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Growing Minds and Opportunities: The Teaching Press as Entrepreneurial Incubator

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Growing Minds and Opportunities:

The Teaching Press as Entrepreneurial Incubator

Abstract

Traditional publishing education consists of instruction and practice through undergraduate and graduate programs, certificates, vocational courses, and internships with traditional publishers. The UNG Press, as a teaching press, provides an incubator for the development of entrepreneurial and high-demand skill sets through its three pedagogical pillars of instruction, practice, and responsibility. These practices align with proven methods of integrating formal and informal learning to grow an individual's knowledge, confidence, and expertise. Through hands-on experiences with real stakes, students have an environment to test their resilience, problem-solving skills, and abilities. At the end of their tenure with the UNG Press, students leave with a body of work, experience for their resumes, and the ability to articulate problems and innovate solutions within the context of the publishing industry.

Keywords

experiential learning, teaching press, publishing, pedagogy, entrepreneurship

Introduction

Publishing finds itself straddling two worlds with one foot planted firmly in the sphere of industry, producing products in the form of books, magazines, and journals, and the other foot rooted in the sphere of academia, a platform for sharing ideas, commentary, and scholarship. Teaching presses fill the gap left by instruction and traditional internships by providing the query-to-publication perspective and valuable hands-on experience to grow student portfolios and resumes, as well as allowing for the development of professional judgment, confidence, and expertise. This paper will show how the University of North Georgia Press (UNG Press) uses high-impact practices and proven formal and informal learning principles to prepare students for careers in publishing with entrepreneurial skills that will last them throughout their careers regardless of change within the publishing ecosystem.

Publishing Education and Career Outlooks

The Foundation of Publishing Education: Vocation and Discipline

The publishing industry is unique. It is the major vehicle for the dissemination of research and scholarship and is an essential element in the hiring, promotion, and tenure of academics across various disciplines. Murray notes this and points out that despite its close association with academia, only recently has it become the subject of postgraduate education by means of vocational courses, certificates, and graduate programs (2007). Maxwell explains that most publishing education is vocational in nature, focusing on the industry training model (2014). Courses may provide targeted instruction on skills commonly utilized in the profession, such as editing, contracts, and typography. However, as both Murray and Maxwell point out,

publishing's reach expands beyond the standard industrial goal of producing a product; instead, it is, and has been since the invention of the printing press, a key cultural contributor to society. Thus, it is the job of educators in publishing to prepare those who will shepherd this industry into the future by developing the professional judgment, critical thinking, and forward-looking problem solving necessary to an industry with so much influence on the evolution of society through the dissemination of information, commentary, and entertainment. Such knowledge is necessary to address disruption and seize opportunities, not only in publishing across the vast ocean of content that is published.

If this sounds like a monumental task, it is certainly that. Maxwell explains the difficulty of developing and maintaining a current curriculum in this area of study. Courses, whether they are part of undergraduate or graduate degree programs or stand alone as intensive workshops, struggle to keep up with the pace of innovation and provide relevant curricula for current and evolving technology and practices (2014). And this difficulty reaches beyond just technology like ereaders and artificial intelligences (AI). It also expands into areas that some would consider as foundational as editorial style. Take, for example, the term Asian American. Up until 2019, style guides directed that the term should be written with a hyphen between the words Asian and American. It was not until Henry Fuhrmann, a member of the Association for Asian American Studies (AAAS), published his piece titled "Drop the Hyphen in *Asian American*" in January 2018 that the journalism community and the larger publishing world finally addressed this issue of implied otherness that exists in hyphenate identifiers (Xiao 2021).

Government regulations and standards also disrupt publishing practice. In 2022, members of the European Union adopted the European Accessibility Act (EAA) into law ("European Accessibility Act (EAA)" 2025). The EAA consolidated EU members' disparate accessibility

laws and standards into a common directive to provide common accessibility standards across industries for all EU members ("Directive (EU) 2019/882 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 17 April 2019 on the Accessibility Requirements for Products and Services (Text With EEA Relevance)" 2019). In 2024, the U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ) ruled that all state and local government websites, apps, and digital documents must be accessible. This ruling applied to public universities and their related university presses; they have until April 2027 to comply with the ruling (U.S. Department of Justice Civil Rights Division 2016). Lacking a time machine to bake accessibility into their digital publications, university presses are now implementing these features and may require specialized training or may find themselves hiring accessibility remediators.

With innovation moving at the speed of thought, keeping curricula in degree programs current is a daunting and seemingly insurmountable task. Technical skills like those required of the EAA and Title II compliance are better taught in a skill-specific vocational workshop (Maxwell 2014). And here is where the gap lies. While it is important to learn the specific skill sets necessary for a career in publishing, it is just as important to learn how to learn, how to be curious, how to think critically to adapt to these disruptors. Maxwell argues that publishing education requires "active renewal of publishing culture" (2014). This can be achieved in the environment afforded to students of publishing through the small population of teaching presses like the University of North Georgia Press.

The 21st Century Employment Gap

Tushare and Sooraksa conducted a literature study of employment research that spanned across thirty years. They were looking for the skills most desired by employers in the 1990s,

2000s, and 2010s. In the 1990s, they discovered the top ten employability skills were problem solving, self-esteem, teamwork, communication, creativity and initiative, interpersonal skills, adaptability, responsibility, goal-setting, and learning. For the 2000s, the top ten employability skills were teamwork, communication, information and communication technology (ICT) skills, problem-solving, self-esteem, creativity and initiative, self-management, planning and organizing, adaptability, and time management. For the 2010s, they discovered the top ten employability skills were problem-solving, communication, adaptability, teamwork, analytical/critical thinking, willingness to learn, integrity, interpersonal skills, ICT skills, and leadership (2023). Figure 1 shows the top ten employability skills ranked for each decade.

