



Patrick Henry Community College
645 Patriot Avenue
Martinsville, VA 24112

disAbility Resources
Learning Resource Center #109D
276-656-0257 / 276-632-1034 (fax)
disabilityresources@patrickhenry.edu

Assistive Technology for Students with Print Disabilities

A student with a print disability may be someone who is blind, has low vision, or a learning disability such as dyslexia, and who is unable to read traditional print materials.

Print Materials

Anything that students read for class must be made accessible for blind and visually impaired students. This includes any material that is required, supplemental or optional reading. This includes, but is not limited to:

- Textbooks
- Handouts
- Course Documents through Canvas
- PowerPoints
- Newspaper and Journal Articles

The student and the professor are encouraged to have a conversation about which format(s) the student prefers. This formatting makes the document readable by the assistive technology software. The student is responsible for making his/her needs known, and the professor is responsible for providing the print materials in an accessible format.

If students are sharing documents, PowerPoints, or other print materials as part of the course requirements (i.e. group projects, presentations, etc.) those also must be made accessible.

Once the document has been made accessible, it can be made available in Canvas or sent to the student as an attachment in an email. It is recommended that whenever possible, the student is provided the document ahead of time in order to make sure it is compatible with the assistive technology software.

Some accessible print formats include:

- Large print - formatting text on a paper to a font size that is larger than usual (font size 18 points or higher).
- Enlarged print - documents are sent to the student electronically and the font is magnified by the software on the student's device (laptop, tablet, cell phone).
- PDF version – all documents should be converted as saved as PDFs. PDF documents can be read by screen readers and text-to-speech software.
- Braille*

*For a student who uses Braille, the disAbility Resources will obtain those materials or convert your documents. Anticipate up to two weeks for the office to complete that task.

Assistive Technology

Assistive technology that provides access to individuals with print disabilities, includes:

- Screen readers - software programs that use speech synthesizers to read text that is on the computer screen. Some screen-reader software must be purchased separately while others may come already installed on a user's device. Some common screen-reader software is JAWS, ZoomText, NaturalReader, NVCA and ChromeVox.
- Speech-to-Text – software programs that use speech synthesizers to read text as the user reads along.
- Magnification Software – software that magnifies the font (some, such as ZoomText have screen-reader capability as well).

Assistive Technology – Hardware Includes:

- Cell phones, tablets, PCs, Macs – PDFs, audiobooks
- Hand held magnifiers, image readers
- Digital Voice Recorder (can hold up to 3 months of lectures)
- Headphones/earbuds

Assistive Technology – Software Includes:

- JAWS
- Apps: Learning Ally, Vital Source, Audible, iBooks
- Voice-Over Features: reads emails, or whatever is on your phone or tablet.

Assistive Technology – Rule of Thumb

If you use it for your class, it must be made accessible. If it doesn't come from the publisher in an accessible format, the college must take responsibility to make the documents accessible.