Textbook design and structure

• **Consistent pedagogical structure**
  Students learn more efficiently when they can follow a consistent pedagogical structure from chapter to chapter. To this end you should decide in advance what your elements your chapters will most benefit from, and stick to that structure for every chapter.

• **Learning objectives**
  It’s always good to alert the reader to what they should be learning in the chapter. The most effective way to do this is to begin the chapter with a bulleted list of learning objectives which acts as a checklist of achievements. You should aim for 6-8 per chapter (ideally one specific objective for each section in the chapter). If possible, the objectives should be active (e.g., define, apply, etc. rather than understand, appreciate, etc.). If the objectives are too numerous, or not specific enough, students will overlook them. For the most effective implementation of objectives, they should also be tied to points in the chapter summary.

• **Meaningful hierarchy in structure of headings**
  For textbooks a strong structure of headings/subheadings should outline the key concepts and supporting evidence. The headings should provide a roadmap to guide the reader through the material and as a review after completing the chapter.

• **Defining key terms and concepts**
  Every discipline/course has its own language and it is the role of the text to help the student learn that language. Be careful to define key terms and concepts when first introduced. Standard practice in textbooks is to use *italics* for emphasis and **bold** for key terms.

• **Glossary**
  A glossary is usually included at the end of the book which provides a brief definition of each of the key terms and concepts that you have highlighted in your chapters. An additional option is to define key terms in a running glossary in the body of the chapter, or at the end of each chapter.

• **Examples**
  Real world examples will help the reader to connect with the subject and with your book, and will act as an important learning tool - so use them as often as possible. Where you use real world examples, label them as ‘examples’ (this sounds obvious, but it’s important to distinguish examples from the main body of the text). Set them off from the regular text for emphasis, for example smaller bold type. It is always good to include the names of real-world companies for easy identification, and for major sites include the web address.

• **End of Chapter Summary**
  A ‘summary’ provides a review of the major concepts covered in the chapter, and should not include new information. (By contrast, a conclusion brings forth the a new meaning/perspective, after consideration of the issues covered.
in the chapter.) The most effective summaries are tied to the learning objectives (at the beginning of the chapter) and can be presented in bulleted form with one point for each section of the chapter.

- **End of Chapter Review Questions**
  It’s a good idea to include conceptual and analytical questions at the end of each chapter - open-ended questions (that ask students to identify concepts in the chapter) as well as problems (that ask students to synthesize and/or apply the concepts). You should set yourself guidelines for type and number per chapter, to ensure consistency.