



## 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](http://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:

### Human Physiology



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Find it: [eTextbook Website](#)

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Format

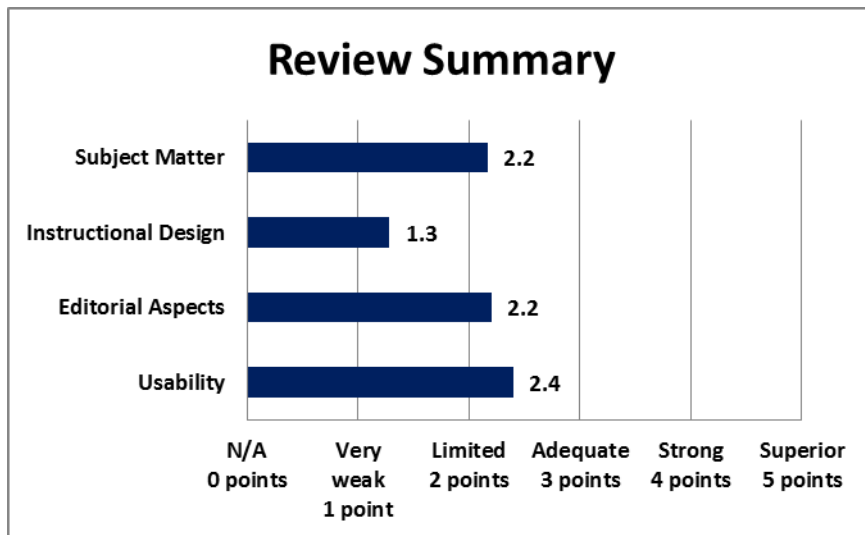
Reviewed:

[Online](#)

A small fee may be associated with various formats.

Date Reviewed:

December 2015



### California OER Council eTextbook Evaluation Rubric

CA Course ID: [BIOL 120B](#)

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:

- There are some terminology issues with this text. For example, in the chapter on the nervous system, the incorrect term "nerve" was used when "neuron" was correct. This is a common misconception that students often have, so to have a text that confuses the issue is unacceptable.
- The depth of content coverage was inconsistent. Parts of the nervous system were extremely detailed and complex, while other parts were superficially covered. There were also some inaccuracies, such as the lifespan of a sperm.
- The case studies included in the text are really nice.
- I don't see where an instructor could access a set of images, nor are there test banks. Each chapter does have review questions. I also don't see an index.

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: 9 out of 35

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

- The reading level is extremely inconsistent.
- There are many bulleted lists, which seems too informal for a textbook.
- The images are weak and not highlighted for maximal effectiveness in helping to make complex concepts more clear.
- There are no learning outcomes associated with the text and the organization is choppy. There were parts that clearly SEEMED like a "wiki," as the tone, depth, and organization would change dramatically (like in the nervous system chapter, when the discussion about the lateral cord came out of nowhere).
- As a web document, each chapter is easily searchable, though it is not possible to search the entire text, which is definitely cumbersome. It would be easier to search the pdf file.

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			

Please provide comments on any editorial aspect of this textbook.

- There were grammatical errors (such as comma use) in each part of the textbook that I specifically sat down to read.
- There were lots of bulleted lists, which just seems superficial and unprofessional for a textbook.
- Formatting was inconsistent. There were parts of the muscular system chapter that were actually written in first person voice, which is again very unprofessional.
- When I looked into the authors, it appears that this wiki started as a professor's project and that much of the text was written by students. This might explain the tone.

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.

- The book is provided online (HTML) or as a pdf. The pdf could be printed easily...but 552 pages is a lot of paper.
- I don't see how the text could be annotated by students or instructors, unless they actually edited the wiki. (That might be an interesting class project, actually...!)

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: 1 out of 10

## Overall Comments

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

- I would not recommend this book.

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

- It has inconsistent coverage, is unprofessionally written, and the images aren't very high quality. All of these things would need to be fixed.

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.)

For questions or more information, contact the [CA Open Educational Resources Council](#).



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