University of New England
Disability Services

Options for Getting Textbooks in Alternative Format: "Self Service"

What do we mean by a "self-service" option?

Most electronic devices (laptop, tablet, smartphone) have the capability to read aloud text that appears on the screen. If a textbook is available for purchase in digital format, students may be able to use a built-in or free text-to-speech program to have the book read aloud.

Advantages:

- The book can be accessed in alternative format as soon as it's downloaded (no need to wait for Disability Services to provide the book in MP3).
- Voice and speaking rate of the text-to-speech program are adjustable.
- Most text-to-speech programs have the option to create an MP3 file if a student prefers to listen to books without following along with the text (e.g., using an iPod with ear buds while walking or riding a bus).

Disadvantages:

- Some students may prefer to have physical books (i.e., hardcover, paperback, or spiral) to digital versions.
- Students will need to take the primary initiative in acquiring and accessing textbooks. Disability Services will facilitate the process.

What do students need to access the "self service" option?

For self-service, you'll need two things:

1. Your book in digital format.
2. A device with built-in text to speech or that has any text-to-speech program installed.

You can acquire your book in digital format in one of the following three ways. Prior to making a purchase, please contact Disability Services so that we can confirm that the book is in an accessible digital format.

1. Directly through the UNE Bookstore. If a digital version of a textbook is available for purchase, it will be listed in the table with other formats (e.g., hardcover, paperback, or spiral).
2. Through an online service known as CourseSmart: http://www.coursesmart.com.
3. Through an online commercial vendor, such as Amazon.

For more information about Disability Services "Self Service Option," please schedule an appointment:

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