# Information for incoming students:

# Using electronic text for reading textbooks

Welcome to Albion College! **The Learning Support Center (LSC)** Staff will be happy to work with you in making the transition to using electronic text for college classes. First, there will be some differences from how you obtained books in high school. Textbooks are no longer provided to you for free. In college you will be expected to purchase your books.

You will either rent or buy copies of your books from the following sources:

* Electronic versions available from **the publisher’s website.**
	+ Textbook companies rent and sell both hard and electronic versions. Be sure that the electronic version available is compatible with your screen reader. **CourseSmart /VitalSource** has a policy of carrying only accessible electronic versions.
	+ E-books are also available from **Amazon Kindle** (a plug in is available for reading from your computer or other device), **Apple Books,** and **Google Play**.
* Free electronic versions from **Bookshare**.
	+ To get an invitation to join Bookshare (if you don’t have your own membership already), you will have to provide the LSC with documentation of your print disability.
* Books no longer copyrighted may be available from online sources such as **Project Guttenberg.**
* If not available through the above options, the LSC can try to request e-text copies of your books from the publisher.
	+ We will need documentation of your print disability and
	+ You will have to purchase a hardcopy and provide a copy of your receipt before we can give you the e-text.
	+ **Please contact the LSC coordinator, Nick Mourning at** **nmourning@albion.edu** **at least 3 weeks in advance if you require assistance or the LSC to request electronic texts.**

## Frequently asked questions about electronic text in college

**How do you know which books you will need to buy?**

* As soon as you register for classes, you can go to the Albion Bookstore online and check for textbooks. Your faculty may not have sent over the list of books for fall. They will do so over the course of the summer. Keep checking.

**How do you know when to ask for a publisher’s e-text version from the LSC?**

* First year students who use alternative text should receive a list of books and their sources from the LSC before August 1. We will let you know sources for books you should obtain yourself and those we will provide (with proof of purchase from you).

**How will I receive the publisher’s e-text versions from the LSC?**

* **Google Drive**. This is a good way for you to store all electronic books you obtain from any source since it allows you the freedom to access your textbooks wherever you are. We will share a Google Drive folder with your name on it. You can then access the books we put there for your use during the semester.

**What screen reader or text-to-speech system is available on campus?**

* If you do not already use a screen reader or text-to-speech program, the college has a software license for **Claro**, a text-to-speech, writing, and research program. This allows our students to download the software to their own computers. It is also available in most computer labs on campus. Please contact our LSC coordinator, Nick Mourning at nmourning@albion.edu, for a tutorial about how to download and use this program.

**How are course materials such as handouts and readings made accessible?**

* For articles or other lengthy reading materials we will ask faculty to send them to us so we can prepare an electronic version for you or:
* For materials the faculty member will prepare themselves, we will request that they send this to you in advance. You can bring your lap top or other reading device (phone?) to class if necessary to read along with the class.

**What do I do about taking notes in class? Can I use my laptop?**

* Yes, as an accommodation we can let you use your laptop in class. However there are other options:
	+ **Student Notetaker:** another student in the class can take notes for you with a notebook that has carbonless paper. After class the student will hand you a copy of that day’s notes.
	+ **Echo Smart Pen:** You write notes and the handwriting is synched to an audio recording of the lecture. You then download the notes to your computer and as your read your notes, you can hear the lecture. Click on any point in the notes and hear the lecture.

**I use Dragon Dictation for speech to text. Is this available on campus?**

* We recommend that you purchase your own version if you plan to use Dragon for writing most or all your papers. (See below for possible way of getting financial help with this).
* Dragon is available on I-pads in the college library which can be checked out.

**I am concerned about being able to afford my own PC, laptop or tablet device. Do you have any ideas?**

* **Michigan Rehabilitation Services** may help with these expenses if you have applied for student financial aid. You will have to pursue their services over the summer through your local Michigan Rehabilitation office.

**Do you have recommendations for the kind of PC/laptop/notebook I should buy for campus?**

* What you decide to purchase will be a matter of personal preference. We have noticed an increase in the number of students using laptops and/or notebooks. We suspect this is a matter of convenience and accessibility.

## Important Information

* **Pam Schwartz**, LSC Director, pschwartz@albion.edu , 517-629-0825
* **Nick Mourning**, LSC Coordinator, nmourning@albion.edu, 517-629-0411
* **Amazon Kindle:** <http://tinyurl.com/lqdqjlx>
* **CourseSmart/VitalSource:** <http://www.coursesmart.com/search>
* **BookShare**: <https://www.bookshare.org/cms>
* **Claro**: <http://www.clarosoftware.com/>
* **AC BookStore:** <http://tinyurl.com/mo8o4hr>