



POLICY & PROCEDURE

Title: Alternative Media Policy and Procedure

Effective Date: 11/20/2023, Rev. 8/13/2025

Applies to: All Students with Disabilities Enrolled at ^{HF}CDHP with Alternative Media as an Approved Accommodation

Statement: Alternative media refers to an alternative or different format of materials, such as textbooks, which may include e-text, large print, Braille, text to speech software, etc. In keeping with the Harris Family Center for Disability and Health Policy's (^{HF}CDHP) policy that all students shall have equal access to educational materials, programs, facilities, admissions, and activities, ^{HF}CDHP makes every effort to provide material in alternate formats for students with disabilities.

Purpose: This policy was designed to delineate ^{HF}CDHP's process to provide students approved for this accommodation with timely and effective Alternative Media Services.

Related Information:

The Assistive Technology and Alternative Media Specialist will meet with the student to determine the appropriate format their accessible materials will be in. Students are provided with demonstrations of the available text-to-speech software (Kurzweil 3000 and Speechify) to determine the best option and additional training is provided as needed.

Students are responsible for submitting the Alternative Media Request form each term accessible materials are needed, specifically for those materials that are not already available in digital format through WesternU or in an accessible electronic format.

Materials released to students will need to have proof of purchase (receipt) submitted each term. For students enrolled in the College of Dental Medicine or College of Optometry using Vital Source, the WesternU Campus Store can provide a textbook receipt. Students can contact them by email at campustore@westernu.edu. Rental receipts are accepted, and materials will be available for the term requested.

If requested materials are not available from in-house libraries or publishers, students will be notified via their WesternU email to provide a digital file or bring their hard copy books/course materials to ^{HF}CDHP for in-house scanning. Scanning, depending on size and volume, may take one to two business days. Students will be emailed when their hard copy materials are ready for pickup.

^{HF}CDHP may cancel any textbooks/course materials requested for in-house scanning and conversion if they are not received by the requested date stated in the email. This includes digital materials that are requested for conversion. If students are unable to provide their materials by the requested date, they must contact ^{HF}CDHP immediately for an extension.

Students renting physical textbooks should note that ^{HF}CDHP cannot cut and scan them. This also includes any book materials checked out from the Harriet K. and Philip Pumerantz Library.

Any questions or concerns regarding the alternative media accommodation, formats provided, or difficulties accessing provided files should be directed to the Assistive Technology and Alternative Media Specialist at disabilityaccommodations@westernu.edu.

Alternative media is intended solely for the educational purposes of the student. According to the Copyright Revisions Act of 1976, as amended [17 U.S.C. Sec. 101 et seq.], students may not copy, duplicate, or distribute the alternative media.

If students are no longer in possession of the eBook or physical copy of the book, they must delete alternative media files from their account(s).

Procedure Steps:

	Action	Responsible for Implementing
1.	Students submit a request for alternative media by filling out the Alternative Media Request Form completely and submitting it to ^{HF} CDHP via email at disabilityaccommodations@westernu.edu . The form can be found on the “Services” webpage at https://stagewp.westernu.edu/cdhp/cdhp-services/alternative-media/#accordion-1-button . Incomplete forms may result in delays while the information is being obtained.	Student
2.	Students can submit their additional materials on the Alternative Media Request Form. Students are responsible for providing all materials that are not on the required book list to ^{HF} CDHP for scanning and conversion. Digital files may be emailed to disabilityaccommodations@westernu.edu while physical copies must be brought to the ^{HF} CDHP office during normal business hours.	Student
3.	Students must submit textbooks, digital, and/or printed materials by the date requested by ^{HF} CDHP. Timely submission will ensure faster delivery of alternative media.	Student
4.	^{HF} CDHP will communicate with students regarding the status of their materials via their WesternU email. Thus, it is important that students waiting for alternative media check their email regularly.	Student/Assistive Technology and Alt Media Specialist & ^{HF} CDHP Staff
5.	It is the student’s responsibility to contact ^{HF} CDHP about any changes in their course registration or materials needed.	Student
6.	It is the student’s responsibility to contact ^{HF} CDHP if they encounter trouble submitting materials (i.e., instructor has not announced materials, book is out of stock, source is already in electronic format).	Student
7.	Students can submit their receipt(s) as soon as they are available after submitting their request. If there are	Student