1990s	
1	Problem Solving
1	Teamwork
1	Self-esteem
4	Communication
4	Creativity and Initiative
6	Adaptability
6	Learning
6	Interpersonal Skills
6	Responsibility
6	Goal-setting
Unranked	
--	Analytical/Critical Thinking
--	Integrity
--	ICT Skill
--	Leadership
--	Self-management
--	Planning and Organizing
--	Time Management

2000s	
1	Teamwork
1	Communication
3	Problem Solving
3	Self-esteem
3	Creativity and Initiative
3	ICT Skill
7	Adaptability
7	Self-management
7	Planning and Organizing
7	Time Management
Unranked	
--	Learning
--	Interpersonal Skills
--	Responsibility
--	Goal-setting
--	Analytical/Critical Thinking
--	Integrity
--	Leadership

2010s	
1	Problem Solving
2	Communication
3	Teamwork
3	Adaptability
3	Learning
6	Analytical/Critical Thinking
6	Integrity
8	ICT Skill
8	Interpersonal Skills
8	Leadership
Unranked	
--	Self-esteem
--	Creativity and Initiative
--	Self-management
--	Planning and Organizing
--	Time Management
--	Responsibility
--	Goal-setting

Fig. 1. Desired employable skills and their rank within studies across 1990s, 2000s, and 2010s. The rankings were provided by the percentage of studies they appeared in for that decade. The 1990s consisted of 5 studies, 2000s of 6 studies, and 2010s of 14 studies (Tushare and Sooraksa 2023).

The majority of these most desired skills are what some call "soft skills" that relate more to interpersonal relationships and higher-level thinking than vocational skills. Tushare and Sooraska note that "earlier studies reported that basic literacy, numeracy, manual skills, and skills related to financial management were on the top of the list of employable skills." As we can see from the findings they reported in the chart above, demand for transferable soft skills grew over the decades. Their study also revealed a disconnect between the skills desired by employers and the skills graduates possessed, implying a breakdown in communication between what employers are looking for and what educators are teaching (Tushare and Sooraska 2023).

Unsurprisingly, the skills looked for in employees overlap with skills commonly associated with entrepreneurship. Morris et al. lists 13 entrepreneurial competencies identified from a Delphi study (2013). The entrepreneurial competencies identified by Morris et al. and the top employability skills identified by Tushar and Sooraksa can fit into five functional themes: innovativeness, execution, resilience, judgment, and communication (Table 1).

Functional Themes	**Top Employability Skills**	**Entrepreneurial Competencies**
Innovativeness	• Creativity and initiative • Problem-solving • ICT skills	• Creative problem solving / Imaginativeness • Value creation • Opportunity recognition

Execution	• Planning and organizing • Time management • Self-management • Adaptability	• Resource leveraging / Bootstrapping • Guerrilla skills • Maintain focus yet adapt
Resilience	• Self-esteem • Responsibility • Goal-setting • Learning	• Resilience • Tenacity / Perseverance • Self-efficacy
Judgment	• Analytical / Critical thinking • Integrity	• Opportunity assessment • Risk management / mitigation
Communication	• Communication • Teamwork • Interpersonal skills • Leadership	• Conveying a compelling vision • Building and using networks

Table 1: Top Employability Skills and Entrepreneurial Competencies alignment across Five Functional Themes (Tushar and Sooraksa 2023, Morris et al 2013).

To bring an additional layer to this conversation, one can argue that the traits described in Table 1 across the five functional themes assist in building an individual's sense of self-efficacy. Caliendo et al. define self-efficacy as "the self-belief in own abilities to cope with adversity and succeed at an endeavor." Self-efficacy is an indicator of entrepreneurial performance, with higher self-efficacy correlating to a higher likelihood of positive entrepreneurial outcomes (2023). And herein lies the problems. Experts can agree that vocational skills in publishing are important; however, those skills are not the highest in demand for employers (Murray 2007, Maxwell 2014, Tushar and Sooraksa 2023, Morris et al 2013). Employers are looking for skills that can be difficult to teach in the classroom; rather, those skills are acquired through experience. Teaching presses offer a bridge between vocational and formal learning and the

informal learning and experience required to develop the soft skills employers are looking for, allowing graduates to land a first job and build a career.

The State of Publishing Education and the Teaching Press Solution

Traditional Education Models and Their Limitations

"All roads lead to Rome." This is a quote that one could say about publishing. In the United States, there are multiple paths through which individuals could enter or find themselves in careers in publishing. Publishing professionals hold degrees in varying disciplines, including English, communications, business, visual art, and graphic design; the list goes on. Beyond traditional degree programs, there is a growing number of courses, certificates, and workshops in the various areas and skill sets found in publishing offered through continuing education platforms and institutions. These postgraduate learning opportunities allow publishing professionals to build additional skills they may not have acquired through their traditional degree program. For example, a graphic design graduate may take a six-week workshop on creating engaging book covers. These courses are offered online through platforms like Coursera as well as through institutional programs such as the University of Denver's Publishing Institute. There is also a small and growing number of master's degree programs serving graduates. New York University, George Washington University, Emerson University, and Portland State University are among the higher education institutions offering master's programs in publishing. All of this is to say there is no one-size-fits-all approach to publishing education. There is no prescription or formula for individuals to follow to learn publishing and begin their careers. This is a blessing and a curse; while there is no mold on the shelf for "hirable publishing professional" (nor do we want one), it can be difficult to discern what programs, courses, and certificates will

offer the best return on an individual's investment and what lines on a resume will get them noticed in an ocean of hopeful new graduates looking to land their first publishing job.

