

Guide to Requesting Alternate Format Texts



University of Connecticut
Center for Students with Disabilities



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What Are Alternate Formats?

Alternate formats provide individuals access to print material through different methods. Students who are approved for alternate format texts receive the accommodation at no cost. The student must, however, show proof that they have purchased the book before they can receive the alternate format. It is against copyright laws to provide the book if it has not already been purchased.

There are a variety of alternate formats that are available. If you have a preference for which format you receive, please indicate it on your alternate format request form. We try our best to accommodate for individual preferences. The formats include:

- **Braille**
According to the American Foundation for the Blind (AFB), Braille is a logistical system using raised dots to allow individuals with low vision or no vision to read through touch.
- **CD-ROM/Electronic files**
This alternate format type allows students to have access to their textbooks on the computer. Students can then read the textbook off the screen, or they can use a text-to-speech program that will read the text aloud.
- **Audio tapes, CDs or MP3s**
Audio files are another way that students can access their textbooks. Often times there students will need to also borrow media equipment from the CSD in order to access the audio files.
- **Large print**
Text can be enlarged so that students are able to see the material more clearly.

While the Center for Students with Disabilities is responsible for contacting the Reading for the Blind & Dyslexic (RFB&D), Bookshare, and publishers to obtain your textbooks in an alternate format, the student also has responsibilities around alternate formats. All students who are approved for alternate format texts as an accommodation are also granted early registration with the understanding that they will contact their professors once they register for classes to obtain book information for each course. The earlier the CSD can get the alternate format request, the more likely we can have them available for the beginning of the semester.

Requesting Alternate Formats: A Step By Step Guide

Once you have been approved for alternate formats, you may want to know your next steps. Please follow the instructions below.

1. Check to see if the book is already available for purchase or download as an electronic text from the below list.

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

Bookshare's goal is to make the world of print accessible to people with disabilities and is free for all U.S. students with qualifying disabilities. Bookshare offers more than 42,000 digital books, textbooks, teacher-recommended reading, periodicals and assistive technology tools.

<http://www.coursesmart.com/>

CourseSmart was developed by five higher education textbook platforms and brings together thousands of textbooks across hundreds of courses in an eBook format.

<http://www.amazon.com>

Amazon offers a variety of audiobooks for purchase.

<http://www.gutenberg.org>

Project Gutenberg is the first and largest single collection of free electronic books.

<http://www.bibliomania.com/>

Bibliomania contains free online literature with more than 2000 classic texts.

<http://classics.mit.edu>

This website was put together by the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. It compiles 441 works of classical literature.

<http://shakespeare.mit.edu/works.html>

This website was put together by the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. It compiles the complete works of William Shakespeare including his poetry and plays.

<http://onlinebooks.library.upenn.edu/>

This website was put together by the University of Pennsylvania. The Online Books Page is a website that facilitates access to books that are freely readable over the Internet. It also aims to encourage the development of such online books, for the benefit and edification of all.

2. Contact your professors or the UConn Co-op to find out your textbook information.

The purpose of granting priority registration to all students approved for alternate formats is to give them the additional time to contact their professors and gather the book information. You can find the instructor's name in Peoplesoft and use the people search at www.students.uconn.edu to obtain the instructor's email address. Below is a sample email to an instructor that you can use for a guide.

Dear Professor _____,

My name is _____ and I will be a student in your _____ course in (enter semester here). I have a disability that requires my textbooks in an alternate format. I was wondering if I could get a list of books you will be using for the course so that I can have the textbooks for the start of next semester. I would be extremely appreciative if you could provide me the following information:

Book title:

Author(s):

Edition:

ISBN #:

Thank you so much for your time, and I look forward to your course next semester.

Sincerely,
(your name here)

If you do not hear back from your professor or do not feel comfortable contacting your professor, you can continue to check the Co-op's online book search at:
<http://webstore.uconncoop.com/booksearch.aspx>.

3. Fill the online alternate format request form

Once you have obtained the book information, log onto HuskyCT and enter the site for CSD Alternate Formats. You will then find the link to get to the online alternate format request form. Fill it out as completely as possible. If you do not have all of the information for each book, you can look it up on www.amazon.com. Please remember that alternate formats can take up to 8 weeks to process.

Requesting Alternate Formats: Timeline

<i>June & July</i>	<i>December</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Be sure to submit your alternate format request form online.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Be sure to submit your alternate format request form online.
<i>August & September</i>	<i>January</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Pick up your alternate format texts from the Center for Students with Disabilities as soon as they come in.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Pick up your alternate format texts from the Center for Students with Disabilities as soon as they come in.
<i>November</i>	<i>March, April, May</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Register for classes and begin to contact professors to gather book information	Register for classes and begin to contact professors to gather book information

Alternate Format Readers

Some alternate formats require additional hardware or software. Hardware can be loaned from the Center for Students with Disabilities on a semester-by-semester basis. Some software is available for use at the technology lab at the CSD for students to use as needed. Other software can be downloaded at no cost or a low cost. Feel free to set up an appointment with the CSD in order to determine which program may be best for you.

