



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:

Art History



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Find it: [eTextbook Website](#)

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Title/Position:

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Format

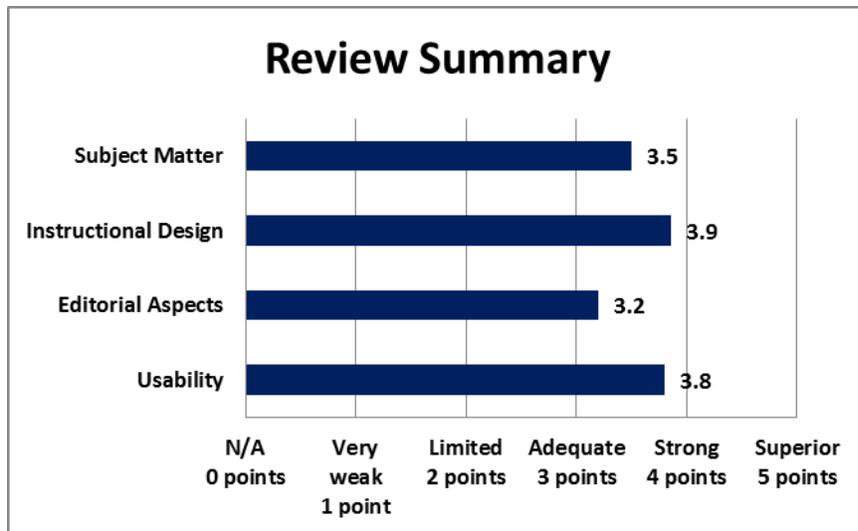
Reviewed:

[Online](#)

A small fee may be associated with various formats.

Date Reviewed:

August 2015



California OER Council eTextbook Evaluation Rubric

CA Course ID: [ARTH 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: 21 out of 30

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

- I so wanted to love Boundless. Last year, when I discovered it, it seemed to be the answer to my prayers: a cheap alternative to Stokstad, which I have used for several years. At first glance, my hopes were high: format was clear with stated objectives, key points, important terms followed by text. The images looked superb on my computer screen, and the font size and spacing was attractive. The table of contents was inclusive and wide ranging. Then I started reading. I found the writing to be plodding and dull.
- Certainly not Stokstad, which is quite good. Not Fichner-Rathus, not Gardner, all of which Boundless purports to offer "alternatives" for, but actually just rearranges the table of contents. I noticed some typos (craved instead of carved, "manuscriptsca" for manuscripts) and some linked terms that really don't need to be underlined ("viewer"...really?) as it tends to slow the reader down. But then I came to all the added features meant to customize the course and got lost. I'm using an iPad for this process, which might explain part of the problem, but I'd say there's a lot of navigation and clicks one needs to wade through before getting to where you want to go, which strains one's patience. Maybe you really can customize, assign and rearrange the quizzes for your class, but I often lost the whole page with a poorly aimed click. And had some difficulty getting back to the page I was on. It left me frustrated.

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: 27 out of 35

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

- If you can get through the navigation, which I had problems with, Boundless has tried very hard to be the one stop shop for online teaching.

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: 16 out of 25

Please provide comments on any editorial aspect of this textbook.

- I tried to find out who was responsible for the editing of Boundless, and found 3 top contributors. I clicked on Claire Bennett, Domain Expert, and pretty much hit a dead end as far as bio, education and expertise are concerned. It remains a mystery to me how this information is selected.

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: 19 out of 25

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

- Although I found it confusing, Boundless clearly states that it's completely accessible and easy to use.

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: 5 out of 10

Overall Comments

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

- It's certainly better than Wikibooks for art history!

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

- It would have to be easier to navigate and the writing would need to be more engaging, less encyclopedia-entry in tone.

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