



PROFESSIONAL BOOKSELLERS SCHOOL

2025 STORE & OPERATIONS MANAGEMENT



Store & Operations Management 2025

Course Meeting Days: Thursdays

Course Meeting Times: 5 PM EST

Course Length: 4 months, March 13-June 19, 2025

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COURSE DESCRIPTION: Store & Operations Management is designed to cover all of the day to day and long term operational and other business-related needs of an independent bookstore, considering both high level management topics and the daily tasks assigned to individual booksellers. Store examples and tutorials will provide opportunities for learning, comparison, and implementation within each student's store. A mix of lectures, workshops, handouts, and assignments will be used to guide the student towards creating or expanding store resources and systems for real-time applications. Assignments do not require access to a student's own store's materials or policies, but they are welcome to use them in completing the assignments.

COURSE COMPONENTS:

- 14 live classes via Zoom
- Bi-weekly course emails with links, recordings, and homework
- Discussions, chat, and office hours via Discord
- Weekly homework assignment uploaded to your personal workbook



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OBJECTIVES: This course will provide a thorough overview of the systems, plans, and processes for running an independent bookstore. At the end of this course, students will have important documents in place, including:

- Store operations manual, including store procedures
- Budget management systems
- Staff handbook, including store policies
- Staff management systems, including training, task, and evaluation plans
- Emergency preparedness plan
- Inventory and store layout plans
- Merchandising plan
- Supply ordering plan
- Promotions and marketing plan
- Leadership tools

PREREQUISITES: All students will need to install the latest version of Zoom and create a free Discord account if they don't already have one ([a guide to getting started](#)). Participants must have a current membership with the American Booksellers Association (ABA) and/or their regional booksellers association. Preference is given to participants who are employed by or who own a retail bookstore (this includes a mobile or pop-up shop) that has been in existence for at least one year. Others may apply and will be considered on an individual basis. *This course is not for someone who does not own, work, or plan to work in a book selling business.*

REQUIRED ACCESS AND RESOURCES:

- Access to the internet and a computer.
- Primary email account to receive course communications.
- Able to use Zoom video conferencing software to participate in webinars and meetings.
- Ability to view documents in Word, PDF, and Excel formats.
- A POS system that tracks individual inventory and supports purchase orders/receiving
- A Discord account (free)

ATTENDANCE & PUNCTUALITY: Online attendance is required for all participants. Students are allowed to miss a small number of synchronous classes (though they should view the recorded program after the class); however, too many missed classes may result in being dropped from the program. We also



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encourage you to keep your video on and to participate, when appropriate, in the webinar. Please make your best efforts to join class on-time. Recordings will be shared within a few days of the class on Discord and in the class follow-up email.

COMMUNICATION: Information and important announcements will be communicated during each class, via email, and on our class Discord channels. Current students may ask questions during class, schedule private sessions with the Dean or instructors, email private questions to instructors, or post questions to the module's Discord server. Students and instructors will also communicate directly about homework assignments in the student's Ops Workbook.

OFFICE HOURS: Office hours allow students to check-in with an instructor one-on-one to make sure they're on track in the course and to ask any general questions they may have. If they have a specific question about the material in a class, they should message the instructor directly in Discord - or post the question in the class channel for everyone. Students are required to sign-up for at least one 15-minute office hours slot during the semester. [You can do so here at any time](#) by entering your name in an empty slot.

HOW TO SUBMIT ASSIGNMENTS: Each student has their own Operations Module Workbook in Google Drive. Throughout the semester, you'll complete your homework assignment(s) for the previous class in your workbook and then message the instructor(s) for the class to let them know that it's ready to be reviewed. Assignments must be completed and noted by the next scheduled class (one week).

GRADING: Assignments will be Pass/Fail. Failing assignments will be given feedback on how to bring the assignment up to standard and the assignment can be redone prior to the end of the module. No work will be accepted after June 19 without prior permission.

CONFIDENTIALITY: Homework and store data submitted by students during this class is kept confidential and is not shared with anyone without the student's permission. Anything shared with permission will be anonymized. Instructors are reviewing for comprehension of assignments and completion of tasks. It is also understood that the work done in this class is the sole property of the student, regardless of source of registration funding. Materials shared and the information taught in this class is to the benefit of the student and their place of employment. Students are expected to incorporate the forms, procedures, and best practices from the Professional Booksellers School course to their bookstore work.