To add to the confusion, it can prove difficult to keep up with the speed of technology and how it disrupts and provides opportunities for the publishing industry (Maxwell 2014). With emerging technologies come speculation and uncertainty, something loathed by industry and capitalists worldwide. For example, the publishing world was turned upside down with the growing popularity of ebooks and ereaders. Were print books as we knew them to exist since the 13th century going the way of the dodo bird? Digital reading did affect some areas of the publishing world, with the newspaper industry the hardest hit. Even as recently as 2020, publishers were wringing their hands over ebook borrow through libraries and how it might affect sales (Marshall 2020). While print books are clearly still a "thing," new technologies require employees with knowledge in these areas, vocational skills, and the critical thinking needed to see how these new technologies enhance or disrupt the publishing ecosystem. And while traditional instruction via in-person and online classrooms is still the primary go-to to grow this vocational knowledge, it doesn't come without shortcomings.

Traditional education often feels as though it is occurring in a vacuum, and publishing education is no exception to this. However, the publishing world certainly does not operate in a vacuum; it includes interconnected systems and interdependence. Students in classrooms can have a difficult time understanding how different departments within a publisher are interdependent. Part of this is caused by the disconnect between work performance and outcomes in the classroom versus in the publishing house. Poor performance in the classroom results in poor grades, which have little effect beyond a semester and an individual's GPA. However, poor performance in the workplace results in publishing delays, lost time and money, and even

lawsuits and public backlash, which can have far-reaching and devastating effects. For example, Hachette canceled the US release and discontinued the UK edition of a novel titled *Shy Girl* (previously self-published) over claims that the book was written by artificial intelligence (AI). Frustratingly, readers noted that the book was clearly created using generative AI (Alter 2026). So what happened? In this scenario, there was a breakdown in critical analysis of the work that may have come from the fact that the self-published edition sold well. What may have started out as a "sure bet" has come to hurt Hachette's bottom line. Worst of all, Hachette has since lost the trust and confidence of its readers, and earning that back will take time.

Critical analysis is something missing from current publishing curriculum that rely on traditional works and manuscripts for their coursework. Because students have more experience analyzing literature works, they are less likely to think critically about them as a publishing professional looking to acquire their next manuscript. The same can be said for peer-to-peer feedback. Students are more likely to discuss what they liked or didn't like about a classmate's work while offering peer feedback rather than examine whether the piece actually worked and identify or prescribe improvements (Bowden 2026). Teaching presses offer a platform for students to think critically of the work they are reading and provide them the vocabulary needed to articulate their criticisms.

Pipeline Interdependencies and Books as Micro-Startups

Classroom instruction and the limited time frame for coursework make it difficult for students to observe the whole machine of publishing working, with its different parts performing their specialized jobs but also turning the gears of other elements within the publishing industry. For example, typesetters rely on production department and its budgets to learn the parameters of

a specific title, such as page length and trim size. A proofreader depends on a thorough and reliable style sheet from a copyeditor. Marketing relies on acquisitions and editorial to provide an accurate description of the title, key features, and intended audience. Within the limitations of a classroom, and even an internship, it can be difficult to see the far-reaching consequences of unforeseen (and seemingly inevitable) hiccups in the process. When faced with these issues early in their publishing career, students may not know how to respond and may feel unprepared. It can feel like a trial by fire.

Participating in traditional internships can provide a glimpse at the interdependencies as they exist in publishing; however, interns can also find themselves siloed within specific departments and assigned low-risk, low-reward tasks. Working with a teaching press allows students to see the interdependencies that exist within workflows and departments in publishing. Teaching presses are usually small publishers tied to universities and colleges that provide students with real publishing experience with real stakes. Because of their size, they are a natural incubator for entrepreneurship as they are quick to adapt, take advantage of disruptions, and solve problems creatively. Interns have a hand in most aspects of the publishing process, from acquisitions and permissions to editorial, design, and production (EDP) to marketing and sales. They still perform the day-to-day job of an intern with assignments given to them by press staff, but they also have a zoomed-out view of the entire operation. They can see when the process breaks down and assist in getting the process back on track. Teaching presses also integrate their publishing workflows into coursework for the publishing students. Teaching presses provide an opportunity for students to invest in the work they are doing. They receive more than a grade. They see the consequences, good and bad, of the work they are doing. Students are encouraged to think critically and strategically about their choices, offering opportunities to expand and grow

skills that are not easily taught in a classroom, but instead must be practiced. These skills include clear communication, negotiation, time management, risk assessment, contingency planning, working within policy or budget limitations, and others; these skills align with those identified earlier by Tushar and Sooraksa and Morris et al. as desirable employability and entrepreneurial skills (2023, 2013). This connection is strengthened by the observation provided by Berens et al. that within the publishing industry, each book behaves like a startup "and those entrepreneurial competencies of tolerance of ambiguity, flexibility, and curiosity are all essential in real-world publishing" (2020). An individual who can demonstrate these skills and provide a body of work to show for it has a step up when competing for a lucrative publishing position.

Cultivating Entrepreneurial and High Demand Competencies at UNG Press

The UNG Press activities uniquely prepare students for publishing careers by developing the core competencies that are in demand by employers and are tied to entrepreneurial success. Table 2 below demonstrates the alignment between the skills that fall into the five functional themes and the UNG Press activities that cultivate those skills. While these activities are neatly placed within specific themes in this table, it is important to note the overlap between function themes that exists with these activities. Figure 2 provides an example of this overlap as it exists in one of the UNG Press activities.