Victor Vibe Reader

Audiobooks that are available through the Reading for the Blind and Dyslexic (RFB&D) will only play in a customized CD player called a Victor Vibe Reader. These readers are available to be loaned out at the Center for Students with Disabilities. In addition, the audiobook must be unlocked by entering the PIN number 7323 on the Victor Vibe Reader. The reader contains batteries, and a carrying case.

Microcassette Recorder

Books that are read on tape require a microcassette recorder to be played. Students can borrow these microcassette recorders as well as batteries each semester.

Text-to-Speech Programs

Many alternate format texts are provided electronically. The electronic text must be used in conjunction with a text-to-speech program. The electronic text can be copied and pasted into the text-to-speech program and the software will read the text aloud as well as highlight the text as it reads. Students can visit the Center for Students with Disabilities to use text-to-speech software in the technology lab. Software can also be downloaded or purchased for personal use. Below is a list of some text-to-speech programs available as well as the cost. Please note: This is not an exhaustive list, but will provide some options that are available on the market.

PLEASE NOTE:

All equipment must be returned to the Center for Students with Disabilities at the end of EACH semester. If you feel you have special circumstances that otherwise permit you to keep equipment for a longer period of time, please contact the CSD. The following fees will be charged to the student if the materials are not returned or are returned damaged:

- Headphones: \$5.00
- CD-Rom or RFB&D CD - \$10.00
- Standard Tape Recorder - \$30.00
- RFB&D Victor Vibe Reader - \$199.00

PC/Windows		
Product	Cost	Description
<i>ReadPlease</i> www.readplease.com	Free	Students may download ReadPlease from the given website. Through this program, students have the ability to copy their alternate format material, and paste it into ReadPlease. The program will read aloud and highlight the words as it goes along. There are multiple voices a student can choose from. In addition, students may choose the size of the text as well as the speed in which the text is read.
<i>NaturalReader7</i> http://www.naturalreaders.com	Free	<p>This program's selling point includes <i>more natural voices</i> when reading the text. There are two voice options, a male and female. The user can adjust the speed at which the text is read. In addition, the text is highlighted as it is being read.</p> <p>Another feature of this program is that students can download mp3 files of the text to play on their iPod or other devices. Students can upgrade their free download to include more natural voices and features for either \$50.00 or \$100.00 depending upon the features.</p>
<i>Browsealoud</i> http://www.browsealoud.com	Free	Students can download this free speech to text software program by clicking on "Downloads" at the top toolbar. The benefit of this program is it's compatibility with both PCs and Macs. Similar to other text to speech programs, there are a limited number of voices the user can choose from as well as a speed adjustment. Lastly, text is highlighted as it is read.
<i>Coolspeech 5.0</i> http://www.bytecool.com/coolspch.htm	\$30	This program is a low cost text to speech software. Students can download a free trial to test out the program. Coolspeech is good for use with the internet and reading emails in addition to reading electronic texts.
<i>Textreader</i> www.textreader.net	\$30	This program can be downloaded directly from the internet once payment is complete. In addition, students can download a free trial to test out the program. Textreader can convert text into audio mp3 or WAV files that can be put on an mp3 player.
<i>Reading Made EZ E-text</i> http://www.readingmadeez.com/products/EtextReader.html	\$79.95	Reading Made EZ created an e-text reader that can be purchased and downloaded from their website. Text can be easily highlighted, underlined and bookmarked. This e-text reader can also be controlled by hot keys or icons on the toolbar. This program includes a electronic manual for easy reading.
<i>Kurzweil 3000</i> http://www.kurzweiledu.com/	\$395 plus shipping	<p>Kurzweil is a comprehensive text-to-speech programs. In addition to reading text aloud, students to create and save notes on their electronic texts, to customize toolbars, to choose from improved natural voices, etc.</p> <p><i>Please note: Kurzweil can be ordered online but cannot be downloaded directly from the internet. You will need to allow extra time for shipping.</i></p>

