



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 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 International Relations



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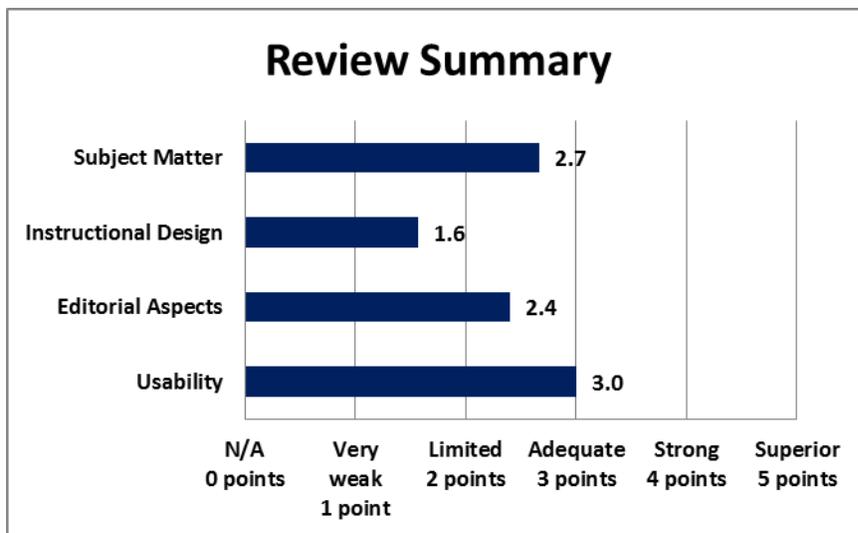
Professor

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: [POLS 140](#)

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					X	

offensive and insensitive examples? Does it include examples that are inclusive of a variety of races, ethnicities, and backgrounds?)						
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Total Points: 16 out of 30

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

- The reading consists of 10 separate units. Students would benefit from increased readability if all units were combined into a single textbook and each unit were divided into at least two short chapters. This single textbook would then need a brief introductory chapter (now missing) to familiarize students with International Relations as a field of study and its historical development. Furthermore, the introductory chapter should explain the purpose of all other chapters in the textbook and their relationships to one another.
- Some of the units themselves are confusing and not coherent. Particularly, units 5-9 are scattered, too basic, and do not provide in-depth analysis of their subject matters. The majority of the links in units 5-9 are websites of organizations and institutions. This is a middle school level of reading. There is currently very little dialogue between theory and history in all units.
- It is crucial that students learn how to test theoretical approaches against specific historical case studies and learn techniques for applying these conceptual models to examples of conflict and cooperation. The textbook currently misses an opportunity to do this important teaching, making it a less valuable resource for students and faculty alike. The following important components are also missing in all units: study questions, a few recommend further readings at the end of each chapter, and a glossary.
- This text does not provide any study questions. Incorporation of study questions would be very useful for class discussion and students' learning. A world map, maps of different regions of the world, a glossary, and a few tables that list major wars, the countries involved, major non-state actors and organizations, and a chronology appendix for each chapter would be helpful.

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: 11 out of 35

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

- All units should be compiled into one PDF document that contains all links and essays. This would help students easily toggle between different parts of the book.
- The textbook also needs a table of contents. I recognize that the text is designed to be multimodal. However, textbook structures have evolved over time for specific reasons and students need to know how to access the information they will expect to find.
- Adding readings on theory at the beginning of all chapters/units, images, maps, and study questions would promote students' engagements in the materials and in class discussions.

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			

Total Points: 12 out of 25

Please provide comments on any editorial aspect of this textbook:

- Since this is not a complete textbook and consists of several incoherent and scattered links, I do not know what would be the proper answer to this question.

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: 15 out of 25

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

- The following links are not working and need to be fixed:
 - Unit 1.2.1 Challenges to National Sovereignty
 - Unit 2.1.2. Lecture: iTunes U: American University: Professor Patrick Jackson's "Realism" Lecture
 - Unit 3.4.2 US-China Relations
 - Unit 4.3 Just War Theory - Web Media: Bigthink.com: "Michael Walzer on Just War Theory
 - Unit 6.2.1 Organizational Structure
 - Unit 6.2.1.1.5 Annan Doctrine of Humanitarian Intervention
 - Unit 8.1 Poverty and the Developing World

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: 2 out of 10

Overall Comments

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

- First of all, the materials included in the 10 units are free and I believe students would appreciate that.
- Although the units are at this stage still scattered and somewhat disorganized, they (units 1-4) contain some major conceptual debates and key issues of the discipline International Relations.
- The inclusion of audio and video materials and lectures in all units is a huge plus.
- I would definitely not recommend units 4-9 as a proper textbook for a college-level course.

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

- Add a table of contents .
- Add an introductory chapter.
- Unit 3 examines US foreign policy but students would gain more if the unit provided a discussion on what foreign policy is, who makes it, and how it is made or evaluated.

- Units 4-9 are very basic. They do not provide a substantive analytical examination of their respective subject matters.
- Add at least two new chapters on the following subjects:
 - One chapter on Global Issues examining themes like Human Rights, migration, and the environment
 - One chapter that discusses the impact of the information revolution and social media on state and non-state actors.

We invite you to add your feedback on the textbook or the review to [the textbook site in MERLOT](#)
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