# 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:

# Public Speaking: The Virtual Text

Find it: eTextbook Website

Textbook Authors:

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Reviewed by:

Elizabeth Losh

Institution:
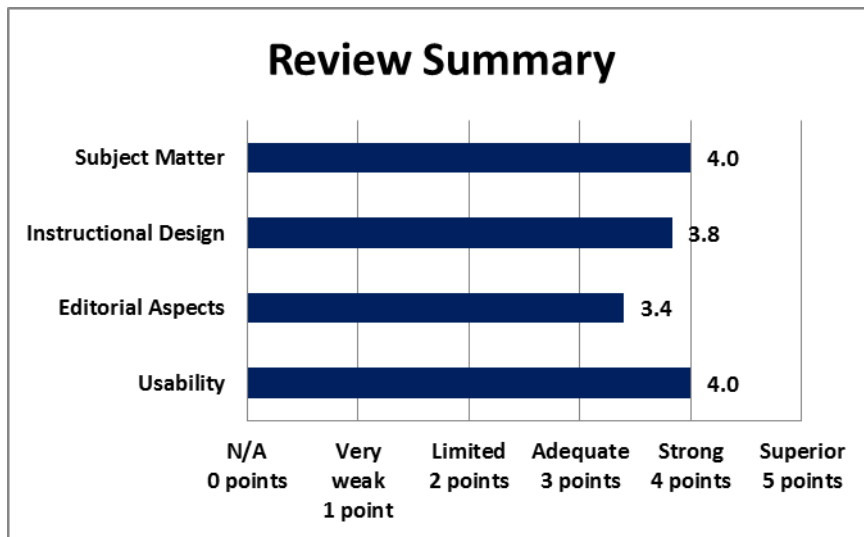
University of California, San Diego

Title/Position:

Professor

Format Reviewed:

Online

A small fee may be associated with various formats.



**Review Summary**

| Category | Score |
| --- | --- |
| Subject Matter | 4.0 |
| Instructional Design | 3.8 |
| Editorial Aspects | 3.4 |
| Usability | 4.0 |

N/A 0 points | Very weak 1 point | Limited 2 points | Adequate 3 points | Strong 4 points | Superior 5 points

Date Reviewed:

December 2015

## California OER Council eTextbook Evaluation Rubric

**CA Course ID: COMM 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 | |

| | N/A (0 pts) | Very Weak (1pt) | Limited (2 pts) | Adequate (3pts) | Strong (4 pts) | Superior (5 pts) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 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: 24 out of 30

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

- This book models good citation practices with frequent parenthetical references to scholarly sources and generally reflects current communication research. It begins with relatively sophisticated models of communication channels and continues with a research-based approach to the subject matter. It offers more coverage of graphic design basics than most public speaking textbooks.
- The section on speaking to a global audience from a faculty member in India is particularly valuable, although generalizations about masculinity and femininity and national culture are potentially extremely problematic, and sections about contrastive rhetoric (example: the "spiral pattern" in particular cultural discourses) present contrastive rhetoric as received knowledge rather than a debated area, particularly for those who take the comparative rhetoric position.
- The section on ethics covers inclusive language and includes NCA standards. It incorporates issues about search engines, sponsorship, and algorithm bias, although it is weaker on scholarly databases and Internet research than some current textbooks and offers less general discussion of technology overall, even though it includes new digital genres such as TED talks.

| 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

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

- By combining HTML and PDF formats, it addresses searchability and accessibility issues adequately. It has good glossaries and sufficient quizzes.
- Because of the multiple authors, there is sometimes a regrettable lack of a unified tone. The casual introductions may undermine the scholarly ethos of the authors.
- The forum area in the "faculty lounge" section is still under development.

| 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:  17 out of 25

Please provide comments on any editorial aspect of this textbook:

- Limited use of multimedia, like other PDF textbooks.  Images are often stock images that don't invite more analysis in class discussion.

| 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: 20 out of 25

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

- Annotation issues can be solved by printing out text or using commonly available Adobe software.

| 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:  7 out of 10

## Overall Comments

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

- This is one of the few public speaking textbooks available to give good advice about graphic design and speaking to global audiences.  It incorporates NCA standards and inclusive language and a number of contemporary case studies.  The apparatus (including provocative quotations) is designed to invite class discussion.

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

- More content about the history of rhetoric would be important for incorporation into my courses.

> 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.