

How (and when) to use SensusAccess

SensusAccess is available to you as part of the Vassar community. SensusAccess is Optical Character Recognition (OCR) technology. SensusAccess uses OCR technology by scanning the uploaded documents and converting previously inaccessible documents into accessible documents. This means that you are provided with a document that can be read out loud with text-to-speech software. Pay attention to the quality of your original document, it will determine how you use SensusAccess (things to watch out for: underlines, dark gutters, writing in the margins, ghost text). YouTube video: https://youtu.be/nyq_0ozjVno

1. Make sure your original file is saved somewhere on your hard drive. Because Moodle is password protected, you'll have to save any file you're converting from there to downloads, desktop or any other location where you can access it again.

2. Visit the AEO website at:

<http://accessibilityandeducationalopportunity.vassar.edu/sensusaccess/>

3. This will be your first selection:

Alternate media made easy

Follow the four easy steps below to have your document converted into an alternative, accessible format. The result is delivered in your email inbox. You may upload one or more files, enter a URL to a file or simply type in the text you wish to have converted. The form expands as you make your selections.

Source

File
 URL
 Text

Most of the time, you'll be selecting 'File' as your source.

Here's when you would not: If you want to convert a website or text to mp3, braille, or E-book.

Websites will be already be accessible (meaning: they can be read by a screen reader), this means, unless you need them in a different format, you do not need to send them through SensusAccess.

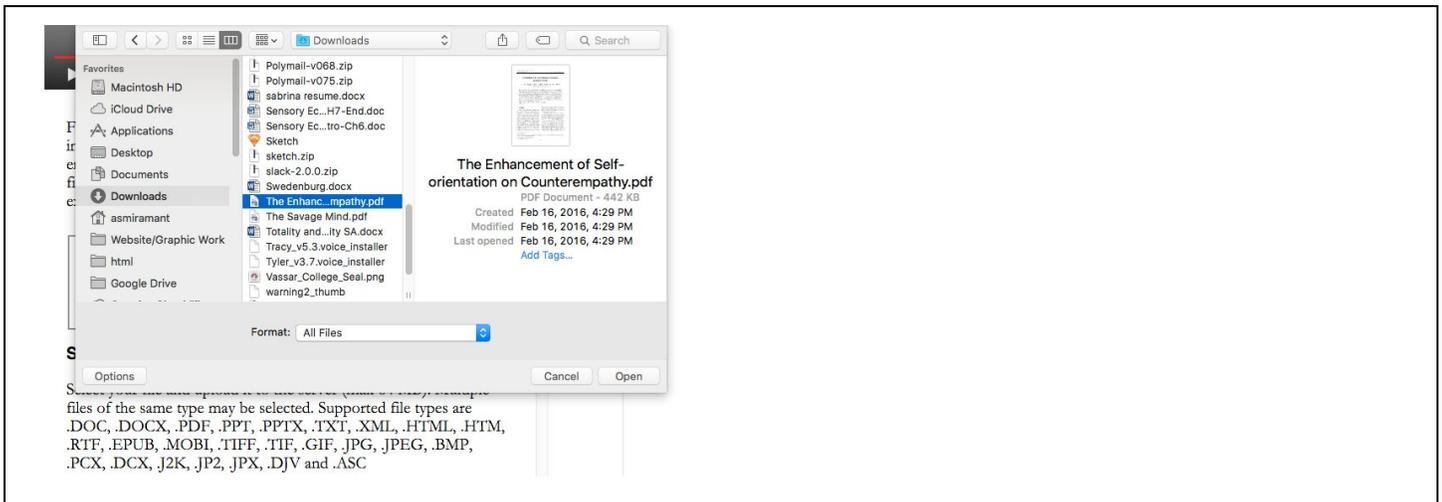
4. Upload your document.

Step 1 - Upload your document

Select your file and upload it to the server (max 64 MB). Multiple files of the same type may be selected. Supported file types are .DOC, .DOCX, .PDF, .PPT, .PPTX, .TXT, .XML, .HTML, .HTM, .RTF, .EPUB, .MOBI, .TIFF, .TIF, .GIF, .JPG, .JPEG, .BMP, .PCX, .DCX, .J2K, .JP2, .JPX, .DJV and .ASC

File name: No file chosen

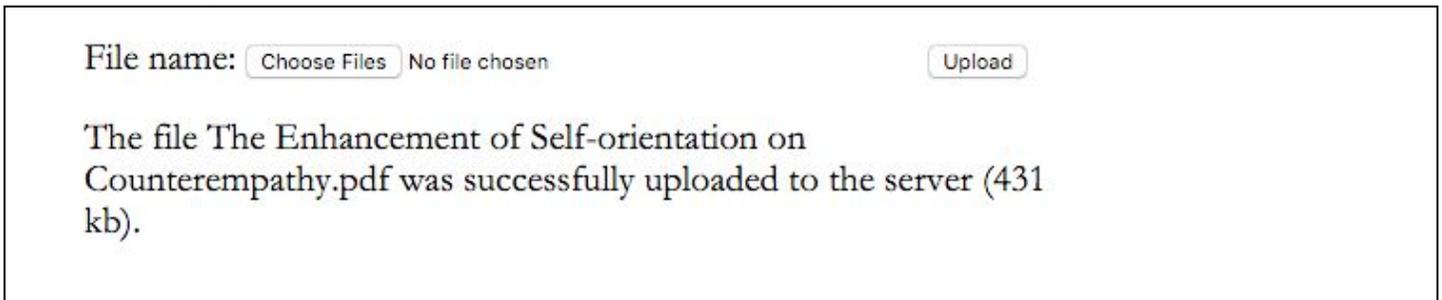
Select 'Choose Files' and find the file on your hard drive.