Functional Themes	**Top Employability Skills**	**Entrepreneurial Competencies**	**UNG Press Activities**
Innovativeness	• Creativity and initiative • Problem-solving • ICT skills	• Creative problem solving / Imaginativeness • Value creation	• Evaluating manuscript proposals and underserved reaching niches.

		• Opportunity recognition	• Resolving issues like formatting errors and finding solutions to novel problems associated with their tasks. • Transforming raw manuscripts into marketable physical and digital products.
Execution	• Planning and organizing • Time management • Self-management • Adaptability	• Resource leveraging / Bootstrapping • Guerrilla skills • Maintain focus yet adapt	• Operating within budget and policy limitations. • Executing low-cost social media and grassroots publicity campaigns. • Adjusting marketing tactics based on early sales data and audience engagement.
Resilience	• Self-esteem • Responsibility • Goal-setting • Learning	• Resilience • Tenacity / Perseverance • Self-efficacy	• Navigating revision and editing cycles with tight deadlines. • Handling author pushback, critical reviews, or unexpected delays. • Building confidences through

			published book credits.
Judgment	• Analytical / Critical thinking • Integrity	• Opportunity assessment • Risk management / mitigation	• Conducting market analysis and comp title sales research. • Reviewing profit and loss calculations against industry pricing. • Recognizing sunk costs and when to scrap a project.
Communication	• Communication • Teamwork • Interpersonal skills • Leadership	• Conveying a compelling vision • Building and using networks	• Presenting reader's reports and book concepts to Press staff. • Creating cover briefs and TI sheets. • Interacting with professional authors, distributors, and industry partners.

Table 2. UNG Press Activities that Develop Top Employability Skills and Entrepreneurial Competencies alignment across Five Functional Themes (Tushar and Sooraksa 2023, Morris et al 2013).

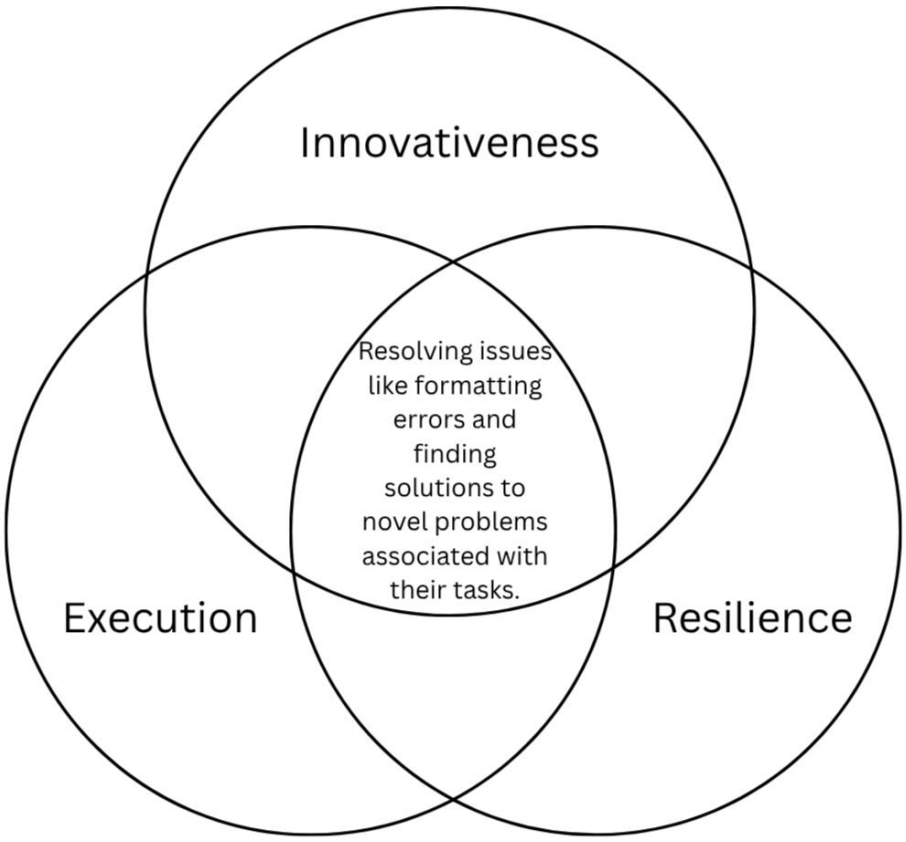


Fig. 2. Function Theme Activity Overlap Example.

Generalized Self-Efficacy Growth Through UNG Press's Three Pedagogical Pillars

Generalized self-efficacy (GSE) is an indicator of entrepreneurial success, job creation, and innovation. Caliendo et al. saw that one-standard deviation increase above the mean in their measurement of self-efficacy correlates with an 8% increased likelihood of employing others and an 18.4% increase in innovation measured by patents and trademarks (2023). Eraut's research uncovered three key learning factors that contribute to the growth of self-efficacy in individuals: challenge, support, and confidence. These learning factors coincide with three context factors: allocation and structuring of work, encounters and relationships with people at work, and expectations of each person's role, performance and progress. Eraut discovered that both novices

and mid-career respondents required both challenge and support to build confidence. Where those factors were lacking, so did the individual's confidence. Each factor falls into a specific theme: the work, the people, and the individual (2004). These areas, the learning factors, and the context factors correspond with the three pedagogical pillars that exist within the teaching activities offered by UNG Press, as shown in Figure 3 below.

