# TRANSCRIPT: Adding a "Help with Life Stuff" Button to Your Course Site

Hello. I'm Chris Weberg, an English instructor here at Durham Tech. Part of creating inclusive environments is making our courses responsive to students' experiences and situations, reflecting our awareness that a class needs to respond to all students' life situations, experiences, and traumas to truly work for them.

As we work to ensure that our courses are inclusive and equitable learning environments, many of us in the Creative and Liberal Arts Department and beyond have been compiling resources for students in various ways.

The Help with Life Stuff button in Sakai is one way of compiling and presenting these resources -- that developed using in-house Durham Tech resources. Building on the work of our Student Support team and The Center for Academic Excellence, I tried to compile quick descriptions of College resources and links and embed them in my course Sakai site.

My thinking was that I did not want to make a student in need of support wait for an email response from me and that they might not immediately think of looking through the syllabus or going to other college sites to find specific resources.

For these reasons, I wanted to provide a quick, visible, and immediately accessible resource that was native to each course's Sakai site, reaching students as they participate in remote learning. My hope was to do more to meet students when and where they are, putting the resources at their fingertips within the course Sakai site. This was the genesis of the Help with Life Stuff button.

As you can see in my practice Sakai site, the Help with Life Stuff button works with Sakai's built-in navigation tools, and it offers students a number of pathways to health, mental health, food access, and financial emergency resources -- among others.

Additionally, this Sakai button, and its counterparts in other CALA classes, help to build in a recognition that each student needs the supports that can help them succeed and that meeting their needs and providing supports are part of what we do in any class.

The button helps make this visible and present in the online course, part of its infrastructure.

As our task force subgroup discussed ways of sharing this concept and content with colleagues, one of our amazing adjuncts, Shaquana Suggs suggested moving to an infographics format.

She then adapted the material to create a more robust graphical format. Shaquana also added community resources to the list of supports, reflecting the inclusion and equity work that she has also been engaging in. As a synthesis of Shaquana's wonderful work, and the original Help with Life Stuff material, the button has become a more comprehensive resource with a more student-friendly format, using both graphical and text-based information to quickly provide fast access to these supports.

Shaquana has also created an MS Word template for this graphical version that can be edited with embedded links and headings. Another option might be to create subpages in Sakai, as shown here.

In this model, an instructor might enable drop-down menu navigation in Sakai Lessons to create a quick list of supports. In these ways, we see the Help with Life Stuff button as an additional support -- one that is there 24/7 for students -- supplementing inclusive learning practices and supportive, welcoming environments.

To add a Help with Life Stuff Button to your Course site in Sakai, click on Site Info and select the Manage Tools tab. Scroll down, and check the empty box next to Lessons.

Then at the bottom of the page, click Continue. On the next screen, change the Title of the button from Lessons to Help with Life Stuff. Click Continue. Then click Finish.

The button will be added to the bottom of your course menu.

If you’d like to move it up, click Tool Order and then click, hold, and drag the button to its new location. We’ll Save, and the Help with Life Stuff button appears in its new location on the menu. We’ll go ahead and click it.

To add resources to this page, review Option A and Option B below this video to decide which option you’d like to pursue:

Option A creates a page of helpful resources in Sakai and Option B provides students with a link to a document that contains the helpful resources.

For Option A: we’ll click the Option A link to download the file and open it. There are two locations in the document where you will add your contact information. These two places have been highlighted. The first place is at the end of the second paragraph near the top of the document, and the second is in the Contacting the Instructor section. I’ll open the Navigation Pane to quickly jump to that subheading.

As you make these edits, you can remove the highlighting, if you’d like.

When you’re done, press CTRL+A on your keyboard to select all of the content in the document, and then we’ll right-click and select Copy. On the Help with Life Stuff page, click Add Content, and select Add Text.

We’ll Paste the content we copied, and then click the Save button. The resources appear.

For Option B: we’ll click the Option B link below this video to download the file, and then open it to make any edits you’d like. I’ll keep the default content. Make sure to save the file to your computer.

On the Help with Life Stuff page, click Add Content, and then select Add Content Links.

We’ll name this link Help with Life Stuff Resources, and then select Choose Files to locate the saved file on your computer. Then click Save. A link to the Help with Life Stuff Resources is created.

If you need any assistance with Sakai, please contact sakaihelp@durhamtech.edu.