

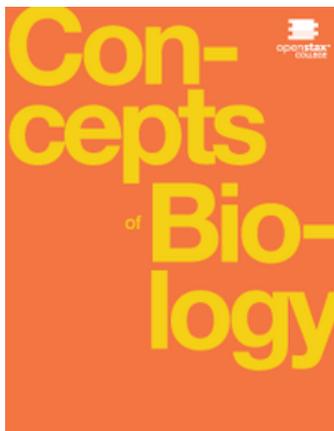


Faculty Review of Open eTextbooks

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:

Concepts of Biology



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Find it: [eTextbook Website](#)

Textbook Authors:

Boundless

Reviewed by:

Wendy Riggs

Institution:

College of the Redwoods

Title/Position:

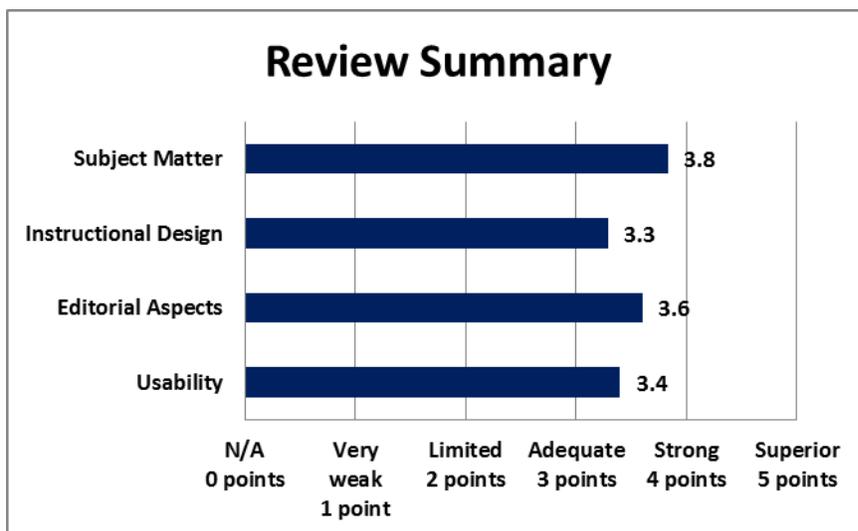
Professor

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: no C-ID

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 covers a great deal of content in satisfactory depth for a non-majors course.
- There may be some areas that are not detailed enough for some classes (depending on the specific focus of this highly variable non-majors course), but the content could be easily supplemented with the majors level OpenStax Biology text if necessary.
- The online version of the text is updated frequently, and you can download the latest version there.
- PowerPoint presentations are available to instructors. Chapters have review questions at the end, but there are no test banks or unlabeled images available.

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:

- This is a well-designed textbook. Students can get a relatively inexpensive hard copy (\$25) if they want, or they can access the book (free) online or as a PDF. There is even an iPad version of the text for \$5.
- There is also an accessible version of the text through Bookshare. OpenStax has also partnered with several companies that are offering other supporting materials, such as adaptive learning platforms, online laboratory simulations, and a giant KEY TERMS study guide. Some of these resources cost money.
- Additionally, faculty have access to PowerPoint slides and images and OpenStax even offers language faculty can insert into their syllabi.

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		
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Total Points: 18 out of 25

Please provide comments on any editorial aspect of this textbook.

- This is an extremely professional textbook with excellent images and graphics.
- I did not see a list of further references or citations.

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: 17 out of 25

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

- The book comes in a large number of formats, which is extremely valuable for meeting student needs.
- Each page of the online text has a menu/table of contents at the top, which must be unpacked if you want to browse around the text. This is a little clunky, but understandable as it is difficult to have enough space on a computer screen for navigation AND content.
- Also on the website version of the text students can download JUST THE PAGE they are looking at...or the entire book. This is a really nice, flexible feature.
- I did not see any sort of annotation tools to go with the text, though perhaps some of the supplementary content offered by for-profit companies might offer an annotation option.

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: 9 out of 10

Overall Comments

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

- I would absolutely recommend this text. It is professional, well written, comprehensive, and comes in a huge number of formats.
- I'm not fond of the fact that students must pay for some of the supplementary resources, but I think it is positive that companies are looking for opportunities to partner with OpenStax to increase the value of the product.

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

- It would be awesome if there were more free resources that went with the book. But it really is an excellent textbook.

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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