



## 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 etextboks 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:

### The Fundamentals of Physical Geography



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 by Dr. Michael Pidwirny and Scott Jones is  
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Find it: [eTextbook Website](#)

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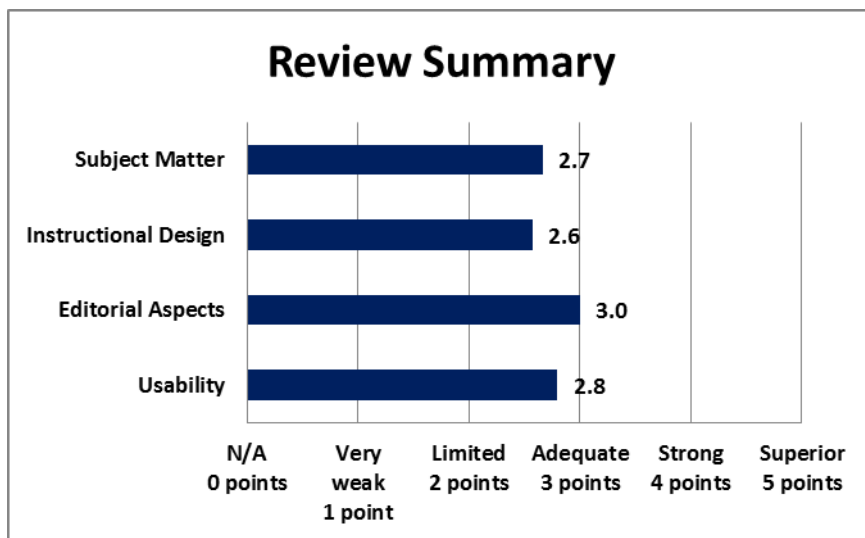
Professor

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: [GEOG 115](#)

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	X					

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?)						
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Total Points: 16 out of 30

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

- Fundamentals eBook (completed)
- Understanding eBook (partially completed, and downloadable pdf chapters)
- The content appears accurate and is presented in succinct writing. There is a paucity of current examples, or ones that combine images, art and text to drive the point home. That said, the coverage is comprehensive in that the usual topics are all introduced. The authors also include relevant weblinks to relevant sites (academic and popular books, journals, gov't agencies, organizations, and other textbooks).
- The links to vocabulary are comprehensive and easily accessed by the reader. There are some helpful animations, but some do not activate on my new computer.

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: 18 out of 35

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

- NOTE: There is a new "Understanding eBook" that appears to be in progress (one chapter dates to 2009), that does contain some Learning Objectives, but they are not particularly tight in their application.

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: 15 out of 25

Please provide comments on any editorial aspect of this textbook.

- The "Fundamentals Book" that I reviewed, is comprehensive and complete in content, but the supporting graphics that are important to many English learners, and visual students, are not well developed.

Usability (25 possible points)	N/A (0 pts)	Very Weak (1pt)	Limited (2 pts)	Adequate (3pts)	Strong (4 pts)	Superior (5 pts)
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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: 14 out of 25

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

- The pages download for printing or saving as PDF, and there does not appear to be any formatting issues.

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: 5 out of 10

## Overall Comments

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

- The text is well written and comprehensive. It provides a good understanding of the content. The search function for vocabulary and concepts is excellent. The book offers a limited but helpful review after each chapter.

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

- The supporting examples and graphics are not well developed. Most are downloaded from government sites. There is very little ancillary support.

We invite you to add your feedback on the textbook or the review to [the textbook site in MERLOT](#)  
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For questions or more information, contact the [CA Open Educational Resources Council](#).



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