Columbia Publishing Course
formerly the Radcliffe Publishing Course

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The Columbia Publishing Course does not discriminate among applicants or students on the basis of race, religion, age, gender, sexual orientation, national origin, color, or handicap.

A Professional Experience in the Business of Publishing

June 10 – July 18, 2024

Columbia University
Graduate School of Journalism
New York City
Columbia Publishing Course

Careers in Publishing have always attracted people with talent and energy and a love of reading. Those with a love of literature and language, a respect for the written word, an inquiring mind, and a healthy imagination are naturally drawn to an industry that creates, informs, and entertains. For many, publishing is more than a business; it is a vocation that constantly challenges and continuously educates. Choosing a career in publishing is a logical way to combine personal and professional interests for people who have always worked on school publications, spent hours browsing in bookstores and libraries, or subscribed to too many magazines.

The Columbia Publishing Course was originally founded in 1947 at Radcliffe College in Cambridge, Massachusetts, where it thrived as the Radcliffe Publishing Course. In 2001, the course moved to Columbia University's Graduate School of Journalism. New York City is the heart of American publishing, and the Publishing Course has taken every advantage of its current location while building on its strong legacy.

For seventy-seven years, the Publishing Course has provided an intensive introduction to all aspects of book and magazine publishing, from evaluations of original manuscripts to the sales and marketing of finished products. Students learn from writers, editors, publishers, design directors, advertising experts, publicists, and writers—all are leaders in the industry, and many are course graduates. More than one hundred publishing professionals come to the Publishing Course each summer to describe the nature of their work, conduct workshops and seminars, and answer questions in classroom discussions and informal sessions. The curriculum is designed so that students learn about publishing through a rigorous schedule of lectures and group activities and by completing professionally evaluated assignments. By spending time with speakers and instructors in one-on-one discussions, working on assignments after classes end, and interacting with like-minded colleagues for six weeks, students take part in a total-immersion program that cannot be duplicated by any other educational experience.

The Columbia Publishing Course provides an unparalleled overview of the entire publishing process, teaches basic publishing skills, and offers students the opportunity to meet and learn from top publishing professionals.

New York City

The New York City publishing community has always welcomed students of the course.

For instance, in the past, HarperCollins, Random House, Macmillan, Hearst, Condé Nast, Rolling Stone, Scholastic Books, and Time magazine have also invited our students to a variety of events.

Course Faculty

The instructors and lecturers, drawn from all areas of the publishing industry, are recognized as experts in their fields. Many speakers are course regulars; others are invited to speak because they are setting trends or challenging traditional methods. Faculty members represent publishing’s diversity: some are publishing executives, others are successful entrepreneurs or consultants to the industry, but all have had illustrious careers in all aspects of publishing. The detailed list of the 2023 faculty (see following pages) is representative of the high caliber of instructors who teach at the course each year.

Editing Seminars

Short seminars are held during the course to teach the fundamentals of book manuscript evaluation and magazine editing. For the manuscript evaluation seminar, each student reads an unpublished manuscript and writes a reader’s report recommending whether or not to publish. Students meet in small groups with editors to discuss the editing process and methods of manuscript evaluation. In the magazine-digital editing seminar, students edit an article that is about to be published in a national magazine or on a website. Seminar sessions focus on developing effective ledes as well as editing for length and clarity.

Workshops

Students apply what they’ve learned in lectures during two hands-on workshops. Based on their particular areas of interest, students are assigned to a workshop group and take on specific job responsibilities. Teams of carefully selected mentors work with each group to develop a discussion and providing guidance and professional advice.

Students have access to a computer lab equipped with sophisticated design software. In addition, students work with custom-designed models for financial projections and up-to-date industry databases. At the end of each workshop, top publishing leaders carefully evaluate each group’s results, giving constructive criticism and real-world feedback. These workshops equip students with the practical knowledge, experience, and confidence needed to succeed in their careers.

Book Workshop

The weeklong book workshop is an intensive, collaborative simulation that requires interaction with the experienced publishing faculty, the works of Columbia Publishing Course alumni, and the wider publishing community. It provides an opportunity to meet and learn from top publishing leaders.