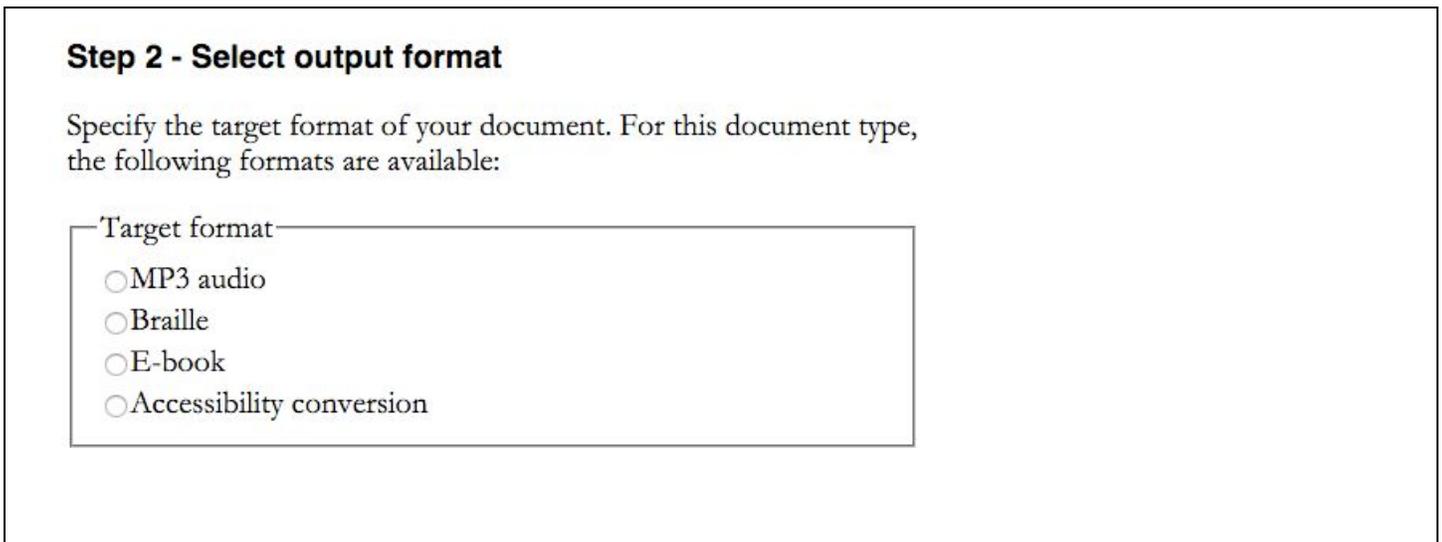
Once you've selected the file, select 'upload':



The upload process will take a moment or two, depending on the size of your file. You'll know you're reading for the next step when you see this confirmation text:



5. Select your file conversion preference:



Here's some info about each output format:

MP3: With MP3 you're going to be asked to choose the language in which your file is written as well as the speed with which you would like to have it read.

Step 3 - Specify audio options

Specify the natural language of your document and how fast you want the speech.

Options

Language:

Speed:

Why this is a great option: Totally hassle free, once you make this you can just add it to any playlist/app/whathaveyou that can play mp3's. Use this option for listening on a commute/bus/train.

When you wouldn't want to use this option: Once you've made the mp3, you can't change it. This means, you can speed up or slow down the speed. If there are mistakes in the text (from poor quality readings) it cannot be edited.

Braille: If you need Braille services, please contact AEO.

EBook: The e-book option creates a .epub file that can be read on your phone, tablet, computer and many e-readers. This file can be read on iOS/OSX's iBook.

Step 3 - Specify e-book options

Specify the target format of your e-book.

Options

Format:

Base font size:

Why this is a great option: Generally nicer interface. Simulates reading a book.

Why you wouldn't want to use this option: Once this is made, it cannot be edited. This is fine if your original file is clean. However, if your original file has any issues, we recommend using the Accessibility Conversion option.

Accessibility Conversion: This is our most commonly used converted file format category. The options offered in this dropdown box will depend on the original file format. Here's what you get when you upload a PDF:

Step 3 - Specify accessibility conversion options

Specify the target format of the conversion.

Options

Target format ✓

- doc - Microsoft Word
- docx - Microsoft Word
- rtf - Rich Text Format
- pdf - Tagged PDF
- xls - Microsoft Excel
- xlsx - Microsoft Excel
- csv - Comma separated
- txt - Windows Text
- htm - HTML

Step 4 - Enter email address and submit request

Email address:

At this point, you'll want to select 'docx - Microsoft Word' (compatible with Pages and Microsoft Office for Mac) or 'pdf - Tagged PDF'.

DOCX: This has the most flexibility. Use this option when you know you're going to have to do some clean up (if your original file is messy). This will allow to clean up the text while still having it read to you. Also, SensusAccess will automatically put the page numbers into a header and footer, this means your sentences won't be interrupted.

PDF: This is an accessible PDF, that means that text-to-speech software can read it. Use this when you have a clean original copy because it can't be edited once it's created. *TIP: If you like to highlight while you read, use this type of PDF in Preview or Acrobat to take highlightable notes while you read!*

RTF will give an unformatted text document that will default open to textpad.

6. Enter your @vassar.edu email and submit. Files will take between 5-15 minutes, depending on their size, and will be sent to you via email when complete.

Step 4 - Enter email address and submit request

Email address:
