



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). 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:

Introduction to Sociology



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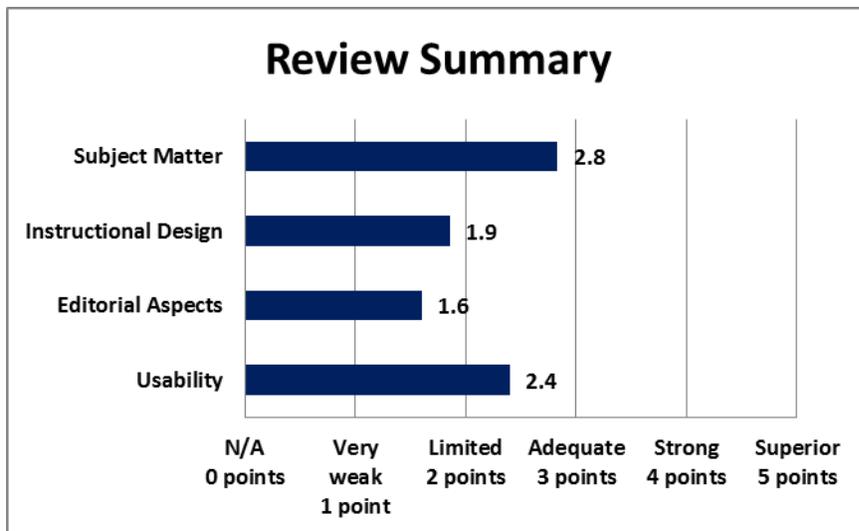
Professor

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: [SOC110](#)

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:

- I had a difficult time considering the overall range and scope of material, sufficiency (and clarity) of examples, and current knowledge and sensitivity to subject matter. Here's why:
 - (1) each "chapter" is organized by a clear topic outline and relevant subheadings; however, within nearly every sentence, there are links to additional information that may be only marginally relevant to the sociological topic being discussed (depending on the type and number of links a student decides to follow);
 - (2) there is a wealth of information about sociologically-relevant issues; however, given the variety and number of avenues a student might take in exploring the links to information, an instructor who decides to use this text will need to be (a) very focused and specific about the way in which they advise students to use the text OR (b) be quite lenient and open to the manner in which students explore related (and only marginally-related) subtopics and examples.
- The depth and breadth of information available for various substantive areas in sociology and subtopics is relative to the kinds and volume of contributions made to Wikipedia (this is also true for the accuracy (in both truth value and contemporary relevance) of the content.

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: 13 out of 35

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

- See prior comments related to overall organization and capacity for navigating and linking information.
- The fact that there are so many links to additional information makes trying to digest and synthesize information related to a specific topic or area of focus challenging. For an introductory-level course, I think having this wealth (and unevenness) of information would prove difficult for students who are linguistically challenged or for whom writing and comprehension are difficult.

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: 8 out of 25

Please provide comments on any editorial aspect of this textbook:

- Adequacy in writing, grammar, et cetera are conditioned on Wikipedia contributions. In general, I found it difficult to navigate through this book, and to follow a content thread or substantive area (e.g. Health and Medicine, Research Ethics) in a way that I would consider meaningful for an introductory-level viewpoint.
- The presentation of material is dense, as the pages are mostly text-based with few pictures, graphics or video links.

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: 12 out of 25

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

- While the text is fairly accessible (technologically speaking), it would definitely be up to the professor to provide some regulation for navigating a course of meaningful information content as well as to suggest some overarching theoretical, methodological, sociologically substantive, and application-based themes.

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?	X	Strong reservations (1 pt)	Limited willingness (2 pts)	Willing (3 pts)	Strongly willing (4 pts)	Enthusiastically willing (5 pts)

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?

- There is a wealth of information available for exploration.

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

- The principal difficulty with this book is the amount of information and the minimal framework for containing the information or for organizing the body of knowledge/work characterized as "Sociology." Meaningful organization and framework for considering information/substantive areas in Sociology and related social sciences is a (minimal) must for an introductory course.

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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