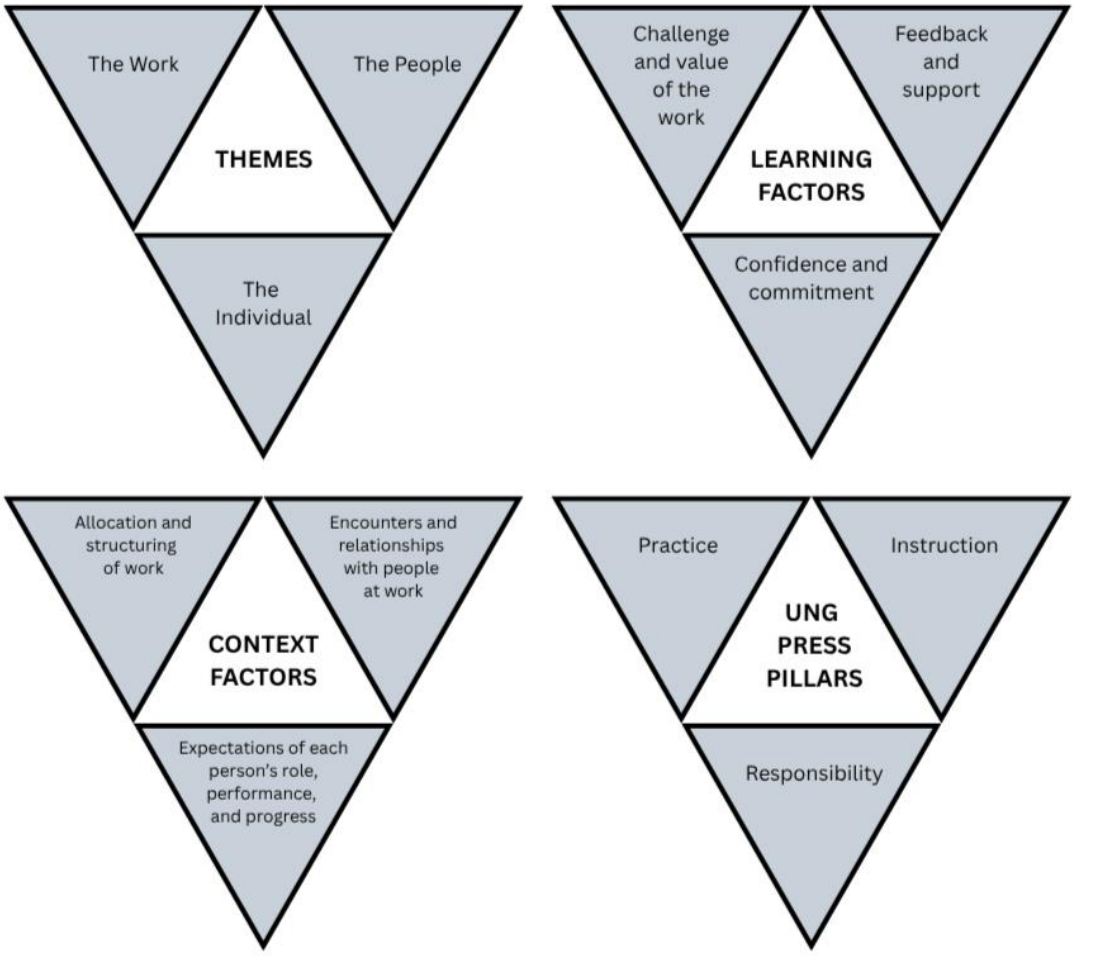


Fig. 3. Correspondences of Themes, Learning Factors, Context Factors, and UNG Press Pedagogical Pillars (Eraut 2004).

Methodology

Institutional Context

Initially supported by a university innovation grant, the UNG Press was intended to provide a lab for Writing and Publication majors to hone their skills. Since its inception, it has published over 100 titles and contributed hands-on publishing experience to thousands of UNG students. Its large impact is thanks to its three-pillar pedagogical model: instruction, practice, and responsibility. Most traditional publishing education addresses the first two pillars of instruction and practice. UNG Press brings the instruction and practice together with responsibility, where decisions are made and defended.

The Three Pedagogical Pillars at UNG Press: Instruction, Practice, and Responsibility

The first pillar, instruction, occurs, predictably, in the classroom. Introduction to Publishing, an asynchronous online course, is a required course for students in the Writing and Publication (English) track at the University of North Georgia. Its purpose is to prepare students for professional participation in the publishing industry. It provides a broad overview of the various publishing roles available to students interested in publishing careers. To help students appreciate the scope of opportunities available within the publishing industry, the course covers topics like copyright (including Creative Commons); book design and production; digital and self-publishing; seasonality; metadata and sales; the sales department, sales cycle, and sales conference; and publicity.

This breadth supplements the course's focused content—particularly editing, marketing, and some production—with experiential learning opportunities to develop the skills required for specific tasks and professional roles. It also emphasizes the transferability of these skills, foremost among them the application of judgment. Almost all assignments mirror actual UNG Press staff tasks and use the same texts on which staff performed those tasks, connecting

students' learning directly to professional publishing practice. With this focus, the course provides in-depth, integrated, and scaffolded assignments, structuring this professional preparation.

With lectures prepared by press staff (director, managing editor), the course uses UNG Press as an experiential learning environment for its students. They learn that the press is a peer-reviewed academic publisher of scholarly monograph and trade titles. They are asked to view UNG Press as their publishing house during the semester. Course content and assignments require them to evaluate all their work using UNG Press's mission, subject areas, and published titles as touchstones for "value."

