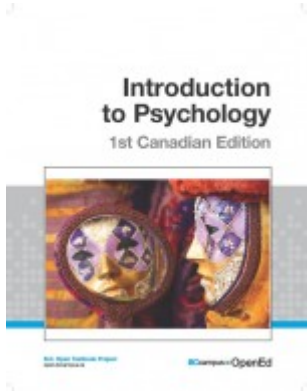# Faculty Review of Open eTextbooks

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:

BC Campus: Introduction to Psychology

License:

Find it: eTextbook Website

Textbook Authors:

Jennifer Walinga and Charles Stangor

Reviewed by:

Megan Gliniecki

Institution:

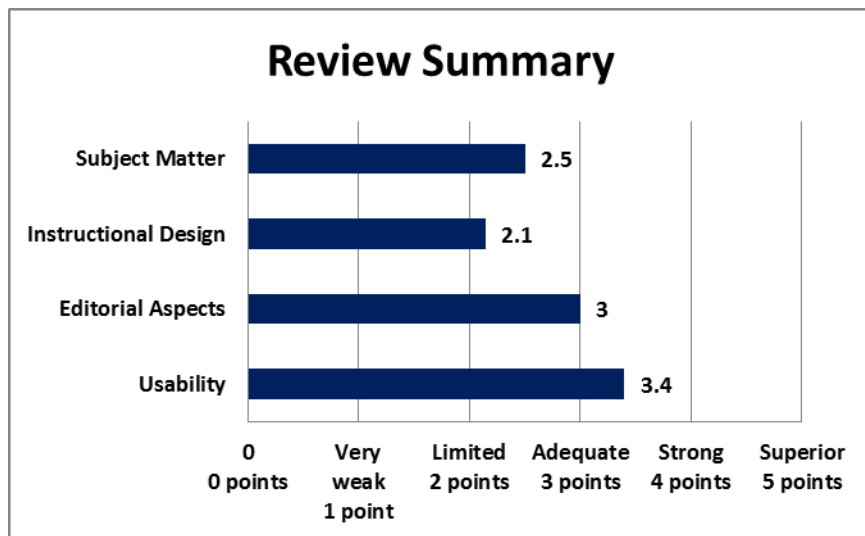## California State University, San Marcos

Title/Position:

Professor

Format Reviewed:

Online

A small fee may be associated with various formats.

Review Summary

Category	Score
Subject Matter	2.5
Instructional Design	2.1
Editorial Aspects	3
Usability	3.4

(0 = 0 points; Very weak = 1 point; Limited = 2 points; Adequate = 3 points; Strong = 4 points; Superior = 5 points)

Date Reviewed:

March 2015

California OER Council eTextbook Evaluation Rubric
CA Course ID: PSYCH 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			

	N/A (0 pts)	Very Weak (1pt)	Limited (2 pts)	Adequate (3pts)	Strong (4 pts)	Superior (5 pts)
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: 15 out of 30

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

- The positives of the text include the chapter openings which seek to engage students and show applications of psychology to everyday life. The empirical research focus is consistent with the push to help students realize that many aspects of psychology are amenable to the scientific method. The take home messages at the end of the chapters are a good way to emphasize important aspects of the chapters.

- Here are critical comments regarding the book: While many introductory textbooks for psychology can be overly long and unwieldy, this text takes too brief of an approach to the subject matter. To create an entire semester course, an instructor would have to bring in many supplementary materials.

- There are places where the information is not entirely accurate. For example, the text states that David Beckham has Obsessive Compulsive Disorder based on reported symptoms that he has a preference for things in a certain order at times. This overlooks the very important aspect of the continuum of normal to abnormal behavior and the fact that Beckham would have to report either significant distress or impairment from his symptoms. In addition, his symptoms may in fact better reflect Obsessive Compulsive Personality Disorder.

- Freud is the father of talk therapy and a core personality theorist. Yet, he is covered very briefly without mention of the structure of the mind or the psychosexual stages of development. With this oversight, it is odd then that Jung is covered in great detail. This seems to be a bias from the author and does not reflect the importance of these men with respect to the history of psychology and their contributions to psychology as a whole. Also, with respect to the coverage of Carl Jung, there was an omission - archetypes were stated to be part of the "unconscious" when in fact they are part of the collective unconscious.

- In the section describing Schizophrenia, hallucinations were described as "imaginary" experiences. This wording seems to suggest that people are imagining the sensory experiences. Brain imaging shows that the same areas of the brain light up for people with schizophrenia who report auditory hallucinations as for non-affected persons who are being spoken to in the imaging room.

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 text is organized well and sections are clear.

- Improvements could be made in the following areas: The text of the book is very small and difficult to read. Most often the tables and figures are especially hard to read. There is an option to navigate away from the text to see the figures, but then access to the descriptive text is lost.

- The text does not seem friendly for visual learners.

- The text does not include a glossary of any form - either at the end of chapters or at the end of the text itself.

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: 15 out of 25

Please provide comments on any editorial aspect of this textbook.
- The table of contents is clear and links to chapters and particular topics are easily accessed. When I performed searches for various topics, chapter sections containing the highlighted terms were listed clearly.

- Improvements could be made in the following areas: With online resources as developed as they are today, the book is lacking in both embedded visual resources and links to resources on the web. There are only a handful of videos within the entire text, and many psychological topics are more effectively covered by visuals. As mentioned previously, there are important figures missing from the biology/physiology chapter. In addition, there are many videos available on the web describing psychological disorders and the patients who have them. In a topic such as psychology which is about understanding people, the text should include interviews of real-life clinicians, researchers, patients, and every day people to help concepts come to life for students.

- Student learning requires testing knowledge. The book includes only critical thinking questions but no multiple choice or short answer options for students. Learning often requires a stepwise progression from more rote memorization and review of concepts to more complex application of material. This book does not support that aspect of learning.

Usability (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 access concerning this textbook.
- The text is available in a variety of formats including: online, pdf, pub, xhtml, and wxp. The text is also

available in printed form, which I think is an excellent option for students and instructors. The navigation of the text is easy and obvious. That being said, there are not a lot of embedded resources that require complex navigation. Thus the navigation is clear but not advanced.

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: 3 out of 10

Overall Comments

If you were to recommend this textbook to colleagues, what merits of the textbook would you highlight?
- This textbook is easy to navigate and includes many applications of psychology to everyday life. Students will be excited about the many ways that psychology affects the world they live in.

What areas of this textbook require improvement in order for it to be used in your courses?
- The book is too brief for an introductory psychology course even within a community college. While the overall breadth of topics is sufficient, chapters do not go into sufficient detail. For example, the entire peripheral and central nervous systems, including brain areas and functioning and synapses are covered in less than 10 pages.

- There is a great deal of focus today on different learning styles including visual, aural, read/write and kinesthetic. This text does not provide resources for any of these diverse learning styles nor is the format itself conducive to anything but read/write learners.

- The text also does not include instructor or student supplementary materials. Students frequently seek out ways to review or test themselves on the subject matter. Instructors would have to employ a great deal of effort and time to create such important resources.

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.)

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