Magazine-Digital Workshop

For the magazine-digital workshop, student groups develop original concepts for hypothetical new brands. Each team finds underserved audiences, evaluates competitive titles and sites, and identifies the content and editorial voice of its brand and the accompanying website. They research story ideas and writers and establish regular features and departments. Students target advertisers; propose strategies for promotion, circulation, and digital audience development; and set budgets. Designers create layouts that complement editorial content. The final results capture the look, feel, and tone of each brand and website and include detailed long-term business plans.
**CAREER PLANNING AND PLACEMENT**

All over the years, publishers have come to recognize the advantages of hiring applicants who possess the skills and knowledge gained at the Columbia Publishing Course. The percentage of course graduates placed in publishing jobs each year is very high, often as much as 95 percent in the first year for students who stay in the New York City metro area. The Pandemic brought obvious changes in work arrangements and there is now a great deal more opportunity to work remotely, but many companies are still asking for a few days in the office, either weekly or monthly.

During the course, every effort is made to prepare students for entry into the job market. Small-group sessions are held on résumé and cover-letter writing. The director is available to students throughout the program to discuss career plans, interests, and goals. Faculty members are also valuable resources for those seeking information and advice. Recent graduates visit the course to share their job-seeking experiences as well as their experiences working in entry-level positions throughout the industry.

While students are not guaranteed job placement, the course offers extensive job opportunities and support services to graduates. New job listings are posted frequently during the program and are refreshed constantly throughout the year. The wide-ranging network of course graduates provides students with access to individual companies and publications as well as information about specific openings and employment opportunities in general.

Students with a demonstrated interest in publishing have always gained the most from the course. Those who have held publishing internships or worked on high school or college publications are familiar with publishing’s long hours and constant deadline pressures. Those with bookstore, library, or office experience have skills and insights that publishers find valuable. Many types of interests and jobs—including volunteer work—can be considered related to publishing. For example, experience with photography, graphic arts, sales, and marketing can be good training. Applicants should know that the course does not emphasize instruction in journalism or creative writing. But applicants with writing experience who seek new ways to apply their skills within the world of publishing—as editors, publicists, designers, marketing and business managers, or publishers—are encouraged to apply. Applicants should note that the Columbia Publishing Course is a highly intensive six-week session, during which students are expected to attend classes and workshops every weekday morning, afternoon, some evenings, as well as on many weekends. As a result, students can expect little free time during the course.

**APPLICATIONS**

Applications are accepted any time after November 17, 2023 and will be told of acceptance on a rolling basis—therefore it’s to an applicant’s advantage to apply well before the March deadline.
The following items must be received no later than Friday, March 1, 2024, to complete the application process:

2. A $55.00 nonrefundable application fee (payable by credit card)
3. A two-page personal statement and a short answer response (essay prompts for 2024 are given on the application)
4. Two to three letters of recommendation from employers and/or professors
5. Academic transcripts listing degree date or expected degree date from each undergraduate and graduate institution attended as a degree-seeking student
6. A current résumé or curriculum vitae

Interviews are not required, but information sessions will be conducted virtually through the career services offices of some colleges during the first half of the spring semester. The course will also be holding its own virtual information sessions. Applicants should check the course website and social media platforms to determine when information sessions will be available.

Those accepted are required to make a $1,000 nonrefundable deposit by April 12 to guarantee enrollment.

**ADVANCE ASSIGNMENTS**

**IN PREPARATION FOR** the program all students must complete advance reading and assignments, which are short, practical, and require the class to perform tasks related to many of the topics to be discussed in lectures. All of these will be evaluated by publishing professionals.

**Fees**

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<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Cost</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tuition &amp; Workshops</td>
<td>$6,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Room</td>
<td>$3,120</td>
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<tr>
<td>Board</td>
<td>$1,428</td>
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**THE MANDATORY BOARD** plan includes breakfast, lunch, and dinner on weekdays. Students living off campus will be assessed a $1,428 fee for the mandatory board plan.

Limited financial aid is available. Aid applications can be downloaded from our website and must be submitted with the application. Applications are evaluated by the scholarship committee, and notification of financial aid decisions will be sent after the entire class has been accepted. Aid is awarded based on need and requesting aid is not considered when determining which students are accepted to the program.

Because of the short length of this course, federally funded grants and student loans are not available. If you require financial assistance, we suggest you explore direct-to-consumer private loans in addition to applying for the course’s modest financial aid fund.

The Columbia Publishing Course gratefully acknowledges scholarship assistance from Simon & Schuster, through the Carolyn Kroll Reidy Scholarship; Ecco, Dan Halpern, and Cynthia D’Aprix Sweeney, through the D’Aprix Sweeney Family Fellowship; Seven Stories Press, through the Glenn Thompson Scholarships; the family of Christopher Carduff, through the Christopher Carduff Scholarship; Penguin Random House; Oxford University Press; Women’s Media Group; and Chronicle Books.