Macintosh		
Product	Cost	Description
<i>VoiceOver</i> http://www.apple.com/accessibility/voiceover/	Free	This program is automatically on Macintosh computers with an operating system of OS 10 or higher. This program can read the open page or document on the screen. Apple's new speech technology has created a voice, "Alex" which is to be a more human-like voice. The rate, pitch and volume of this voice can be adjusted.
<i>Type It Read It</i> http://www.schoolfreeware.com/TypeIt_ReadIt.html	Free	This program is a free download to students and schools. Students just need to visit the given website, scroll down to the "Download" section, and select their appropriate operating system. Video Tutorials are available through this website. The program will read aloud and highlight the words as it goes along. There are a variety of voices a student can choose from. In addition, students may choose the size of the text as well as the speed in which the text is read. One downside to this program is that the speech may seem very mechanical to students.
<i>Browsealoud</i> http://www.browsealoud.com	Free	Students can download this free speech to text software program by clicking on "Downloads" at the top toolbar. The benefit of this program is its compatibility with both PCs and Macs. Similar to other text to speech programs, there are a limited number of voices the user can choose from as well as a speed adjustment. Lastly, text is highlighted as it is read.
<i>Ghostreader</i> http://www.convenienceware.com/ghostreader.php	\$39.95	Ghostreader advertises life-like voices. In addition to the basic text-to-speech features, Ghostreader allows the user to transfer audiobooks to the iPod or iPhone for easy use and portability. Software can be purchased and downloaded online. A free trial is also available for download.
<i>Kurzweil 3000</i> http://www.kurzweiledu.com/	\$395 plus shipping	Kurzweil is a comprehensive text-to-speech programs. In addition to reading text aloud, Kurzweil allows students to create notes on their electronic texts for later extraction, to customize toolbars, to choose from improved natural voices, etc. Please note: Kurzweil cannot be downloaded directly from the internet. You may order this program online, but will require extra time for shipping.

Picking Up Alternate Format Texts

It is typically expected that students will pick up their alternate formats within the first week of the semester. If the request was made very close to the new semester, however, there may be some delays in getting all of the books for the start of the semester.

Where to pick up alternate formats

Alternate formats can be picked up in two locations; HuskyCT and the Center for Students with disabilities.

HuskyCT

All electronic files will be uploaded onto HuskyCT under the Center for Students with Disabilities Alternate Format site. You will only be able to see the books that you requested in an alternate format. You can then download that file to your computer and use a text-to-speech program to read the file. Students will still be expected to log into the site within the first week to check to see if their books are available.

Center for Students with Disabilities

All non-electronic files will be available for pick-up at the Center for Students with Disabilities. This includes Recordings for the Blind & Dyslexic audiobooks, Braille and large-print.

Frequently Asked Questions

What is an ISBN Number?

Each book that is published in the United States and internationally has a unique number assigned to the book. **You may provide the CSD with ISBN-13 or the ISBN-10.** This number can be found on the back of the book in the lower right hand corner and looks similar to the ISBN below:



If all of my books are not available at the start of the semester, how will I know when to pick them up?

If alternate formats are received after the first day of classes, the student will be notified by email that it is available and should be picked up at their earliest convenience. If a student would like to be emailed on a different account than their Huskymail account, they should let the CSD know as soon as possible.

Why do some books come in quickly and others take a while?

The Center obtains alternate formats from three main sources. First we check to see if the book is available as an audiobook through the Reading for the Blind and Dyslexic. Typically, if we are able to obtain the book through that source, delivery and turnaround time is very quick since the files have already been read onto CD and just need to be shipped out. Second, we contact the publisher of the textbook to see if the files are electronic. If publishers do have the electronic file, it is also tends to have a rather quick turnaround time. If the publishers do not have the electronic files available, we must then borrow book from the UConn Co-op, scan the book and edit all of the text at the Center. This process can take a while and is completed in the order requests are received.

What do I do if I am having any issues with my alternate format texts?

Let your case manager know as soon as possible. We cannot help fix any alternate format problems unless we know about them. It is the student's responsibility to contact the CSD if any issues do arise with their alternate formats.

When do I need to return my alternate format texts?

It is expected that each student will return their alternate format texts at the end of each semester. In order to obtain more audiobooks from the Reading for the Blind and Dyslexic, we must first return the ones that have been borrowed. In addition, according

to copyright laws, many publishing companies only allow books to be used in an alternate format for one semester.

What happens if I forget to return equipment or books that I have borrowed?

Because equipment is expensive, we have each student fill out an equipment loan form that details the time in which students are allowed to borrow the equipment. If equipment is not returned by the date outlined in the equipment loan form, students will be sent an email reminding them to return the equipment as soon as possible. If equipment is still not returned, students will have a hold on their account which may prevent them from registering for classes or obtaining transcripts.

If students mistakenly bring their equipment home over break and live too far to return it in person, it can always be mailed to:

The Center for Students with Disabilities
University of Connecticut
233 Glenbrook Road, Unit 4174
Storrs, CT. 06269

If you feel that you may have a special circumstance that requires you to keep the equipment for longer than outlined on the equipment loan form, please contact your case manager as soon as possible to discuss the matter with them.

If you have any additional questions or concerns that are not detailed in this manual, please feel free to call the Center for Students with Disabilities at 860-486-2020.