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:

Light and Matter

Find it: eTextbook Website

Textbook Authors:
Benjamin Crowell

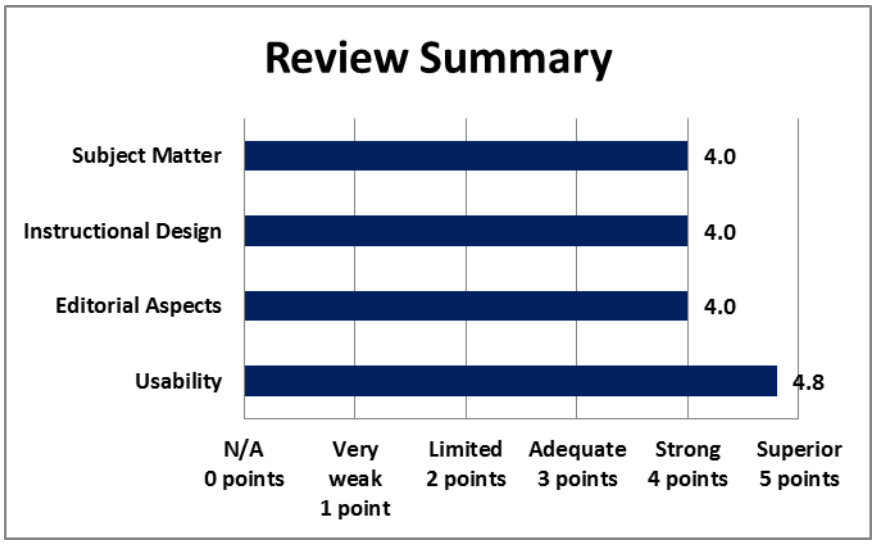
Reviewed by:
Alex Small

Institution:
California State University, Pomona

Title/Position:
Professor

Format Reviewed:
Online

A small fee may be associated with various formats.



Date Reviewed:
December 2015

California OER Council eTextbook Evaluation Rubric

CA Course ID: PHYS 105

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: 24 out of 30

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

- This boook seems to be a completely bog-standard "algebra-based" physics book nominally aimed at life science students. It has an even thinner veneer of biology than your typical "algebra-based" book, but your typical physics instructor knows so little biology that they can't tell their ass from their hand, so it balances out.
- Most bog-standard books are integrated with an online homework system. While I dissent from most progressive pedagogy, I strongly believe in online homework because of the value of immediate feedback. The lack of online homework is my only stumbling block in regards to this book.

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: 28 out of 35

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

- Since this is a free book, the author hasn't had enough money to hire a team of graphic designers to make it into a complete sensory overload like all of the other traditional textbooks out there. Consequently, this book is almost readable. I'm confident that with a bit more funding for a design team that could be fixed.

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: 20 out of 25

Please provide comments on any editorial aspect of this textbook:

- This is a completely standard book. Probably fine for "Engineering Technology" students (read: People who are entitled to engineering degrees despite an inability to do math) but not terribly useful for biology majors since the thin veneer of biological context is even thinner than in most competing books. However, if your only goal is to spend a year teaching biology majors to hate physics while giving them inflated B- grades as a reward for their inability to do algebra, this book will suffice.

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: 24 out of 25

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

- I think .pdf is a fine format for sharing books.

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: 5 out of 10

Overall Comments

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

- It is completely standard, but free. My colleagues will be able to do exactly what they were doing before, except it will be cheaper for students.

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

- In order to appease me personally, the author should either add a meaningful layer of biology or online homework (not just an answer checker).

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.