



# Professional Booksellers School Basic Bookselling Course Schedule & Course Description Spring 2024



**Class Days:** Ten Mondays, March 11 to May 20, 2024

**Class Times:** 7 pm ET/ 6 pm CT / 4 pm PT

## **Dean and Instructors:**

Dean Susan Kehoe, Owner, Browseabout Books, Rehoboth Beach, DE

Dean Heather Herbert, Owner, Children's Book World, Haverford, PA

Sarah Bagby, Owner, Watermark Books & Cafe, Wichita, KS

Dionne Sims, Owner, Black Garnet Books, St. Paul, MN

John Evans, Co-Owner, Diesel, A Bookstore, Los Angeles, CA

Gabriel Moushabeck, Owner, Booklink Booksellers, Northampton, MA

## **COURSE DESCRIPTION**

### ***A Bookstore is only as good as its booksellers***

Our Basic Bookselling Course is designed to welcome staff into a career in bookselling. It is intended as a primer for frontline booksellers with a year or less experience. The course introduces staff to life inside a bookstore and to the wider bookselling industry. Students will learn the knowledge and skills necessary to succeed in bookselling, including: merchandising, hand selling, creating shelf talkers and other reviews, customer service, and creating displays that sell. The course uses a combination of lectures, in-class discussions, and hands-on work to support beginning booksellers learn how to help their stores succeed. Students will learn the vocabulary of bookselling, the range of resources available to support bookselling such as BINC, Netgalley, Bookshop.org, ABA and regional trade associations. They will also learn how to use Edelweiss to find book information and to post reviews.

**PREREQUISITES/COREQUISITES:** This course is designed for booksellers and new store owners who have been in the field for one year or less. Students must work in a bookstore, whether brick-and-mortar, pop-up, or mobile or be on the path toward opening a bookstore. *This course is not for someone who does not own, work, or plan to work in a bookselling business.*



**OBJECTIVES:** This course will provide a thorough understanding of the bookselling business and an overview of the traits and qualities that a successful bookseller must possess. By the end of the course, participants will be able to:

- Demonstrate effective and confident hand-selling techniques.
- Become familiar with the bookstore industry, including ABA, Regional Trade Associations, and BINC.
- Learn to use Edelweiss to find book information and post reviews.
- Identify and understand the traits, skills, and practices that make a bookseller successful.
- Understand the different jobs and roles inside the bookstore, and how frontline booksellers can support book buyers, merchandisers, and event staff.
- Understand how independent bookstores fit within the broader book industry.
- Gain skills applicable to an entry-level bookselling job, including customer service, display design, and handselling.
- Write effective shelf-talkers.

**REQUIRED ACCESS AND RESOURCES:**

- Access to the internet
- Primary email account to receive communications
- Access to Zoom to participate in classes
- A Discord account (an invitation to join the course’s server will be emailed to you)

**ATTENDANCE:** Weekly online attendance is required for all participants. Students are allowed to miss a class or two, but if multiple weeks are missed by a student, it may impact the student’s chance of certification. Because the course is only 10 consecutive weeks, missing any number of classes will impact your ability to succeed and comprehend the material. Please try to be on time to each class. Please reach out to the one of the Deans of the course if any issues arise throughout the class, and we will address them individually. All classes will be recorded for later review, if necessary.

**COMMUNICATION:** Information and announcements will be shared during each class, through Discord, and via email. Students may ask questions during the specified Q&A sections of each unit, schedule one-on-one conversations with the Deans, or ask questions in Discord. We ask that conversation in the Zoom chatbox be limited specifically to the course material and that side conversations happen in private or on Discord.



**HOMEWORK:** Each week students will be assigned homework specific to each class. In addition, students are expected to complete a shelftalker each week. These will be explained and modeled in Class 1.

Homework will be uploaded into Discord. Each student will have their own homework channel, visible only to that student and the instructors. Homework for each class is due by the beginning of the following class. Instructors will respond to homework within a week. Homework turned in late will be responded to before the end of the course.

**GRADING:** Weekly assignments and the final project are Pass/Fail. Any failing grade will be provided feedback on how to bring the assignment up to the standard that instructors are seeking. The final project is required in order to receive certification. No work will be accepted after the final date announced in class.

