

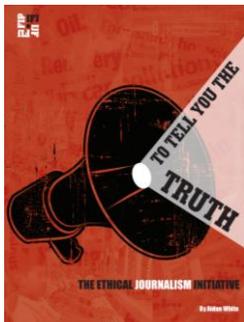


## Faculty Review of Open eTextbooks

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 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:

### To Tell the Truth: The Ethical Journalism Initiative



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Find it: [eTextbook Website](#)

Textbook Authors:

Aidan White

Reviewed by:

Bradford Owen

Institution:

California State University,  
San Bernardino

Title/Position:

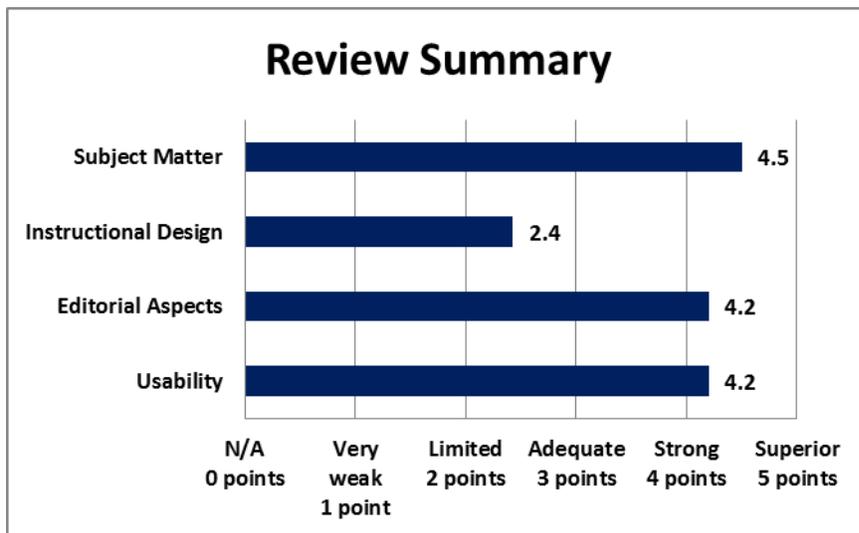
Professor

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: [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

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: 27 out of 30

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

- This 183-page work was published by the International Federation of Journalists (IFJ), and the author is a journalist and the IFJ's General Secretary.
- As the title suggests, this is not an introductory textbook on reporting and newswriting, but rather has a strong focus on the ethics of journalism in its various aspects.
- Chapter titles include "Ethical Journalism Initiative," "Why Ethics Matter," "A Changing Media Landscape," "Subterfuge, War, Crime, Race, Intolerance," "The Legal Minefield," and "Building Trust and Credibility."
- The quality and coherence of the writing is high, and the topics addressed are of vital importance.
- The examples are excellent.
- As noted, the focus is on ethics, so the book would not be suitable as a stand-alone textbook for an introductory course.
- The book has relatively few images, and no review questions, exercises, or test banks.

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: 17 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 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: 21 out of 25

Please provide comments on any editorial aspect of this textbook.

- The design and layout of the book are of professional quality, and use color blocks, images, highlighted quotes, etc. effectively.
- The book lacks a glossary but has appendices with examples of codes of ethics for journalists, a bibliography, and links to useful sites.

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: 21 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	
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: 7 out of 10

## Overall Comments

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

- Importance of subject matter
- Quality and depth of the writing
- Strong visual design

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

- Not suitable for use as the primary textbook in an introductory course on reporting and newswriting, but excellent as a secondary textbook

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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