With UNG Press as context, course lectures connect concepts, information, explanations, and principles with press staff examples of professional practice. These professional models include grouped editing tasks, moving from acquisitions to proofreading (reader's reports and editor's letters on submitted manuscripts; line- and copy-edits on revised manuscript chapters; and proofed print-ready texts) and grouped marketing tasks [cover briefs, title information (TI) sheets, marketing campaigns, and press releases]. Application begins with preliminary practice via assignments tied to peer feedback, such as a practice reader's report on a book of their choice tied to Pair and Share Checklist feedback; an editor's report on a mountain bike book proposal with peer feedback; and a TI sheet on a newly launched UNG Press title tied to its group-developed marketing plan. Students learn to assess quality using evidence and professional criteria, including through reviewing classmates' work. The reader's report, for example, requires an evidence-supported recommendation about a manuscript's suitability for the press. Also, the editor's report requires a diagnosis and a workable revision plan. These tasks help teach the reasoning behind professional action.

Students develop these skills through manuscript assignments that prepare them for subsequent tasks: sustained editorial and marketing work on an original manuscript submission of a book that has already gone to contract with the press and is in its final editing or production. Successive assignments move students through manuscript evaluation; developmental editing; line editing on assigned manuscript chapters; and copyediting and style sheet preparation on these chapters. In this way, students hone their judgment throughout the course.

They see professional decisions in the staff professional models. They practice making their own decisions in reader's reports. They explain their reasoning in their editor's report, which must ensure that authors not only have a clear sense of what improvements the students recommend but also understand how and why to make those improvements. They apply their reasoning across different publishing roles. In their Pair and Share feedback on chapter line edits, they become aware that their classmate's line edits can differ from their own. Students learn not to suggest alternative edits or comment on ways their classmate's line edits could be made more effective. Instead, they just note what they see as incorrect, unnecessary, and/or omitted line edits. In this way, they apply ethical editing—not altering the intended meaning or the author's style to conform to the student's personal tastes or ideas.

This continuity enables students to consider how the same work's audience and purpose affects several kinds of publishing decisions. Similarly, the subsequent public-facing assignments provide students means of connecting that same manuscript with its path to readers by writing a cover brief, marketing plan, and press release.

The course allows students to explore their professional identity. As a beginning-of-the semester reflection, students state their expectations of the course, how they hope the course will contribute to their career goals, and what role they hope to take in professional publishing. To

this latter question, students often express their goal of becoming an editor. In their end-of-the semester reflections, these students frequently express interest in either different or more specific goals, such as becoming a proofreader, copyeditor, or publicist.

This combination of sustained manuscript and published title work, explicit decision criteria, professional examples, and peer feedback helps students develop and treat their judgment as reasoned, accountable, and capable of legitimate variation. It helps students develop the capacity to justify recommendations, evaluate alternatives, and recognize the limits of their authority in relation to a press's mission, an author, and their own assigned role(s). Those students who choose subsequently to intern with the press can extend these capacities through staff-guided assignments that provide relevant experience and knowledge.

Practice is most concentrated within the internship at the Press. Students apply for semester-long internships and can also request to intern for subsequent semesters. Here is where the instructional foundation established in the Intro to Pub class counts the most; interns who apply must have taken this class to participate in an internship with the Press. That is because the Press throws these interns into the deep end to see how well they swim. From the very beginning, students practice the skills they learned in class by participating in the various publishing workflows. They are also expected to research heavily during their time here. Nearly everything assigned to interns requires some form of research, and the quality of their work often reflects their ability to research and apply that research to the assignment.

One of their first assignments is a reader's report. This assignment allows students to familiarize themselves with the Press catalog, and the Press staff can usually establish a baseline for the student's skills from their first reader's report. It also gives them a glimpse into the different considerations a press makes when acquiring a new title. Interns are expected to review

the submission, conduct market research, and make recommendations based on their observations and evidence. They then present their report during a staff meeting, where staff members ask questions regarding the submission, list alignment, author credentials and publishing history, target audience, etc. This live feedback provides a proving ground for the interns. Usually, the first reader's reports are rough. However, there is a marked improvement by the time they present their second and third reader's reports, accompanied by a new confidence and conviction in their decisions (more on this in later). Interns are also given the opportunity to provide reader's reports for full manuscripts the Press has requested.

Along with reader's reports, every intern at the Press completes editing assignments. Editing is the skill most students associate with publishing, so the majority of students express an interest in editing. They come with an assumption that publishing is mostly editing and learn through experience that editing is only a fraction of the work. Interns begin with copyediting, and this is where they will really learn whether they truly "love" editing. Copyediting requires precision and attention to detail. While copyediting, interns become familiar with the Press's house style guide and create thorough style sheets. Their work is reviewed by a staff member, who will provide feedback and instruction. Interns may be required to complete additional copyedits until the manuscript meets the standard of the Press.

Those interns who experience copyediting and would like additional editing experience are assigned developmental or line edits in partnership with a staff member who provides further one-on-one feedback and instruction. Staff guide the interns through interactions and decisions for which their classroom instruction provided limited preparation. They learn how to query authors and make recommendations. As in any human interaction, different people respond to criticism differently. Interns learn how to package their queries and revision requests with

consideration for the author's voice and personality in a way to which the author will be most receptive. During this stage, interns also learn discernment and which battles are worth fighting. Lastly, they are taught how to stand by their work when challenged and how to use resources and evidence to support their recommendation.

