



## 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:

### Introduction to Psychology



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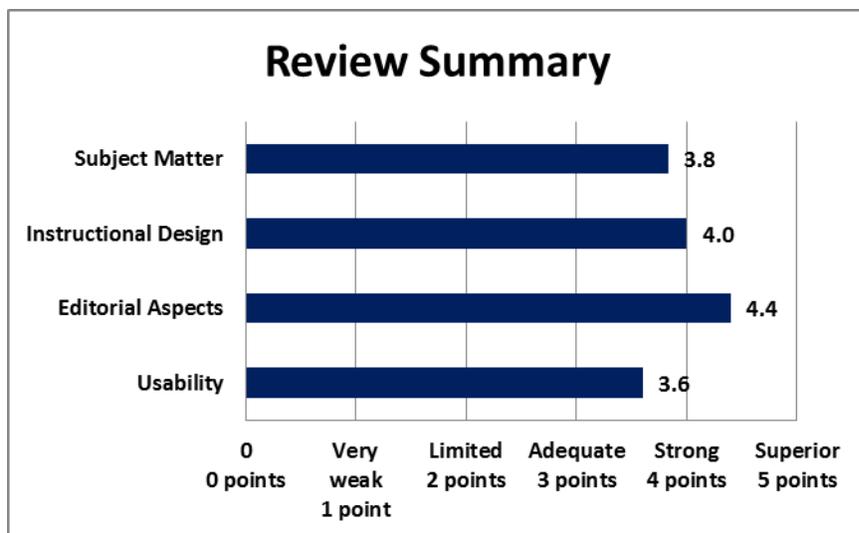
Professor

Format

Reviewed:

[Online](#)

A small fee may be associated with various formats.



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	
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: 23 out of 30

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

- This textbook is presented in a modular form, with each topic written by people who have expertise in the particular subject area. Most topics are covered in sufficient detail and reflect both best practices in teaching and current perspectives. My suggestions are more to improve the book than outright criticisms, as I have found this source to be the strongest of five OER's I have reviewed. In this process, I have found it easier to critique good work than to try to make suggestions for OER's that needed major revisions.
- Here are some suggestions:
  - The only truly notable limitation is that the portion of the book covering psychological disorders has not been updated to include the DSM-5 edits. The section on personality disorders reflects proposed changes to DSM-5, but these particular changes were actually not made in the final publication of the DSM.
  - While some chapters did an excellent job of incorporating visual learning aids such as tables and figures, there were chapters where visual aids were lacking. For example, the chapter on Attachment should include a figure depicting the Attachment Behavioral System and a table outlining the attachment styles and responses to the various stages of the strange situation. Both of these tables would go far in assisting comprehension of material while also being sensitive to the needs of visual learners.
  - The Attachment chapter does mention Hazan and Shaver as a reference with respect to adult attachment. The most important aspect of their findings is that empirical studies show attachment to be dimensional rather than categorical. Specifically adults can be described along the dimension of attachment-related anxiety and attachment-related avoidance. A fun aspect of the text could include a link to an attachment quiz for adults that rates people along these two dimensions. It is available for free online.
  - The chapter on Social and Personality Development in Childhood could include a mention of the various personality theories that are discussed later in the text, such as Freudian theory. In addition Erikson's theory of personality development is notably absent in the text and could be included here.
  - Within the Personality Disorders chapter, there is a discussion of the Big 5 traits and a table outlining related characteristics. This actually seems more appropriate for one of the chapters describing the development of personality, as the DSM-5 does not discuss personality disorders in this way. In addition, a visual aid could be added that summarizes all of the personality disorders and their most salient features.
  - The chapter on mood disorders could include a graph depicting the various mood episodes and their relation to bipolar and unipolar disorders as a visual aid in differentiating among them.
  - Some chapters such as the one covering biological aspects of behavior include excellent videos. Videos are always great and could be incorporated in other chapters as a way of enhancing learning and interest. There are many appropriate YouTube videos on psychological disorders, for example, that are publicly available.

<b>Instructional Design (35 possible points)</b>	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: 28 out of 35

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

- This language and writing style used in this book is excellent. Authors incorporate first and second person in a way that capitalizes on student engagement and comprehension. For example, chapters frequently describe what has been covered so far, what will be discussed and what students should focus on. In some areas, authors even explicitly state for students not to be discouraged by complex terminology but to approach the subject matter by attending to certain subtopics.
- While most textbooks incorporate a story into the chapter openers, this book utilizes both a purpose and an introduction. The purpose is succinct in targeting student attention for the upcoming readings. The introduction gains interest by asking questions relevant to students' everyday lives. Well done.
- The visual layout of the book is excellent. Headings and subheadings are clear and typically use different fonts and font sizes. An outline of the chapter is always available to the right of the page for easy navigation. The search feature brings up a list of modules containing terms. Definitions of terms are available simply by hovering the cursor over a word. For the most part, figures are embedded within the chapters with descriptive text adjacent. One exception is within the psychodynamic module, tables are at the end of the chapter rather than within.
- Another great design aspect of this text is that figures and tables can be saved to Pinterest. This is a way for students to have such visual aids organized and accessible from a smart phone.
- As mentioned previously, the book includes an outstanding instructor manual. The manual itself is easy to navigate and facile to use. It is available online unlike many manuals today which have parts presented only in pdf format.

<b>Editorial Aspects (25 possible points)</b>	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: 22 out of 25

Please provide comments on any editorial aspect of this textbook.

- I have commented on all of these facets previously. I would just emphasize that some chapters could include more visual aids, particularly videos which students seem to enjoy immensely.

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: 18 out of 30

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

- The only format I saw for this book was online access. This seems sufficient for most students and instructors but could be a limitation for those who do not have internet access at home.
- The book is really strong as a whole. I would not see a reason to annotate it. However, in the event that an instructor only wanted to use certain modules or chapters, the navigation features of the text would make that easy to accomplish.

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: 8 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 very readable and organized. Navigation of the text is facile. The chapters are written by people who have expertise in the topics discussed. The language used is relatable and clear and the authors go as far as encouraging students and addressing where frustrations in comprehension may arise. The text includes great instructor resources that go beyond content to address teaching style and student engagement.

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

- Overall this is a strong book. Content needs to be edited to reflect DSM-5 updates, and certain topics should be enhanced as discussed in my previous comments. To be sensitive to the needs of visual learners, the text should incorporate more figures and tables (many of which I specifically addressed already). Kinesthetic learners would benefit from additional assessments such as online quizzes. Student resources should be added that include the aforementioned quizzes as well as chapter outlines and study strategies. The book could also benefit from videos in many chapters to enhance both learner comprehension and engagement.

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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