What is Alternative Format Text?

Alternative Format Text, also referred to as Alt Format Text, or AFT, is text that is accessible on a computer in electronic format. Because of the electronic format some refer to AFT as e-text; for the purposes here we will use the acronym AFT. This is typically accomplished by using software such as Microsoft Word, Adobe Reader, Notepad, or Kurzweil**.**

How is Alt Format Text used?

Alt Format Text can be used in several different ways with special software such as screen readers or document readers. Alt Format Text can be audibly "read" by a computer; it may also be converted into MP3 files, which can play on any computer or portable MP3 playing device.

What is an audio book?

An audio book is electronic text that has been converted into sound called an MP3 file and recorded onto compact disc (CD). When a student requests an audio book they will receive MP3 files on a CD. No electronic visual material accompanies the MP3 files. MP3 files will play on CD players, portable MP3 devices, home computers, and all Ivy Tech Community College computers.

What is an Alternative Format Textbook?

Sometimes, a student's disability requires enlarged text or access to both the visual material and audio files. This is referred to as an alternative format book. An alternative format book will have Microsoft Word, Notepad, PDF, or Kurzweil files in place of MP3 files.

PDF stands for Portable Document Format. PDF files are images of a written text which can be read by Adobe Reader, Kurzweil, or other screen-reading software.

Kurzweil files are used with the Kurzweil Software program only. However, students with Microsoft Word, Notepad, or PDF files can open and view these files in the Kurzweil program. Approved DSS students have access to Kurzweil in the DSS lab. MP3 and PDF are the typical file formats distributed by Ivy Tech Community College.

How do I obtain Alt Format Textbooks?

E-Textbooks must be requested through the DSS office. When requesting AFT, you must schedule an appointment with the Disability Support Services (DSS) Advisor. Students should bring a current copy of your course schedule complete with instructor names, your textbook(s), and proof of purchase (receipt) of the book(s) for which you are requesting AFT. Once the proof of purchase has been reviewed by the DSS staff, you will then fill out a form detailing the books' information. E-text is provided to our students at no charge.

May I request a specific file format?

Students may request a specific file format; however, due to time restrictions and depending on the size, design, and content of the book, it may not be possible to provide one format over another. In all cases, the content you receive will be accessible and accommodating to your needs. MP3 and PDF are the typical file formats distributed by Ivy Tech Community College.

How long does it take to receive the AFT?

AFT generally takes anywhere from two weeks to a month to receive. Most AFT are ordered directly from the publisher, who usually take anywhere from one to twenty business days to send out the AFT files. However, for students requesting Kurzweil or MP3 files the publisher provided files in Microsoft Word or PDF must be converted to the appropriate file type by the DSS staff. When files cannot be provided by the publisher or for faster results, you might be required to leave your book to be scanned by DSS. This process requires that the spine of the book be removed (the larger the book, the longer the production time); rebinding of the textbook spine is the responsibility of the student. For large books with pictures and complex formatting, the production time may be longer than one month. It is very important to keep this in mind and to submit your request for e-text as early as possible.

How will I know when my AFT is ready?

DSS staff will contact you via your Ivy Tech e-mail when your AFT is ready to be picked up.

How will I receive my AFT?

Once contacted by DSS staff, students will need to bring a USB drive or writeable compact disc (CD-R) to IVY 1323. DSS staff will save the file to this item and return to student that day.

A USB drive is also referred to as a flash drive (refers to the type of memory it uses), thumb drive (refers to the size of the drive), or a jump drive (referring to it's portability). The USB drive should be able to hold the file size of the full textbook; please contact the DSS office for this information.

Will I get my textbook back?

Your textbook will be returned to you the same day you submit your request. If a publisher is unable to provide an AFT, you will be contacted via your Ivy Tech email to bring your textbook(s) to the DSS office for scanning. In this instance, your textbook will be ready when you pick up your AFT.

Can I resell my textbook?

Only after you return your e-text to DSS are you able to resell your textbook. However, the determination to buyback your textbook is solely the decision of the company/entity to which you are selling your book. DSS cannot determine if your book will be bought back.