

# ALS: Assistive Technology

Version 2

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## Assistive Technology at Seneca Polytechnic

At Seneca Polytechnic, we are committed to providing an inclusive and supportive learning environment for all students. We understand that students with disabilities may face unique challenges, and we are dedicated to offering the necessary resources and accommodations to ensure their academic success. Our Assistive Technology services are designed to empower students with disabilities by providing tools and support that enhance their learning experience.

## Our Services

Seneca Polytechnic offers a wide range of assistive technologies to meet the diverse needs of our students. These include:

- **Screen Readers:** Software that reads out the text displayed on the screen, helping students with visual impairments.
- **Speech-to-Text Software:** Converts spoken words into written text, aiding students with mobility impairments or learning disabilities.
- **Text-to-Speech Software:** Reads written text out loud, assisting students with reading difficulties or visual impairments.
- **Note-Taking Assistance:** Digital note-taking tools and services that help students capture and organize lecture content effectively.
- **Captioning Services:** Real-time and post-production captioning for videos and live lectures to support students with hearing impairments.

## Our Technologies

Students Registered with ALS have the opportunity to meet with one of our Assistive Technologists (AT). The AT will provide indepth training and support on the following technologies as needed:

- [Dragon Professional](#)

- Inspiration
- Jaws
- Kurzweil 3000
- NaturalReader
- Otter.ai
- Read&Write
- WordQ
- ZoomText

#### Dragon Professional

Dragon 16 is a powerful speech recognition software designed to help college students improve their productivity and writing skills. By converting spoken words into text, it allows students to create essays, reports, and emails three times faster than typing. The software supports voice commands for navigating documents and applications, making it easier to control the computer without a keyboard. Dragon 16 also includes features for editing and formatting text, ensuring that students can produce polished and accurate work. Additionally, it helps reduce the physical strain of typing, which is beneficial for students with disabilities or those who find typing challenging. With its high accuracy and ease of use, Dragon 16 empowers students to focus more on their ideas and less on the mechanics of writing.

<https://www.nuance.com/dragon.html>

#### Inspiration

Inspiration 11 is a versatile visual thinking tool designed to help users create mind maps, concept maps, diagrams, graphic organizers, outlines, and presentations with ease. The software allows users to quickly capture and organize their ideas visually, and then convert these visual diagrams into written outlines with just one click. It includes features like the RapidFire® tool for brainstorming, a citation tool for adding references, and a smart checklist feature for organizing tasks. Additionally, Inspiration 11 offers over 150 templates and the ability to transfer work to Microsoft Word, PowerPoint, and other applications. This makes it a powerful tool for enhancing productivity and knowledge retention. Inspiration 11 makes it easy to quickly capture ideas and visually organizes them. Then, transfer your visual diagram to a written outline for writing projects.

<https://www.inspiration-at.com/inspiration-11/>

[Inspiration Resources](#)

#### Jaws

JAWS 2024 is the latest version of the popular screen reading software designed for individuals who are blind or visually impaired. Students can use JAWS 2024 for a variety of tasks to enhance their academic experience. The software's text-to-speech capabilities allow students to read and navigate digital textbooks, articles, and web pages, making it easier to access and comprehend course materials. JAWS 2024 also supports efficient note-taking and document editing, helping students keep track of their assignments and study materials. The new Picture Smart AI feature can describe images, charts, and graphs, which is particularly useful for understanding visual content in subjects like math and science. JAWS 2024 includes tools for navigating complex web forms and applications, ensuring students can participate fully in online courses and research. By providing these comprehensive accessibility features, JAWS 2024 empowers students to achieve academic success and maintain independence.

