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Transcription Andrew Daley, Assistive Technologist

Introduction: A video in which Andrew Daley, Assistive Technology Coordinator with UNB Fredericton Libraries, talks about his experiences in accommodating students with vision loss.

How did you accommodate a student with a disability in your class?

Not a lot of what I do happens in the classroom. Most of what happens with respect to my work happens in the background, in the wings if you will, and then the students benefit from that post-class, so there would be a lot of activities with respect to reading print material from the library or from classroom material, so there's a lot of stuff going on in the background, not so much in the foreground. I accommodate students with disabilities in the classroom with a wide variety of accommodations, such as text-to-speech reading software for reading class notes and library material that's put on reserve and so on. We also use screen magnification software in the classroom to magnify the entire desktop while a student is typing their notes. A couple of other really cool, new things are Livescribe smart pens with the ability to connect directly to the iPad—lots of new cool, new stuff coming out.

How was the experience from your perspective?

My experience with students on campus with disabilities is that there are a lot more of them now than there ever were. They're certainly more advocates for themselves than they ever were, and they're certainly more active in participating in the classroom every day. So I'm seeing a growing number of students taking part and utilizing technology to do that.

What would you say to a colleague who will have a student with a disability in his or her class?

I would say that seeking out help and encouraging students to become self-advocates is really important and directing them to the right place. Two places—one would be me if it relates to technology and two, the Student Accessibility Centre for everything else related to tutoring and mentoring and so on.