

# CSU ODS Alternative Media

## Policies and Procedures Handbook

### What is Alternative Media?

Alternative text, commonly referred to as alt text refers to the conversion of required course materials such as textbooks, electronic documents, exams and other print materials into an accessible format, such as PDF, RTF (Rich text format) or DOC (document), DAISY (Digital Accessible Information System), and Braille. We operate on a first come, first serve basis so the earlier the request comes in, the sooner they are processed and sent out.

**\*For returning students who did not pick up their materials the previous semester, you will need to fill out the Alternative Text Request form and meet with your disability specialist before ODS will fulfill your text requests.**

### The Conversion Process:

Converting textbooks into an alternative format is a time intensive process. It takes approximately 2 weeks to 2 months for e-texts to arrive from publishers. Students requesting materials should be prepared to use supplementary technology (scanning programs, CCTVs, etc) in the interim.

### Copyright Notice:

Copyrighted materials provided or reproduced in an accessible format by ODS for a student with a disability may not be copied, shared, distributed, or sold, except in accordance with the provisions of the copyright laws.

### Student Responsibilities:

- 1) Intake meeting: Documentation of disability verifies print disability and alt text disability.
- 2) Sign the Alternative Media Agreement with the student's Disability Specialist.
- 3) Student receives information on various sources (list of outside sources are also provided below) for e-text and electronic book resources for locating accessible textbooks.
- 4) If the student is unable to locate an accessible textbook from outside resources, student submits request by either filling out a hard copy and dropping it off at ODS, or filling out an electronic copy on our website (<http://www.csuohio.edu/offices/disability/alttext/index.html>) and emailing it to [alttext@csuohio.edu](mailto:alttext@csuohio.edu). **A syllabus must accompany the request.** It is the student's responsibility to acquire the syllabus by contacting the professor and/or the department.
- 5) The student will provide proof of purchase to ODS before alternative media will be ordered.

- 6) Requests for textbooks in alternative format should be made **at least four (4) weeks** prior to when materials are needed. Requests to convert classroom materials into alternative formats should be made **at least two (2) weeks** before materials are needed. ODS will try to honor the student's request in this timeframe. However, the wait time can be shorter or longer depending on the specific materials and the format being requested.
- 7) Meet with your professors to:
  - a. Provide them with the ODS accommodation letter;
  - b. Discuss course assignments;
  - c. Determine which textbooks and other reading materials need to be provided in an alternative format;
  - d. Determine when materials will be needed in class;
  - e. Ensure the professors are aware that the quality of original materials is essential to successful document conversions. Inform them that if they have questions, they can contact ODS.
- 8) **The student will notify ODS immediately if there any changes in the status of a request, class schedules, course requirements, alternative format needs, or if some or all the readings for a course are no longer needed, or if the course is dropped.**
- 9) Upon completion of text conversion, ODS will, using the email the student has provided on the request form, send a first and second notice to the student that the text is available to be picked up. Unanswered pickups may result in a halt in production of remaining books to be converted.
- 10) The student will receive the requested media in a timely manner. ODS has several ways to deliver textbooks. We use Dropbox.com (the student can request an invite from [alttext@csuohio.edu](mailto:alttext@csuohio.edu)), the student can provide a flash drive for ODS to copy the textbook onto, the student can borrow a flash drive from ODS (the student's account will be charged if flash drive is not returned), or the text can be burned onto a CDR.
- 11) Inform ODS if there are any problems with the alternative formats.
- 12) Failure to pick up materials in a timely manner may result in suspension of the of the alternative format accommodation.

## ODS Responsibilities

1. Verify that a student who requests alternative formats is registered with ODS and eligible to receive this accommodation.
2. Provide the student with a copy of the **Alternative Media Agreement for Services** and provide training on how to fill out the Alternative Text Request Form when necessary.
3. Acquire or create an alternative format of the text(s) requested.
4. Locate, procure, or convert materials in a timely manner. Every effort will be made to find textbooks that are already available in accessible formats (e.g. audiobooks or electronic text). **Texts that are not already available in alternative formats will be converted when possible to the student's preference.** ODS reserves the right to provide students with optional types of alternative formats as necessary to provide access. In such cases, ODS will ensure that the format is accessible to the

student. Students will be notified and involved in the process of deciding the best types of optional services.

5. Make the student's requested alternative format texts available for pick up in the ODS office. If alternative format text is being provided in installments, ODS will make every effort to notify the student that the next section is completed and available.
  6. Assist with problem resolution if the student experiences difficulties in accessing or using the format provided.
  7. Promote student independence by offering training to students in the use of technologies to convert and access their own materials.
  8. Collect all materials on loan to the student by the last day of finals in the semester, if necessary.
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## **While You are Waiting for Your Alt Media. . .**

If you anticipate needing access to information within the materials during the time that ODS has possession of your hard-copy materials for purposes of creating alternative media, you may self-scan for yourself in advance (before submitting to ODS) that portion of the materials you anticipate needing in the upcoming classes. See below if you need assistance with self-scanning.

While waiting for your alt media, you may need interim support to meet course expectations in your ongoing classes. Contact the Alt Media Assistant at [alttext@csuohio.edu](mailto:alttext@csuohio.edu) if you believe an unedited electronic version would be helpful while you are waiting for the edited alt media (unedited scanned material has not been proof-read for errors occurring during scanning).

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## **Self-Help Options**

There are several "self help" options available for obtaining reading materials in various digital formats. You may contact the Alt Media Assistant at [alttext@csuohio.edu](mailto:alttext@csuohio.edu) if you need assistance using any of these self-help options. If under these Alternative Media Guidelines ODS would otherwise produce alt media for a required or recommended reading, using self-help options does not preclude you from obtaining further editing by ODS of the electronic copy you self-scanned or self-converted.

**Self-Search:** there are many databases/inventories of electronic books/materials (some in an accessible format, others not). You may be able to locate an existing electronic copy of the book you need by yourself – many electronic books are available for free, e.g., BookShare [www.bookshare.org](http://www.bookshare.org) or for a nominal fee, e.g., Learning Ally [www.LearningAlly.org](http://www.LearningAlly.org)

Before submitting an alt media request for a book, you are encouraged to first check these primary e-book databases for availability of an existing electronic copy. If the electronic copy you locate via these databases requires additional editing, or conversion to hard copy Braille or Large Print, ODS will do such further editing or conversion provided a) it is a required or recommended course reading, b) an alt media request form is submitted, and c) the electronic document is not technically “locked” so as to preclude further editing or conversion (in which case you may have to provide a different version, e.g., hard copy, of the book/material to DSP).

**If you need assistance, the Alt Media Assistant can help you:**

- Set up an account with these e-book databases
- Retrieve an electronic copy from an e-book database
- Convert an electronic copy into your preferred alt media format if the material is for a required or recommended course reading

**Self-Scan:** There are several options available that you may want to use to self-scan hard copy printed materials when the amount of material involved is small, and you want the materials very quickly. To make this as easy as possible, scanners (with multiple formatting choices) are located in almost all libraries and in the Assistive Technology Lab (AT Lab). ODS students with print disabilities may use any of these scanners at no charge (ask Alt Media Assistant or Jeff Dell for more information).

Students at the AT Lab who are unable to use the AT Lab self-scanners due to a disability will be assisted at the AT Lab self-scanners (limit 20 minutes/day scanning assistance). An advance appointment with Jeff Dell is suggested if scanning assistance/instruction is needed.

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## Explaining the Types of Formats used in our Alternative Media Department.

1. **doc** is an abbreviation for the word "document." It is the primary format for Microsoft Word. Standard software readers, like Jaws, and Kurzweil, read these files easily.

