Review of Open eTextbooks

The California Open Educational Resources Council 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). Faculty from the California Community Colleges, the California State University, and the University of California were invited to review the selected no/low cost and open etextboks 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:

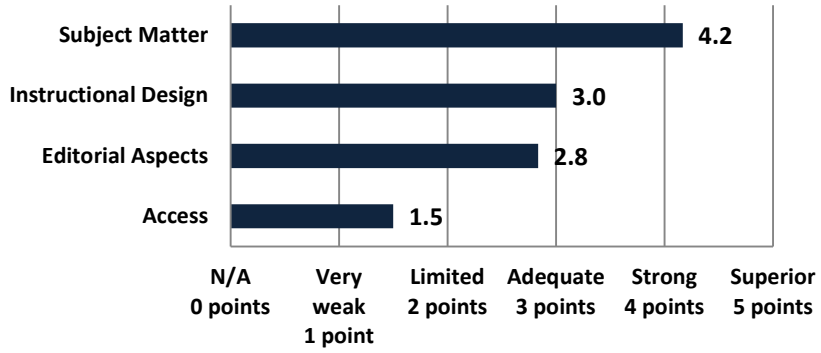
UC Davis ChemWiki

Textbook Founder and Director:
Delmar Larsen, Ph.D.

Find it: eTextbook Website

Reviewed by:
Nancy Gerber, Ph.D.
Institution:
San Francisco State University
Title/Position:
Professor, Chemistry and Biochemistry
Format Reviewed:
Online and PDF
A small fee may be associated with various formats.
Date Reviewed:
August, 2014.

Review Summary



California OER Council eTextbook Evaluation Rubric

CA Course ID: CHEM 110 or CHEM 120S

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: 25 out of 30

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

- Because this text is in a wiki format, it is constantly being updated and examples from current scientific knowledge and applications are being added. There's almost too much at times, but it's better than not having enough.

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: 21 out of 35 points

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

- I tried to print a pdf of this text and found it very challenging. The formatting was problematic and I ended up mostly navigating the live webpages. There were a very large number of figures that wouldn't load on either of my web browsers. I could not figure out why. I clicked on several of the figures and was taken to a website with an error message.
- The end of section questions were often sparse compared to most modern textbooks.

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 latid0out 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 points

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

- There are a large number of good graphics in the text. But the site is slow at times and there also seemed to be several figures that weren't showing.
- I also found the organization of the text to be confusing. I tried to check out other organizations of the wiki but they weren't any clearer.
- There was a way to print out a table of contents, but I couldn't find a way to look at it live.
- I found the site difficult to navigate and find a particular topic that I was looking for. On the other hand, I sometimes found interesting things that I wasn't looking for.

Access (30 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					**X**	

Access (30 possible points)	N/A (0 pts)	Very Weak (1pt)	Limited (2 pts)	Adequate (3pts)	Strong (4 pts)	Superior (5 pts)
college/university campus student computer labs?						
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: 9 out of 30 points

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

- While this is a great reference source, it's not obvious how easy it would be to use it as a traditional textbook. At least in my hands, printing was a huge problem so it would be difficult to access offline.
- I had problems with a large number of figures that directed me to a textbook site that was not available.

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**		
	Not at all (0 pts)	Strong reservations (1 pt)	Limited willingness (2 pts)	Willing (3 pts)	Strongly willing (4 pts)	Enthusiastically willing (5 pts)
How willing would you be to adopt this book?			**X**			

Overall Comments

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

- Updated regularly with feedback from the chemistry community. Some visuals are excellent and it's very expansive, unlike some of the other texts. There was very little content that was missing. In theory could be rearranged to follow the organization of the class, which is highly desirable.

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

- Figures were very problematic. Many did not show on either of my borrowers. Navigation was challenging and it was all but impossible to print a useful pdf.

We invite you to add your feedback on the textbook or the review to the textbook site in MERLOT.
(Please register in MERLOT to post your feedback.)

CALIFORNIA OER COUNCIL
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For questions or more information, contact the CA Open Educational Resources Council