<https://www.freedomscientific.com/products/software/jaws/>

[Resources](#)

[Videos](#)

## Kurzweil 3000

Kurzweil 3000 is an assistive technology software designed to support individuals with learning disabilities by providing multisensory access to reading materials. It features text-to-speech capabilities, allowing users to convert written text into audio, which is particularly beneficial for those with dyslexia or visual impairments. The software also includes tools for writing, test-taking, and studying, such as highlighting, note-taking, and brainstorming. Additionally, Kurzweil 3000 can scan and digitize printed materials, making them accessible in a flexible, digital format. This comprehensive solution helps users improve their reading fluency, comprehension, and overall learning experience. By aligning with educational strategies, Kurzweil 3000 empowers students to achieve academic success and gain confidence in their abilities.

<https://www.kurzweiledu.com/default.html>

[Videos](#)

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## Natural Reader

Natural Reader 16 is a text-to-speech software designed to convert written text into spoken words. It supports various formats, including PDFs, web pages, and emails, making it versatile for different reading needs. The software offers a range of natural-sounding voices and multiple languages, enhancing the listening experience. Users can also convert text into audio files, allowing them to listen to their content on the go. Natural Reader 16 is user-friendly and available for both personal and commercial use. Its features make it an excellent tool for individuals with reading difficulties or those who prefer auditory learning. By providing these capabilities, Natural Reader 16 helps users improve their productivity and accessibility.

<https://www.naturalreaders.com/edu.html>

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## Otter.ai

Otter.ai is an AI-powered tool that helps college students record and transcribe lectures in real-time. It captures audio and automatically generates detailed notes, allowing students to focus on the lecture without worrying about missing important information. The software also integrates with platforms like Zoom, Microsoft Teams, and Google Meet, making it versatile for both in-person and virtual classes. Otter.ai can highlight key points, add images, and even capture lecture slides, providing a comprehensive set of notes. After the lecture, it generates summaries and allows students to search through transcripts for specific information. This makes studying and reviewing materials more efficient and accessible.

<https://otter.ai/>

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## Read&Write

Read & Write 12 is a literacy support tool designed to help college students improve their reading, writing, and comprehension skills. It offers features like text-to-speech, which reads text aloud to aid understanding, and word prediction to assist with writing. The software also includes tools for highlighting, summarizing, and creating vocabulary lists, making it easier for students to organize and retain information. Additionally, Read & Write 12 provides a dictionary to help with word comprehension and usage. The software's ability to convert text into audio files allows students to listen to their study materials on the go. By offering these diverse tools, Read & Write 12 supports students in becoming more independent and confident learners.

<https://www.texthelp.com/products/read-and-write-education/>

[Videos](#)

[Resources](#)

[Toolbar](#)

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## WordQ

WordQ is a simple-to-use tool featuring word prediction, speech feedback, and PDF viewing/editing that helps students create better quality writing with independence and confidence. WordQ v6 is a versatile software designed to assist individuals with learning differences, neurodiversity, and those learning English or French. and in general, anyone facing barriers to reading and writing for any reason. It features word prediction, speech feedback, and PDF viewing/editing, which help users improve their writing quality and confidence. The software works with both desktop and web applications, including Office 365 and Google apps. WordQ v6 offers greater accuracy in word prediction by considering several previous words and includes a refined PDF viewer interface. It also supports reading website text selections with word-by-word highlighting.

<https://www.quillsoft.ca/>

[User Guide for Windows](#)

[Videos](#)

## ZoomText

ZoomText is a screen magnification and reading software designed for individuals with low vision. It offers a range of magnification levels, allowing users to enlarge and enhance everything on their computer screen up to 60 times. The software also includes text-to-speech capabilities, which can read aloud documents, web pages, and emails. Additionally, ZoomText provides features like color enhancement, cursor customization, and focus tracking to make it easier for users to navigate their screens. The integrated magnifier/reader functionality ensures that users can both see and hear their content, enhancing their overall computing experience. By offering these comprehensive tools, ZoomText helps users maintain their productivity and independence.

<https://www.freedomscientific.com/products/software/zoomtext/>

[Resources](#)

[Videos](#)