**How quickly can we create it? Moderate.**

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2. **PDF** stands for Portable Document Format and is an electronic format commonly used by Adobe Reader and Adobe Acrobat. Adobe reader can be downloaded onto your computer for free at the following website: <http://www.adobe.com/products/acrobat/readstep2.html?promoid=BUIGO>

This file can be read aloud using the read function in Adobe Reader. It provides alteration of pitch, voice and speed.

PDF's are produced in three different formats:

- I. PDF's without rendered text that are quick to produce, and good for students with motor impairments that would make handling the physical book difficult.

**How quickly can we create it? Quickest.**

- II. PDF's with rendered text where OCR was run on the PDF so that his has readable and searchable text. However, this type requires proof reading and editing.

**How quickly can we create it? Moderate.**

- III. Tagged PDF's have formatting markup and alt tags for images which is appropriate for people using screen readers for navigation or need to reflow the document.

**How quickly can we create it? Slowest.**

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3. **txt/rtf:** TXT stands for Text files. This is a file extension for files that consist of only text with little formatting. Files with a ".txt" extension are considered universal because they can be easily read or opened by any screen reader program that reads text. RTF stands for Rich Text Format. Much like a txt file, this format was created because of its compatibility across multiple platforms, unlike txt files, however, rtf can contain formatting, such as underlining and bolding.

**How quickly can we create it? Moderate.**

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4. **Daisy files:** Daisy stands for Digital Accessible Information System. Daisy files are a combination of text and audio files that offer navigational control, which allow the user to easily navigate to the table of contents, the body of the text, headings, lists, highlighting, indentations, the index and the glossary. There are a variety of DAISY readers ranging from PC programs such as FS Reader, which ODS supports for stand-alone highly portable devices such as the Victor Stream Reader. We do not support Dolphin products at CSU.

**How quickly can we create it? Moderate.**

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6. **Braille:** ODS will provide Braille documents for math and science courses. We require notification at least 4 months in advance to provide braille textbooks. ODS also has two braille embossers in the AT Lab. Students may use them to braille documents themselves. Please speak to Jeff Dell at x2015 for more information.

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7. **MathML:** ODS will need advanced notice to provide math texts in alternative formats. If you need math equations that are compatible with a screen reader or text-to-speech engine, then we will provide you with MathML Webpages. These need to be opened in Internet Explorer. To view these files and read them you need to have a plug-in called Math Player installed, which is distributed by Design Science. This program is only available for Windows operating systems. The easiest browser to use for MathML is Internet Explorer. The file extension is .xht. If you prefer to use Mozilla then you need to use MathJax.

How quickly can we create it? Slowest.

## Alternative Text Resources for Students:

While ODS provides textbooks in an alternative electronic format, we encourage students to take advantage of outside alternate text resources listed below. If you have already availed yourself of the following resources and did not find your books in an accessible medium, fill out the Alternative Media Request Form.

### Learning Ally

Website: <http://www.learningally.org>

Membership Information <https://www.learningally.org/adult-learners/adults-sign-up/>

Contact Information: 800-221-4792

Frequently Asked Questions: <https://www.learningally.org/help-and-support/>

Memberships are unfortunately no longer free. For unlimited access to audiobooks (including thousands of current textbooks) membership is \$119/year. That may sound like a lot, but when you add up what you're paying for textbooks each semester it is an extremely cost effective service. You can even sign up for a free 10 day trial period to see if they have your current textbooks. Learning Ally's audiobooks are read by real people, and can be downloaded with a free app on PCs/Macs, iPhones and iPads.

### Access Text Network

Basic memberships are free. Most of the major publishers use Access Text to distribute electronic versions of textbooks. Members can request, link and download publisher textbook files efficiently. If you are interested in becoming a member, contact your Disability Specialist for assistance in filling out the form.

