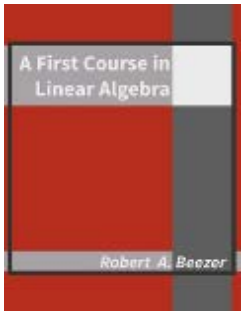
Faculty Review of Open eTextbooks

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 free 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:

A First Course in Linear Algebra



Find it: eTextbook Website

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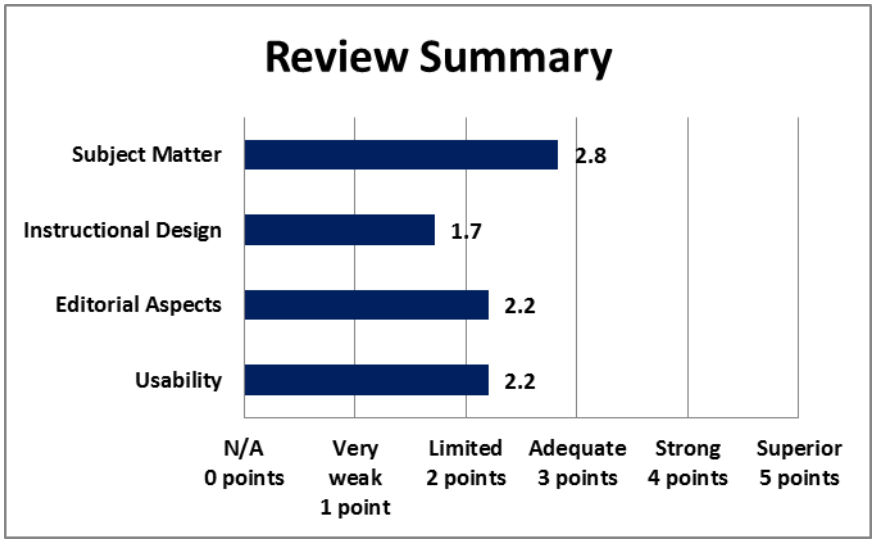
Professor

Format Reviewed:
Online

A small fee may be associated with various formats.

Date Reviewed:
May 2016



California OER Council eTextbook Evaluation Rubric

CA Course ID: MATH 250

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: 17 out of 30

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

- The textbook over uses abbreviations. Every example, definition, and theorem has its own abbreviation. Some examples, (1) Theorem DRCS is determinant for row or column swap, (2) Theorem DZRC is determinant with zero row or column, and (3) Example TCSD two computations, same determinant.
- A suggestion would be to not just use subscripts but also maybe using arrow to indicate which row or column are to be used. Just using subscripts for the non-mathematician student seems bias.

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: 12 out of 35

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

- I am not sure if the textbook would qualify as searchable since I reviewed the print version of the textbook.
- I must note that when I downloaded the pdf version of the textbook there are hyperlinks for which students may click and move to particular areas of the textbook to receive/review associated materials.
- I do not believe this textbook has test banks, or group activities; though there is plenty of exercise that students may use at the end of each section.

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: 11 out of 25

Please provide comments on any editorial aspect of this textbook:

- There is no graphics or multimedia elements of this textbook other than the hyperlinks for the pdf version of the textbook.

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: 11 out of 25

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

- Other than hyperlinks, I do not believe this textbook has any other interactions with readers.

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					

Total Points: 2 out of 10

Overall Comments

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

- I would not recommend this textbook to colleagues, this textbook, though comprehensive in its content, lacks the understanding that some students are not mathematically inclined but would still require this subject material for their major.

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

- I believe that for this textbook to be used in my course, I would like it to have less abbreviations for basic definitions, theorems, and examples. This textbook needs/requires an understanding that students are not all mathematically inclined. It's a very intimidating to read textbook. The notations, though very complete are quite excessive.

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
CSU + CCC + UC

For questions or more information, contact the CA Open Educational Resources Council.