Faculty Review of Open eTextbooks

Textbook Name:

Handbook of Independent Journalism

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Handbook of Independent Journalism by Deborah Potter is licensed under Copyright

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Reviewed by:

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Institution:

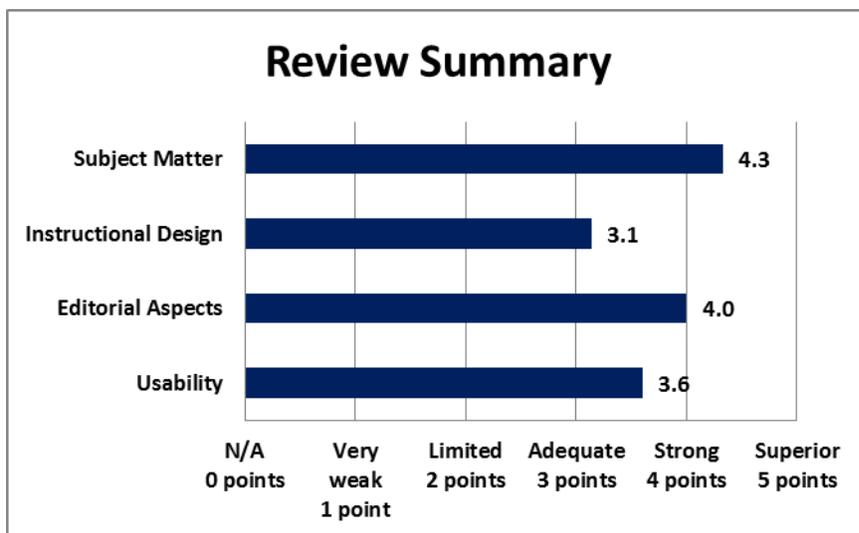## California State University, San Bernardino

Title/Position:

Professor

Format
Reviewed:

Online

A small fee may be associated with various formats.

Review Summary

Subject Matter	4.3
Instructional Design	3.1
Editorial Aspects	4.0
Usability	3.6

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

Date Reviewed:

August 2015

California OER Council eTextbook Evaluation Rubric

CA Course ID: JOUR 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

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

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

- The author Deborah Potter is a veteran network news correspondent (CBS, CNN) and director of NewsLab, an online journalism resource. Not surprisingly, the quality of the content is quite high, and it covers the topics suitable to an Introduction to Reporting and Newswriting course. However, at 61 pages total length, it often does not cover the topics in enough depth or with enough examples to be an ideal textbook.
- There are no images, test banks, review questions, exercises or instructor resources provided.

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: 22 out of 35

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

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: 20 out of 25

Please provide comments on any editorial aspect of this textbook.

- The textbook is professional and beautiful in design, with excellent layout, typography, and graphics (which are however limited to drawings).
- The textbook has a detailed table of contents, but no citations, references, or glossary. At its end is an extensive list of journalism resources on the internet.

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

	Not at all (0 pts)	Very Weak (1 pt)	Limited (2 pts)	Adequate (3 pts)	Strong (4 pts)	Superior (5 pts)
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 25

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

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: 8 out of 10

Overall Comments

If you were to recommend this textbook to colleagues, what merits of the textbook would you highlight?
- Excellence of writing and content
- Credibility of author
- Professional design

What areas of this textbook require improvement in order for it to be used in your courses?
- Depth: Needs more examples of the journalistic principles it describes
- Student focus: Needs chapter learning objectives, review questions, and exercises
- Ancillary: Needs test bank and other instructor resources

We invite you to add your feedback on the textbook or the review to the textbook site in MERLOT
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