### Bookshare

Website: <http://www.bookshare.org/>

Membership Information: <http://www.bookshare.org/membershipOptions>

Contact Information: <http://www.bookshare.org/contactUs>

Frequently Asked Questions: [http://www.bookshare.org/\\_help/overview](http://www.bookshare.org/_help/overview)

Student memberships are currently free and are being funded by an award from the U.S. Department of Education Office of Special Education Program. Bookshares award from the U.S. Department of

Education Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) pays for memberships for U.S. students through September 30th of each year.

### CourseSmart

CourseSmart is an online service that strives to improve the educational experience by offering all users, including those with print-related disabilities, access to the course content they need anytime, anywhere and with the best overall experience.

With CourseSmart you can:

- Read eTextbooks online or offline – in the classroom, at the library, on a bus, just about anywhere.
- Use on multiple devices – laptops, tablets, smartphones, within a browser or with free apps. Students using screen readers must view the books through a browser for them to be accessible. The mobile apps are not screen reader accessible at the moment.

### Kindle

This is a software and hardware platform developed by Amazon.com. It displays e-books and has a text-to-speech option. Users can highlight and bookmark or dog-ear pages. Kindle devices are not accessible as the navigational buttons are not audible. However, Kindle has a screen reader accessible version of the PC desktop program and their iOS app is now accessible .

The main file type supported on a Kindle is Amazon's proprietary DRM-restricted format (AZW). However, JPEG, GIF, PNG, BMP, HTML, doc, and PDFs can be converted to the format AZW through an email-based conversion service. This email-based mechanism will send the newly Kindle-formatted file to the device directly for \$0.15 per MB or to a personal e-mail account for free.

More Product Information: [Kindle Amazon Product info](#)

### Audible

Website: <http://www.audible.com>

Membership Information:

[audibles registration](#)

Contact Information: 1-888-283-5051

Hours: Monday-Friday 9AM-10PM EST

Saturday 10AM-7PM EST

Frequently Asked Questions: <http://audible.custhelp.com/>

Membership at Audible is not free. However, this site offers many audible books that are compatible with many mobile devices at a fair price. Here is a list of mobile device manufacturers that are compatible with Audible: [list](#)

### Gutenberg Library

Website: [http://www.gutenberg.org/wiki/Main\\_Page](http://www.gutenberg.org/wiki/Main_Page)

Membership Information: Not Required

Contact Information: [help2010@pglaf.org](mailto:help2010@pglaf.org)

Frequently Asked Questions: <http://www.gutenberg.org/wiki/Category:FAQ>

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### LibriVox

Website: <http://librivox.org/>

Membership Information: Not required

Contact Information: [info@librivox.org](mailto:info@librivox.org)

Frequently Asked Questions: <http://librivox.org/forum/viewforum.php?f=18>

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### National Library Service (NLS)

Website: <http://www.loc.gov/nls/>

Membership Information: <http://www.loc.gov/nls/faq.html>

Through a national network of cooperating libraries, NLS administers a free library program of braille and audio materials circulated to eligible borrowers in the United States by postage-free mail. This site provides a search for libraries in specific counties that provide special materials at <http://www.loc.gov/nls/find.html>

### Lots of other resources

- Trade books are available for download at [Trade books](#)
- BiblioVault for University Press textbooks at [BiblioVault](#)
- Boston University offers links to eText Libraries at [E-text Libraries](#)
- Wikibooks at [Wikibooks](#)
- Request page for McGraw-Hill electronic books at [McGraw-Hill electronic books](#)
- Online texts, mostly science and math from Colorado University at [Science and Math books](#)
- Publisher Lookup for finding contact information to all publishers at [Publisher Look-up](#)
- Site for students to purchase their textbook in digital format (so they don't need you!) at [digital books](#)
- University of Penn. online books page at [online books-Penn state](#)
- WOWIO online books page at [WOWIO](#)
- There is also Google Books which allows you to search for cheaper books for students to buy at [Google books](#)