Faculty Review of Open eTextbooks
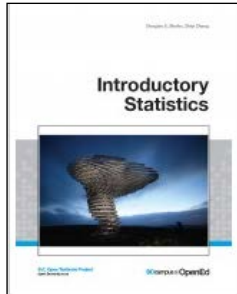
The California Open Educational Resources Council has designed and implemented a faculty review process of the free and open etextbooks showcased within the California Open Online Library for Education (www.cool4ed.org). Faculty from the California Community Colleges, the California State University, 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:

Introductory Statistics

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Textbook Author(s):

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Reviewed by:

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Institution:

San Jose City College
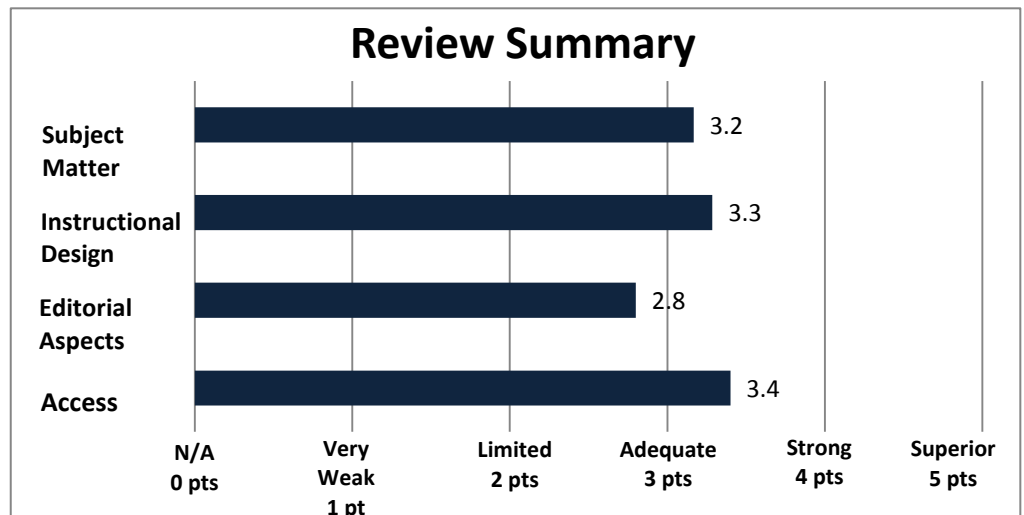
Title/Position:

Instructor, Mathematics Department

Format Reviewed:

Word Document

A small fee may be associated with various formats.

Date Reviewed:

August, 2014

Review Summary

Category	Score
Subject Matter	3.2
Instructional Design	3.3
Editorial Aspects	2.8
Access	3.4

N/A 0 pts | Very Weak 1 pt | Limited 2 pts | Adequate 3 pts | Strong 4 pts | Superior 5 pts

California OER Council eTextbook Evaluation Rubric

CA Course ID: MATH 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				X		

Subject Matter (30 possible points)	N/A (0 pts)	Very Weak (1pt)	Limited (2 pts)	Adequate (3pts)	Strong (4 pts)	Superior (5 pts)
examples that are inclusive of a variety of races, ethnicities, and backgrounds?)						

Total Points: 19 out of 30

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

The chapters reflect the usual organization of an introductory course on statistics. Nothing really stands out in terms of differentiating it from similar textbooks, other than chapter 6 which deals with the details of sampling distribution. The exercises are arranged as basic, application, large data set, and additional, with answers immediately following the exercises (ideally, the answers should be at the back of the book.) Each of the 11 chapters seems a bit too long, on the average each being over 100 pages. Including the two methods of critical value and p-value as separate sections to determine the significance of statistical testing is a nice touch. Highlighting "Key Takeaways" for each chapter is also nice.

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: 23 out of 35 points

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

The lack of a TOC is jarring (at least that's what I found in the Word version of the text I downloaded.) Each chapter, on the average, is over 100 pages, which is a bit too long to sustain student interest. The exercise sections, arranged in order of increasing complexity are relevant and interesting but are concentrated at the end of each chapter, instead of appearing at the end of the sections that would have made gauging student progress more dynamic. Also, simply asking students to explain this or that concept doesn't make for active learning. Too many pages are devoted to descriptive statistics. The logical connections between the chapters to gain insight into the fundamental objectives of statistics are missing. The lack of instruction or emphasis on advanced calculators to solve real-life statistical problems is a drawback, although the authors write in the preface that they would rather leave this aspect to individual instructors for customization.

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: 14 out of 25

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

Lack of a TOC should be addressed immediately. More references need to be cited. Adding a section on calculators, instead of leaving it to individual instructors for customization, would be a good idea to make the book self-contained. The text should be spruced up a bit: the content comes across as rather dry. The overall layout should be made more attractive and easier to navigate.

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 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: 17 out of 30

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

The availability of the textbook in a few formats makes accessing it easy. However, the look and feel of the book feels somewhat primitive. With a few editorial and graphical touches, it can be made more appealing.

Overall Ratings (10 possible points)	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?
- Strong exposition of descriptive and inferential statistics
- Exercises organized in useful levels of complexity

What areas of this textbook require improvement in order for it to be used in your courses?
- Layout
- Table of Contents
- Section on calculators
- Condense the chapters
- Make connections between the chapters toward achieving stated outcomes from the course.

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

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