	issues securing a receipt, please contact the Assistive Technology and Alternative Media Specialist for assistance. Receipts should be submitted as PDFs, JPEG/PNG image or Word Doc to disabilityaccommodations@westernu.edu and should be labeled with the student's first initial, last name, college and graduation year, and the term the receipt is for.	
8.	Third-party receipts and or/purchases from fellow students will not be accepted as proof of purchase.	Student/Assistive Technology and Alternative Media Specialist/ ^{HF} CDHP Staff
9.	Students enrolled in the College of Dental Medicine or College of Optometry using Vital Source can request a receipt from the WesternU bookstore by emailing them at campusstore@westernu.edu . Submit the copy in the appropriate format to ^{HF} CDHP.	Student
10.	When materials are completed, they will be uploaded to the student's library (Kurzweil 3000) or uploaded and shared through a Google Shared Drive (Speechify, etc.). Students will be notified via email that they have been uploaded. Students receiving Braille will be emailed their materials are ready and may schedule to pick them up from ^{HF} CDHP during normal business hours.	Assistive Technology and Alternative Media Specialist/ ^{HF} CDHP Staff
11.	Books that are listed as rentals, this includes subscriptions, are only available for the duration of the rental/subscription period.	Assistive Technology and Alternative Media Specialist/ ^{HF} CDHP Staff
12.	For materials that are provided through Canvas by the instructor, students will need to download the materials and then upload them into their assigned platform (Kurzweil 3000 or Speechify). Students needing a refresher course on the features of their approved software should contact the Assistive Technology and Alternative Media Specialist via email at disabilityaccommodations@westernu.edu . Materials provided through Adobe Shelf or Red Shelf cannot be downloaded and uploaded into the software ^{HF} CDHP provides; however, they do possess read aloud functions and marking features similar to what is offered.	Student
13.	Any questions or concerns regarding the alternative media accommodation, formats provided, or difficulties accessing provided files should be directed to the Assistive Technology and Alternative Media Specialist at disabilityaccommodations@westernu.edu .	Student

Definitions:**Major Types of Alternative Media**

Electronic Text (E-Text) such as Microsoft Word or Adobe PDF files, which can be accessed on a computer with screen reading or screen magnification software. E-text can be easily stored, searched, and indexed, and can be converted to large print or Braille. E-texts are either created on campus by scanning the material or are acquired from the publishers, under the provisions of AB 422, which requires publishers to provide E-text to students with disabilities.

Large print documents for those with sufficient vision are often desirable. Although they are somewhat bulky, materials in large print have the advantage of being relatively portable and requiring no special equipment while conveying all the graphic and spatial information contained in the original material.

Braille is a system of reading and writing which is used by approximately 10 percent of blind and visually impaired individuals. Braille can be quickly referenced without any equipment and can include charts, tables, simple diagrams, and a reasonable approximation of the format of a printed document.

Text-to-speech software is a type of assistive technology that reads digital text out loud. It is often used by severely visually impaired or blind individuals to read texts and has been expanded to include individuals with learning and cognitive disabilities, and English language learners. Kurzweil 3000 is one of the text-to-speech softwares that ^{HF}CDHP provides as an option to students and enables the user to make notations and create study guides from assigned reading materials. Speechify is the other option and allows students to have their text read out loud to them.

References, if applicable:

Related Links: [^{HF}CDHP Alternative Media](#); [Introduction to Kurzweil 3000](#); [Learning Speechify Tutorial](#)

Related Forms: [Alternative Media Request Form](#), [Alternative Media Copyright Agreement](#)

Responsible Department: Harris Family Center for Disability and Health Policy (^{HF}CDHP)

Contact: Consuelo Sanchez, Alternative Media & Assistive Technology Consultant

Email: disabilityaccommodations@westernu.edu; csanchez@westernu.edu

Policy reviewed by: (check all that apply)

Academic Senate	X	General Counsel	Provost's Office
Biosafety Committee		Human Resources	Radiation Safety Committee
Board of Trustees		IACUC	VP Research & Biotechnology
Chief Financial Officer		Information Technology	Sponsored Programs
Clinic Administration		Institutional Review Board	X University Risk Management

Dean's Council	Operations Council		University Compliance Office
Directors of Operations	President's Office		University Policy Office
Environmental Health & Safety	Procurement	X	University Student Affairs