### **COURSE SCHEDULE:**

Class 1 – March 11th, 2024: Welcome to Bookselling

Class 2 – March 18th, 2024: Bookseller Tools & Services

Class 3 - March 25th, 2024: A Day in the Life of a Bookseller

Class 4 - April 01, 2024: Handselling

Class 5 - April 08, 2024: Handselling Children's Books

Class 6 - April 15, 2024: The Shape of Your Store

(No class April 22)

Class 7 - April 29, 2024: Inventory and Curation

Class 8 - May 06, 2024: Customer Service and Engagement

Class 9 - May 13, 2024: Bookstore Finances

Class 10 - May 20, 2024: Student Presentations

# Professional Booksellers School, Inc.'s Code of Conduct



The Professional Booksellers School, Inc. (PBS) values the dignity of everyone with whom we interact. Our safety and anti-harassment policies are critical to ensuring that this core value guides how we speak and how we act. All participants in PBS courses and events are required to adhere to PBS's code of conduct, as described below. This includes booksellers, PBS staff, instructors, speakers/presenters, guests, donors, volunteers, and all affiliated students.

PBS is committed to a broad vision of diversity, equity, and inclusion. This includes providing a harassment-free experience for everyone, regardless of race, color, religion (creed), gender, gender expression, age, national origin (ancestry), ability, marital status, sexual orientation, or military status, in all of its activities or operations. We do not tolerate harassment, discrimination, or other disrespectful or unlawful behavior based on any of these characteristics. We are committed to providing an inclusive and welcoming environment for our students, staff, volunteers, instructors, donors, subcontractors, vendors, and clients.

Behaviors that violate this policy include, but are not limited to:

- Offensive verbal comments related to any protected category above
- Inappropriate physical contact
- Unwelcome propositions, attention, words, or conduct of a sexual nature
- Unwelcome virtual contact inside or outside of PBS settings
- Inappropriate or obscene jokes, remarks, or gestures
- Intimidation, stalking, or trolling
- Disrespect towards difference of opinion
- Sustained disruption of speakers, conversations, classes, or events
- Unauthorized screenshots, photography, or audio or video recording

PBS expects all participants in its programs to follow established rules throughout official classes, office hours, virtual platforms, and related social gatherings.

PBS takes any violation of this policy seriously. Accordingly, participants who violate this policy may, in the judgment and discretion of PBS, be asked to stop; may be expelled from a PBS class or event, without refund if applicable; may be prevented from attending future PBS classes or events; may be banned from virtual platforms; and may have future PBS participation privileges revoked.

If you are being harassed, observe someone else being harassed, or have concerns about potential violations of this policy, please notify PBS staff immediately. PBS will take all appropriate action in response to protect anyone affected by violations of this policy.



## Privacy Statement

### For Stores

PBS asks for both public (address, etc) and private (square footage, POS, sales levels) information from stores who are enrolled. We ask for this information to help us understand and support students. The only public-facing information in our website directory is the store's name, address, contact information, and regional trade association. PBS uses both private and public information to analyze the effectiveness of our courses and our school, but reports only aggregate data. All other store information is protected and available only to PBS staff.

### For Individuals

PBS asks for both public (bookstore, job title) and private (home address, demographic, years of experience) information from individuals who are members. The only public-facing information is the student's name, bookstore, job title, and earned certifications. PBS uses both private and public information to analyze the effectiveness of our courses and our school, but reports only aggregate data. All other information is protected and available only to PBS staff. The exception to this is for students who are receiving financial support or reimbursement from their regional association, with whom their enrollment, attendance, and certification status will be shared.

### For Homework

We recognize that homework can contain personal or sensitive information. Student homework assignments are uploaded into a location available only to the individual student, PBS staff, and instructors, with the exception of projects delivered live in class. These projects are announced well in advance and student presentations are never recorded. All student homework for PBS is owned by the student, not PBS or the student's employer, and is confidential and protected. All shared, spoken, shown, submitted, and typed information is protected and confidential and not to be discussed, saved, or shared outside of applicable PBS classes, platforms, or events without express permission.