Learn About Assistive Technology

Assistive technology is a device or software that can help in performing tasks that might be challenging. This could be something like a pencil grip, making it easier to write, or closed captioning for those who have difficulties hearing. For students with disabilities, assistive technology can serve as a helpful tool in leveling the playing field when pursuing one's education.

While we are not able to recommend or endorse one product over another, as each student will have their own needs and preferences, below are some resources that can help in a student's educational success. Additional resources not mentioned below may be found online or with the help of a healthcare provider. Any use of assistive technology must abide by APUS's Code of Conduct as outlined in the Student Handbook.

If you have questions regarding disability services accommodations (DSA) at APUS, please contact the DSA Office at dsa@apus.edu. Information regarding the DSA process may also be found in the Student Handbook.

Screen Readers

Screen readers allow users, who might have difficulties reading the text displayed on a screen, to instead have the text read aloud to them. As many of APUS's course materials are compatible with screen reader software due to their electronic format and 508 compliance, screen readers can serve as a useful tool. Some devices might even have this software readily available, such as on a computer or smart phone.

For users who have a Mac computer, there are built in assistive technologies such as VoiceOver screen reader, as well as Hover Text and Text to Speech which perform functions similar to that of a screen reader. iPhone users also can utilize the VoiceOver tool and Speak Screen for reading assistance. Apple's website goes into further detail regarding their accessibility support.

Window users may consider NVDA, which is a free screen reader and is compatible with many popular web browsers and applications. Additional information on NVDA can be accessed from their website.

Other resources that may be beneficial include:

- Kurzweil
- NaturalReader
- Snap&Read
- Voice Dream Reader
- ZoomText

Speech to Text

Speech to text software, also referred to as voice to text, converts a user's spoken words to text. This can be a useful tool for students who find typing difficult.

Again, some devices might already have speech to text software available. On Apple devices, the Voice Control tool performs some of the key features of speech to text software. The dictation commands also allow for a user to easily edit and format their text as needed. In Microsoft Office 365 applications, such as Word and PowerPoint, the dictate tool is available for speech to text functionality and editing

capabilities. Visit Microsoft Office 365's website for more information on accessibility within their applications.

Additional speech to text software options include:

- Braina
- Dragon
- Otter.ai
- Speechnotes
- Speechtexter
- Watson Speech to Text

Writing Assistance

Some students may have difficulties putting their thoughts into words or easily confusing letters, making the task of writing challenging. Various applications and software exist that can assist students with their grammar or provide predictive text capability while writing. These often have other assistive technology features included as well, such as text to speech or speech to text ability. Many of the applications and software can be used across various platforms, including email, web browsers, and word processors to assist in multiple areas of a student's studies.

Check out just a few writing assistance applications and software below:

- Co:Writer
- Ghotit
- Grammarly
- Voice Dream Writer

Task Management

Many students find it hard to juggle their various responsibilities and still make time for school. However, some students face additional difficulties making it hard to remember when assignments are due or become distracted making it challenging to focus on school work. Task management applications and software may make it easier to stay on track by allowing you to create lists, reminders, or by offering other focusing tools.

A few task management options to explore include:

- 2Do
- ClickUp
- Evernote
- Focus@Will
- Forest
- Habitica
- MindNode
- Remember the Milk

Anxiety and Stress Relief

The feelings of stress and anxiety may be amplified when it comes to the assignments and deadlines that are associated with college. Fortunately, many application and software developers have created products which may help to ease these feelings.

Below are a few apps that are designed with your mental health in mind:

- Calm
- Happify
- Insight Timer
- Headspace
- Othership