

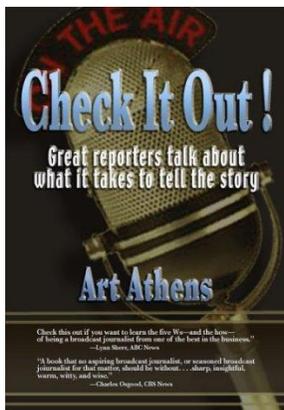


Faculty Review of Open eTextbooks

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:

Check It Out!



License:

Check It Out! by Art Athens is licensed under Copyright

Find it: [eTextbook Website](#)

Textbook Authors:

Art Athens

Reviewed by:

Daryle Nagano

Institution:

Los Angeles Harbor College

Title/Position:

Professor

Format

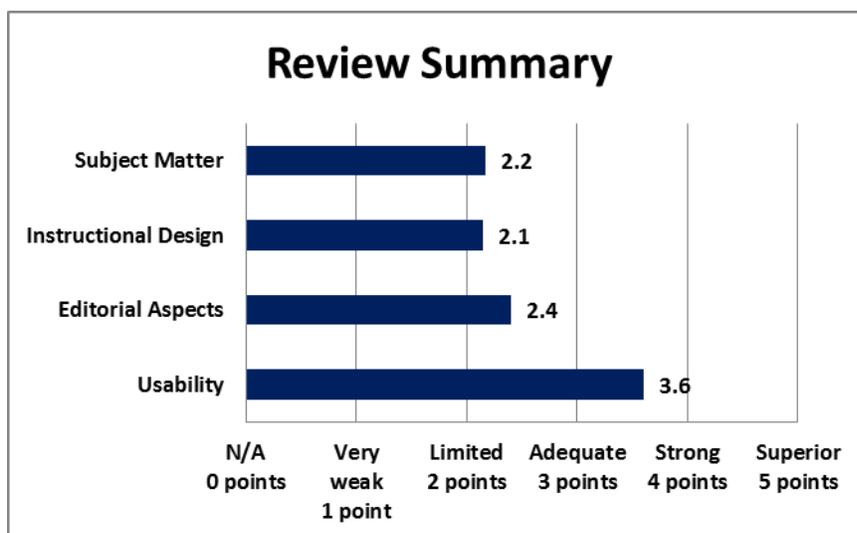
Reviewed:

[Online](#)

A small fee may be associated with various formats.

Date Reviewed:

August 2015



California OER Council eTextbook Evaluation Rubric

CA Course ID: [JOUR 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 examples that are inclusive of a variety of races, ethnicities, and backgrounds?)				X		

Total Points: 13 out of 30

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

- The subject matter doesn't cover all course objectives. For example, APA isn't addressed and that is a major component of journalism. Also, there needs to be an entire chapter on how to write effective leads and how to use the Inverted Pyramid.
- The subject matter also isn't current and doesn't relate to today's student. In fact, the text frequently refers to Brian Williams. While he has done good work, he wouldn't be a current good role model for students given that he misrepresented events and provided inaccurate information. That is the very thing we teach students not to do.
- The only way to test if students understand the material is to have them write and take quizzes. Not one of the required methods of evaluation mentioned below are offered in the text:
 - Writing assignments
 - Style quizzes
 - Exams
 - Critiques; peer critiques
 - Professional protocols (meeting deadlines, attendance, adherence to ethics)

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: 15 out of 35

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

- The material is presented in a chatty and opinionated manner that isn't appropriate for an introductory course. The writing is more for an experienced and mature audience.
- There are no quizzes, tests, activities or discussion questions for students to work on.

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?	X					

(e.g. graphics, animations, audio)						
------------------------------------	--	--	--	--	--	--

Total Points: 12 out of 25

Please provide comments on any editorial aspect of this textbook.

- The text contains a Table of Contents and an Index, but no Glossary or Reference Page.
- In the Preface the author states, "...you will find unattributed quotes and comments throughout this book. Some quotes are just left to hang there, and you will have to take them at face value." While this may be true, as instructors we want beginning students to source cite everything they use to practice good habits.
- The text isn't visually appealing because it doesn't contain any pictures, graphs, charts or color to enhance points.

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: 18 out of 25

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

- The textbook is easy to access, once you click on the link the text automatically uploads. I was able to print out certain chapters to review and most of the chapters are short so printing out each chapter to read separately is feasible.

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?	Not at all (0 pts)	Strong reservations (1 pt)	Limited willingness (2 pts)	Willing (3 pts)	Strongly willing (4 pts)	Enthusiastically willing (5 pts)
			X			

Total Points: 4 out of 10

Overall Comments

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

- I wouldn't recommend or use this textbook.

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

- The textbook would need to address ALL Course Objectives, offer current examples with images and provide writing assignments and discussion questions at the end of each chapter.

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.)





This [review](#) is licensed under a [Creative Commons Attribution-ShareAlike 4.0 International License](#).