All interns also participate in some form of marketing activity. This includes creating content for the Press's social media accounts and blog. They also design graphics for use on social media and at events. This is another research-heavy area for the interns. They may be asked to prepare a blog post on an aspect of the publishing industry that interests them or research best practices for authors when querying. They may also prepare marketing materials for book launches or activities that coincide with a special event or holiday. With the marketing comes the practice of writing, self-editing, and graphic design. They also see firsthand the different elements that impact marketing decisions and how those decisions may affect other aspects of publishing, including titles they have already worked on. For example, an intern may have performed a reader's report for a submission the Press ended up acquiring, and through their marketing assignments, determined the best season or month for the release of this newly acquired title. Or an intern may have completed classroom assignments in Intro to Pub for a title they are now actively creating social media posts for in preparation for the book launch or an author interview.

Interns also review digital proofs for titles that are close to publication. This includes proofing for print editions as well as ebooks. Proofing is usually a new experience for students who are so focused on editing in their coursework. They may put too much time and attention into the content itself, sometimes recommending revisions of sentences or passages, yet overlook

proofing errors such as incorrect typeface or missing running headers. Staff provide correction and feedback on these proofing comments.

While the assignments described above are the most common, the Press also customizes additional intern assignments based on each intern's individual interests. We have had interns design covers, complete typesetting, prepare profit and loss statements, update production schedules, perform accessibility checks, identify and replace outdated information, prepare and participate in events, assess software and technology, etc. Everything the Press produces has provided crucial instruction or practice for every Writing and Publication student and intern, all along building and refining their responsibility–the third pillar.

Responsibility with the Press is crucial for the success of the Press and its interns. While in class, the students learn time management and how to work with deadlines. But what happens if they are late? They ask for an extension or receive points off. The experience is very different for an intern with the Press. Interns see firsthand the consequences of poor time management. If they cannot complete their assignments in time, that can result in missed opportunities for audience engagement online or a delayed publication.

The pillar of responsibility occurs with the pillars of instruction and practice within the internship at UNG Press. This responsibility takes different forms for each task assigned to interns and encourages creative thinking and flexibility. A good example provided earlier, and a crucial springboard to every internship, is the reader's report. After interns give their presentation and recommendation to the Press staff, the staff have an opportunity to ask questions. These questions can range from information about the authors to alignment with the Press's list to target audience profile. This is an opportunity for the interns to go beyond their comfort zone, turn off the literary analysis of a student, and turn on the critical analysis of an

acquisitions editor. With each subsequent reader's report, interns deliver better results and demonstrate increasing confidence in their critical analysis of the submissions.

Interns flex their responsibility with other one-off tasks like research assignments. A recent example is the research task to find suitable grant and funding opportunities for Press projects and initiatives. Working with the director, the intern was given an overview of the initiatives we were looking to fund and given the resources needed to complete the work. Minimal oversight was given; rather, the intern was encouraged to think creatively and outside of the box to find connections between funding sources and the Press projects. After a week, the intern reported back with her findings. She completed great work; however, the delivery was not efficient. Without the scaffolding provided by templates and a rubric in a traditional classroom, the findings as reported by the intern were disjointed and inconsistently formatted, which made it difficult to locate important information regarding the funding opportunities. For example, one grant in the report clearly had the grant amount provided at the top of the first page; the funding for another grant was buried two pages in among other minutiae. She performed the tasks but did not utilize critical thinking to determine what elements the director might be most interested in, such as grant amount, deadline, and desired award outcomes. The director provided guidance to the intern on this, providing mentorship often associated with teaching presses.

Increased responsibility, and really ownership of one’s actions and activities, is what makes teaching presses like UNG Press unique. There are real stakes, and interns see what happens when the unexpected occurs. They defend decisions, course correct, and make time management adjustments based on unforeseen, immediate needs of the Press. They receive constructive feedback and work within boundaries such as university policy and budget constraints. And when given the opportunity and support, interns make a lasting impact. An

example of just such an impact is UNG Press's AI statement. The UNG Press AI statement was developed entirely by Press interns with guidance and feedback provided by Press staff. The first of its kind at the University of North Georgia, this AI statement was used by the institution in its overall AI policy and practices considerations. Those same interns went on to present their work with AI in audiobook production as grant assistants with the Press. The impact continues to spread like ripples in a lake, with the Press accepting the scholarly manuscript of one of these interns for publication. The book, a research and practice manuscript on AI audiobook production and accessibility, is forthcoming as of the writing of this paper.

Theoretical and Pedagogical Foundation

UNG Press teaching activities directly or indirectly correspond with a majority of the twelve high-impact practices (HIP) as defined by the American Association of Colleges and Universities (AAC&U). This paper will focus on the three HIPs that are most prevalent at UNG Press. During their internship with UNG Press, interns are enrolled in their required internship course, where they report on their activities with the Press, reflect on their work, and create a portfolio of their work. This aspect of the internship aligns with the Capstone Courses and Projects HIP (American Association of Colleges & Universities 2021). Throughout their work in the Introduction to Publication class and their internship with the Press, students work in a collaborative environment, contributing to the edification of their classmates through shared experiences and knowledge. They also work directly with Press staff, attend meetings, and collaborate on projects alongside other interns and staff as intellectual partners and contributors. The AAC&U recognizes these activities as the HIP Collaborative Assignments and Projects.

Lastly, Internship is another of the HIPs clearly expressed in the teaching press activities of UNG Press through our robust internship program (2021).

The UNG Press model is described by Guile and Griffiths as "the connective model," in which students are encouraged to draw upon their conceptual and formal learning in collaborative environments, applying their learning across different situations and contexts as they appear. Tynjälä calls this principle of integrating formal and informal learning integrative pedagogics—"a principle which states that in any learning situation key elements of expertise—that is theory, practice, and self-regulation—should be integrated" (2008). These key elements of theory, practice, and self-regulation align directly with UNG Press's three pedagogical pillars of instruction (theory), practice, and self-regulation (responsibility). This pedagogical principle allows student learning to expand beyond knowledge and evolve into expertise (2008). This theory is supported by Eraut's deliberative typology of informal learning, which is defined as having "a definite learning goal and time is set aside for acquiring new knowledge, and engagement in deliberative activities such as planning and problem solving, for which there is a clear work-based goal with learning as a probably by-product" (2004). This informal learning as experienced by students and interns engaged with UNG Press teaching activities builds their performance, judgment, and confidence. Vega et al. write that such shadowing and mentoring allow interns to "get immersed in the activities of the expert, performing in different degrees the expert's activities, and gradually achieving the same expert performance" (2021). While formal learning provides knowledge, the combination of formal and informal learning, integrative learning, and shadowing provides the most robust experience for students looking to grow knowledge into expertise (Tynjälä 2008, Vega 2021).

Outcomes

Student Outcomes

Students who participate in UNG Press teaching press activities leave with developed skills that will set them apart from other new publishing professionals. They possess the expertise and judgment necessary to make decisions. They experience firsthand how to adapt and rise above adversity and challenges through creative thinking and problem solving. They are able to assess situations, activities, and projects critically and determine which of these will provide the greatest return on investment. They build the vocabulary and discernment to assess abstract qualities and ground them in evidence and outcomes. All of these skills are essential for a career in publishing and also transferable to any career they may find themselves in, providing them with the freedom to create opportunities and the ability to pursue bigger and better positions and aspirations in their career.

In the survey of graduates competed by Matthews et al., respondents with service-learning experience reporting earning an average of $4,600 – $6,500 more annually than graduates with no service-learning experience. Likewise, it was more likely that the service-learning respondents found full-time work when searching for their first job than those without service-learning experience (2015). While UNG Press does not formally collect salary or placement data for past interns, we receive updates from some of our interns. They have found jobs both in and outside the publishing industry. Within the publishing industry, our interns have gone on to create careers with UGA Press, Clemson University Press, Peachtree Publishers, BookLogix, UNG Press, and more, filling roles as editors, marketers, writers, indexers, and cover designers. Beyond the publishing sphere, interns have found careers in local and state government administration, marketing, military, grant writing, and graphic design. Some have

pursued graduate degrees in creative writing and business administration, and others have started their own freelance businesses. The common thread through all of these individuals is the UNG Press as a launchpad for their future career success.

UNG Press Outcomes

The teaching press model provides benefits to both UNG Press and its parent institution. Through active engagement and mentoring of interns and students, Press staff have improved workflows, checked assumptions, and improved communication with institutional contacts (students, staff, and faculty) and external contacts (authors, editors, other publishing professionals, etc.). The Press has also strengthened its alignment and campus integration by working with more departments, expanding experiential learning beyond the Press and Writing and Publication majors. These hands-on learning experiences contribute to the scholarship of students' chosen disciplines. Cross-disciplinary involvement in UNG Press teaching activities include faculty and students from the following departments: political science, business, and visual arts.

Constraints, Collaborations, and Replicable Practices

Constraints

UNG Press faced some constraints and limitations due to its small staff size. UNG Press employs three full-time staff, all of whom contribute to the teaching aspects of the Press, with the Associate Director of Editorial and Marketing overseeing all teaching activities within the internship and course integration. While the UNG Press has had as many as 16 interns in a single semester, we have found two interns per semester as the limit to achieve the highest impact and

greatest outcomes for both students and the institution. Additionally, limiting the internship availability to two positions per semester supports the toll of the emotional labor taken on by the staff as they mentor and guide students throughout their internships while still managing their own workloads.

Collaborations

Cross-disciplinary involvement in UNG Press teaching activities include faculty and students from the following departments: political science, business, and visual arts. These collaborations continue to grow as we align ourselves with the institutional mission and departmental goals through our publishing activities while maintaining our integrity and reputation as a publisher of peer-reviewed scholarship. UNG Press will also introduce the opportunity for externships through the institution's Center for Global Engagement. These externships will be short, one- to two-week experiences in which students will attend national and global publishing conferences such as the Association of University Presses Annual Meeting, London Book Fair, Frankfurt Book Fair, and Piedmont Publishing Symposium, allowing them to network with established publishing professionals and possible future employers or clients.

Replicable Practices

While some of the specific practices may prove difficult to replicate beyond a teaching press, there exist opportunities for educators to work with publishers to offer a richer, hands-on experience to their students. We encourage educators to reach out to publishers, freelancers, and others within and adjacent to the publishing industry to find opportunities for collaboration. An

example could be reaching out to a small publisher and asking for queries students can review to prepare reader's reports for the publisher. This arrangement benefits the small publisher by sharing the load of query review, freeing time for other important work. Other examples are offering marketing campaigns or indexing for authors. As noted by Tushar and Sooraksa, there continues to be a disconnect between the skills possessed by students and those desired by employers (2023). It is essential for educators to bring these employers into the fold to better prepare the students for the careers they desire.

Conclusion

The UNG Press, as a teaching press, demonstrates proficiency in the development of entrepreneurial competencies and high-demand skills in students through activities following its three pedagogical pillars of instruction, practice, and responsibility. These pillars align with proven methods and principles combining formal and informal learning. Beyond the demonstrated benefits to students, the teach press reaps its own rewards through these activities by strengthening its practices, its communication, and its alignment with other departments and the institution. While an incubator for publishing professionals, the teaching press model offers much by means of transferable methods for all industries. Teaching presses like UNG Press provide students with an environment to develop their professional judgment and confidence and serve as a launchpad for successful publishing professionals.

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