

Frequently Asked Questions



PURPOSE AND ORGANIZATION

How is UC Press related to the University of California and what is its mission?

UC Press is an autonomous unit of the University of California's Office of the President. It is not associated with any one campus of the University. As the nonprofit publisher of the University of California system, our mission is to disseminate scholarship of enduring value to multiple audiences. In publishing for diverse groups, University of California Press supports the University's mandates for research, teaching, and public service.

What is the function of the UC Press Foundation and its Board of Trustees?

The UC Press Foundation is an independent 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization. The foundation was established in 1980 (as the Associates of the University of California Press) to raise funds to support the work of UC Press. The Foundation is guided by a Board of Trustees made up of cultural and civic leaders from Northern and Southern California.

There are also a Board of Directors and an Editorial Committee. What are their functions?

The Board of Directors is a governing board appointed by the Provost of Academic Affairs to oversee UC Press's finances and operations. The Board of Directors consists of University of California Office of the President executives, publishing leaders, the co-chairs of UC Press's Editorial Committee, and the chair and vice-chair of the Foundation Board of Trustees. The Editorial Committee includes twenty distinguished faculty representing all UC campuses and is appointed by the Academic Senate of the University of California to review and approve every project for publication under the imprint of University of California Press.

ABOUT OUR BUSINESS

How is a university press different from a commercial book publisher?

University presses make available to students, scholars, and the broader public the full range of research, intellectual endeavor, and artistic creativity undertaken in educational and cultural organizations around the world. Driven by the mission of promoting and preserving scholarship rather than increasing the bottom line, university presses play a critical role in disseminating great ideas. For more information, visit the web site of the Association of American University Presses at www.aaupnet.org.

In terms of size and budget, how does UC Press compare to other university presses?

University of California Press is among the six largest university publishers in the United States. Its peers include the presses of Harvard, Yale, Princeton, MIT, and the University of Chicago. Among this group, UC Press is the only press associated with a public university and the only one located west of the Mississippi.

How many books and journals does UC Press publish each year? Who selects what books and journals to publish?

Each year UC Press publishes approximately 200 new books and 40 multi-issue journals. All publications undergo a rigorous peer review process that includes vetting by the acquisitions editor, at least two outside specialists, and our Editorial Committee. While some UC Press publications result from unsolicited proposals, the majority of our books are sought out by our editors.

For whom does UC Press publish? Who are its audiences?

UC Press books serve audiences of general readers, students, scholars, policymakers, and activists. Our books are sold to retail outlets and libraries throughout the world.

Who are UC Press's authors?

UC Press attracts manuscripts from the world's foremost scholars, writers, artists, and public intellectuals. About one-fourth of UC Press authors are affiliated with the University of California.

How is UC Press engaged in digital publishing?

All UC Press journals are published in digital format. Nearly 2,000 books are available in digital format in collaboration with the California Digital Library (CDL), including the University of California Publications series in linguistics, entomology, geological sciences, and zoology. In addition, UC Press is involved in a variety of digital initiatives such as the Mark Twain Project Online and the Caravan project.

SOURCES OF SUPPORT

As a nonprofit publisher, how does UC Press support itself?

UC Press's revenues come primarily from sales of our books and journals, while University subsidy accounts for a small percentage. Generous philanthropic gifts from individuals and organizations fill the critical gap.

How much support does the University of California provide to UC Press?

UC Press receives just 10 percent of its budget from its parent institution. This percentage has not increased since the 1970s.

Why do UC Press books need to be subsidized? Why doesn't UC Press just raise the prices of its books?

A portion of UC Press's publishing program is devoted to specialized scholarship; these books have small print runs and therefore rarely recover their production costs. Other books with complex production specifications, such as those in the arts and sciences, are expensive to produce. UC Press is dedicated to reaching the audiences for which its books are intended; pricing the books for their markets often means that subsidy is required to break even.

Who manages UC Press's invested funds?

The University of California Treasurer's Office manages UC Press invested funds. UC Press draws up to 5 percent of the value of the endowment funds annually, and the remaining gains are reinvested to grow over time.

ABOUT THE CAMPAIGN

How does the Voice for Great Ideas Campaign fit into UC Press's long-term fundraising priorities?

Thanks to the generosity of hundreds of donors over twenty years, our endowment funds reached \$8.5 million in 2006. In order to develop and secure our publishing programs well into the future, we want to see that number build to \$20 million within a decade. UC Press also has an ongoing need for seed funds to develop new programs and to build technological capacities.

Is this UC Press's first capital campaign?

No. In 1988 we completed the \$1 million Campaign for the Humanities, given impetus by a National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) challenge grant. This campaign established four endowments—Art, Literature in Translation, the Philip E. Lilienthal Endowment in Asian Studies, and the General Endowment. In 1999 we completed the \$3.25 million Publishing for the Centuries Campaign, again supported by an NEH challenge grant. Our second campaign built our existing endowments and added additional endowments in African American Studies, Classical Literature, Jewish Studies, and Music. UC Press is the only university press to have received three challenge grants from the NEH.

What is the National Endowment for the Humanities? How does the NEH challenge grant work?

The NEH is an independent grant-making agency of the United States government dedicated to supporting research, education, preservation, and public programs in the humanities. Its most recent challenge grant to UC Press required that we raise \$1.6 million in endowment funds for the humanities by January 31, 2009, in order to receive federal matching funds of \$400,000. UC Press successfully completed the challenge in summer 2007. The challenge grant effort makes up only a portion of the \$5 million Voice for Great Ideas Campaign. For more information about the NEH, visit its web site at www.neh.gov.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

www.ucpress.edu | 510-643-8465