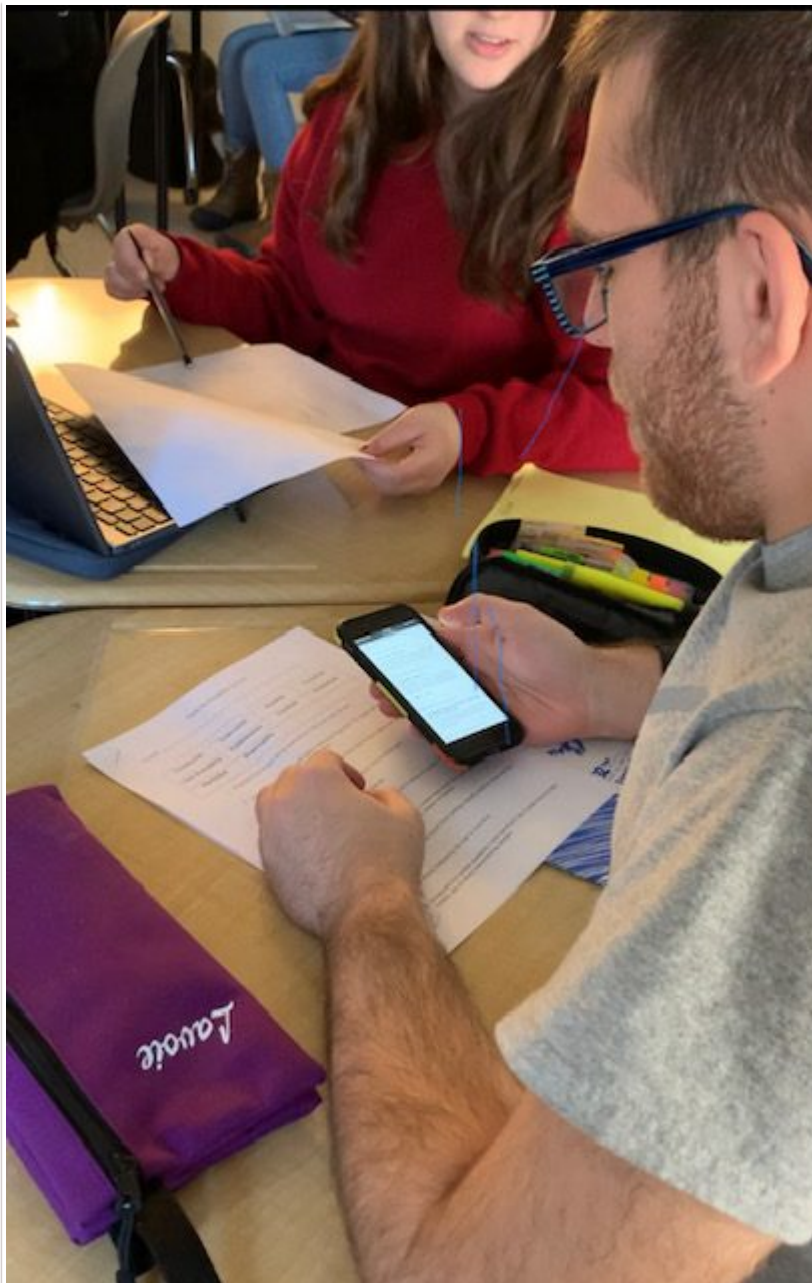


Most courses in the Summer and Fall Semesters will take place online. Resources are available on our **Virtual Campus**. Access to the Dawson College building remains restricted. Visit our **COVID-19 update page**.



Wileman, S., & Havel, A. (2020, May 28). Adaptech "Zooming" ahead in research. D News. Retrieved from <https://www.dawsoncollege.qc.ca/news/dnews/adaptech-zooming-ahead-in-research/>



ADAPTECH "ZOOMING" AHEAD IN RESEARCH

Share

The Adaptech Research Network <http://www.adaptech.org> is housed at Dawson College. We have been active in conducting research on students with disabilities since 1996. With a team of international collaborators, we have received both federally and provincially funded grants and published our findings in peer reviewed journals.

Friday Adaptech meetings continue

However, no one has been in the Adaptech office on the 5th floor E wing since Thursday, March 12. Nonetheless, every Friday morning Catherine Fichten, our co-director, chairs our regular team meeting via Zoom.

Not only do we benefit from video recording our meetings and sharing

documents for discussion (we are techies after all), we can send private messages via the chat mechanism to individual team members without being disruptive. But don't worry; the lockdown hasn't slowed down the progress of our research activities.

Teaching activities using smartphones

By the end of June, we'll have wrapped up an Entente Canada-Québec (ECQ) funded project whose goal was to create and disseminate teaching activities using smartphones.

We used information gathered from focus groups, including students, teachers, and professionals, to develop 10 academic activities using smartphones that teachers can use.

Three one-page information sheets have already been posted on our website

<https://adaptech.org/adaptechs-recent-publications/> and short videos and written lesson plans in collaboration with SALTISE are in the works. Some teachers have even begun to incorporate smartphones into their online teaching.

New project launched May 1

On May 1, we launched a new project, funded by The Montréal Centre for Higher Learning in Artificial Intelligence (PIA), entitled "How Can Virtual Assistants and AI-Based Smartphone Apps Help Post-Secondary Students with Disabilities Succeed in their Studies?"

The goal is to explore the features and functions of AI-based virtual assistants and smartphone apps that can facilitate post-secondary students with disabilities to succeed in their academic work.

53 stakeholders, five countries

To begin the process, we brought together 10 Adaptech team members and 53 stakeholders from five countries, and across various sectors, to meet as an Advisory Board. An early by-product of the endeavor was the compilation of 51 categorized and annotated URLs for AI-based applications and devices mentioned by participants, that will soon be posted on the Adaptech website.

Based on the information gathered, and from our review of literature, our next step is to create an accessible questionnaire about the use of AI-based virtual assistants and smartphone apps aimed at tapping the invaluable student perspective.

Zoom experience

You may be wondering how we managed to get so many participants to our Advisory Board meeting during the COVID pandemic. The obvious answer is Zoom. To contend with the range of time zones from Seattle to Tel Aviv, the Advisory Board was scheduled at two different times, and individuals selected the time most convenient for them.

Contrary to early Zoom experiences, there were no technical snags and we were left with video recordings and copies of the public chats from both meetings.

Those of us who had the privilege of participating two years ago in an international project that explored the role that information and communication technologies play as facilitators, or barriers for students with disabilities enjoyed a bonus. We were able to "see" many of our international colleagues, whom we had previously met face-to-face as collaborators, but who are now continuing the relationship as virtual contributors to our AI project.

Retired psychologists pursuing inclusion work

On a final note, the two of us who are sharing this Adaptech update would like to introduce ourselves. We, Susie Wileman and Alice Havel, are not only research associates with Adaptech but are retired psychologists from the Student AccessAbility Centre at Dawson College.

Our participation as volunteers with Adaptech allows us to continue pursuing our passion, the inclusion of students with disabilities in higher education, while at the same time acquiring new skills in the field of research. There is most definitely life after retirement, and sometimes that's back at Dawson!

-Submitted by Susie Wileman and Alice Havel

Last Modified: May 26, 2020