DOCUMENT STORAGE: Handouts and homework instructions are all included in this workbook. Any additional links or handouts will be shared in Discord to access in Google Drive. Students should save the link to the Google folder provided to them at the beginning of the class. They can upload documents there if they choose to use store information to complete the assignments.

Instructor Information

Core Faculty



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Dean Anna Thorn, The Potter’s House, Washington, DC
 Instructor Carol Price, BookPeople, Moscow, ID
 Instructor Candice Huber, Tubby and Coo’s Mid-City Book Shop, New Orleans, LA
 Instructor Julia Davis, The Book Worm, Powder Springs, GA
 Instructor Tim Smith, Schuler Books, Ann Arbor, MI

Guest Instructors

Nathan Halter, Batch for Books
 PK Sindwani, Chief Financial Officer at ABA, ABACUS representative
 Cyanne Stonessmith, Trident Booksellers and Café
 Angela Maria Spring, Duende District
 Lily Taliaferro, Eagle Harbor Books

Certification Criteria

- Attend a minimum of 12 of the 14 classes
- Watch recordings of missed classes
- Receive passing grades on 10 of 12 homework assignments

Course Calendar

These dates are subject to change at the discretion of the instructors.

Class #	Date/Time	Instructor	Class Name	Homework
1	March 13 5 pm ET	Everyone	How to Succeed at Operations Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explore and familiarize yourself with Discord. • Message a question or two to your fellow students.
2	March 20 5:5 pm ET	Anna, Carol	Store Systems	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create a Master Calendar of maintenance tasks in the format of your choice. • Choose two of the three to create or update: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Step-by-step instructions for a bookseller processing a website order (or a special order if you don’t do website orders) ○ Step-by-step instructions for handling shipping ○ Template emails for website orders
3	March 27 4:30 pm ET	Anna, Carol	Inventory & Merchandising	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create a merchandising plan for 4th quarter • Calculate and analyze turns for your store



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4	April 3 5 pm ET	Candice, Anna, Guest Nathan Halter	Financial Systems & Batch	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read through the terminology and examples for the class. • Answer the questions in your workbook. • Consider tackling the suggested assignment!
5	April 10 4:30 pm ET	Anna, Guest PK Sindwani	Budget & ABACUS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create a financial dashboard for your store (alternate Paradigm Books option). <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Decide on reports and metrics to track ○ Develop specific goals for financial metrics
6	April 17 4:30 pm ET	Carol, Tim	Staff Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Choose two of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Write a job description and job posting ○ Develop or update an application ○ Create a list of interview questions ○ Create onboarding/training checklist ○ Create a team building activity
7	April 24 4:30 pm ET	Carol, Guest Cyanne Stonesmith	Staff & Human Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Request materials for your store from BINC. • Make sure you have up to date Department of Labor Posters for your store. • Determine payroll percentage for your store • Choose one of the following topics to develop a set of policies for your Staff Handbook: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discrimination • Social media • Illness procedures
8	May 1 4:30 pm ET	Anna, Tim	Staff Handbook	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Update or begin building a Staff Handbook for your store.
9	May 8 4:30 pm ET	Julia, Guest Angela Maria Spring	Define Your Store	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Write a paragraph defining your store. • Create two of the following: your store’s mission statement; values statement; policy on controversial books/authors; policy on diversity, equity, and inclusion; and anti-racism statement. • Create headings in your Operations Handbook for the other policies outlined in class.
10	May 15 4:30 pm ET	Julia, Candice	Marketing Overview	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • List 5+ ways you can engage your community • List 5+ partnerships you can pursue to benefit your bookstore and other local businesses • Brainstorm new audiences to reach out to
11	May 22 4:30 pm ET	Julia, Candice	Create Your Own Marketing Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create a marketing plan and budget template for your store covering: store promotion to the public, in-store marketing, and event marketing
12	May 29 4:30 pm ET	Julia, Carol, Guest Lily Taliaferro	Websites & Digital Marketing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assess and reflect on the efficacy of your website for specific purposes. • Begin a plan if you don’t currently have a site.



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13	June 5 4:30 pm ET	Candice	Emergency Preparedness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create an Emergency Plan for your bookstore, including a plan to ensure all staff are trained and ready for potential emergencies.
14	June 12 4:30 pm ET	Everyone	Leadership Discussion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recommended Reading • Finish all assignments
	June 19 4:30 pm ET			Final day to turn in homework

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.



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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.