

Background and Introduction

The HelpMe system is an innovative student support platform designed to enhance academic assistance by streamlining interactions between students and the teaching team. HelpMe was produced at UBC Okanagan and is accessed through Single Sign On (SSO) through Campus Wide Login (CWL) making this tool FIPPA compliant.

It serves as a central hub for managing office hours, lab sessions, and real-time question answering that leverages AI. The AI chatbot runs on an instructor selected Large Language Model (LLM) to drive the AI that is loaded on their Canadian server which addresses privacy concerns.

Implementation and Impact

The HelpMe system was implemented in a study involving 107 students, with 67 consenting to have their data analyzed. Instructors and TAs were trained to keep help sessions concise (5-8 minutes) to optimize efficiency. The platform collected interaction data, helping researchers understand student behavior and perceptions regarding the value of help sessions and their academic performance.

The system aims to make seeking assistance more efficient and accessible for students while providing instructors with valuable insights into student engagement and learning patterns.

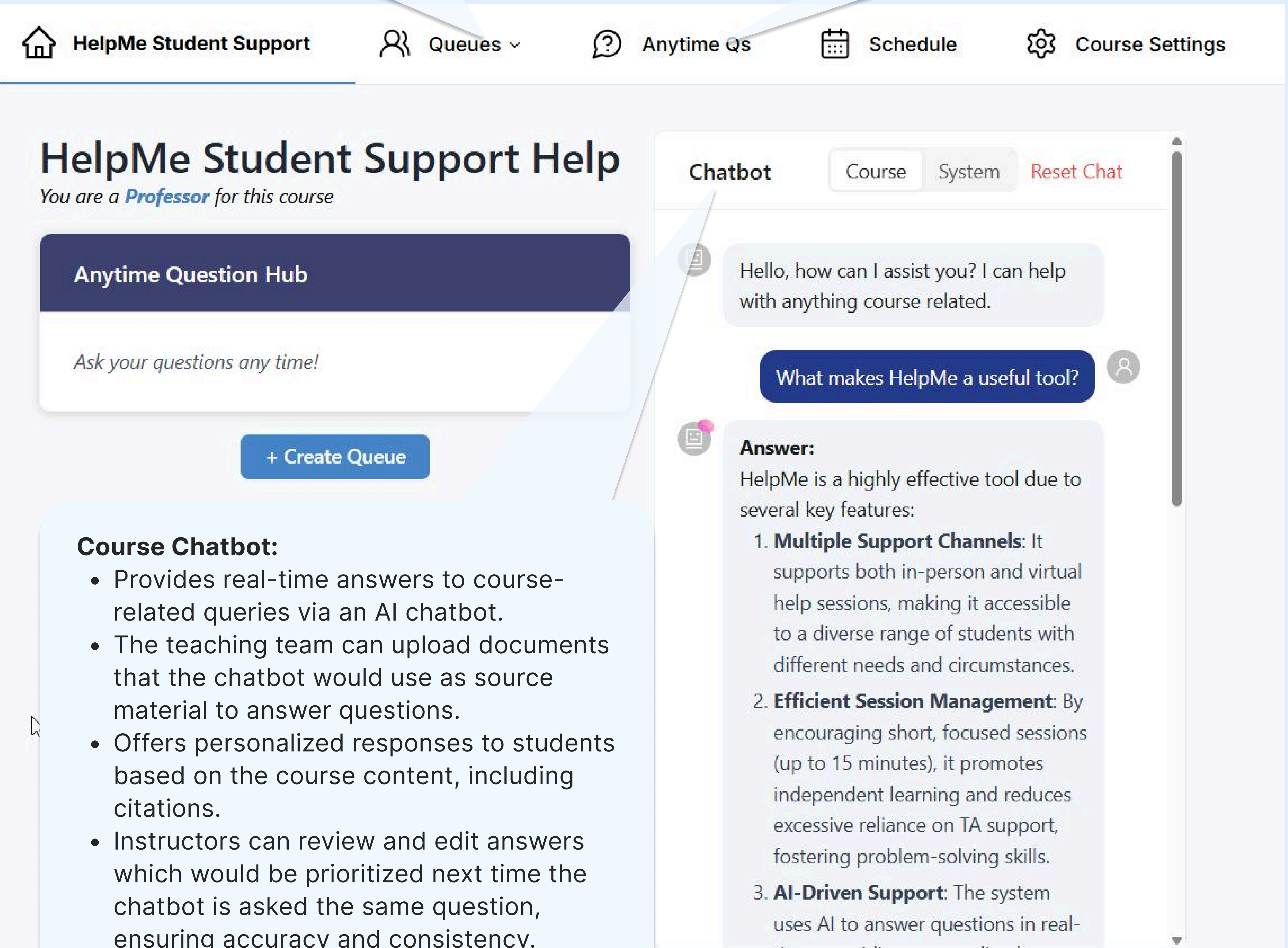
Key HelpMe System Features

Queues for Office Hours and Labs:

- Manages both in-person and virtual office hours and labs.
- Supports "task questions" where students can have specific lab tasks checked off by staff, ideal for multi-part assignments needing verification.

Anytime Questions:

- Allows students to submit questions outside scheduled office hours, initially answered by AI.
- These answers are later reviewed and evaluated for quality.



Course Chatbot:

- Provides real-time answers to course-related queries via an AI chatbot.
- The teaching team can upload documents that the chatbot would use as source material to answer questions.
- Offers personalized responses to students based on the course content, including citations.
- Instructors can review and edit answers which would be prioritized next time the chatbot is asked the same question, ensuring accuracy and consistency.

Benefits

- 1. Enhanced Efficiency:** The system streamlines interactions between students, instructors, and TAs, reducing wait times and making assistance more accessible.
- 2. Flexibility:** Supports both in-person and virtual sessions (through Zoom), improving efficiency over email.
- 3. Personalized Learning:** AI chatbots provide tailored responses with citations, offering accurate information quickly and supporting independent learning.
- 4. Convenience:** Students can seek help outside office hours with Anytime Questions. Initially answered by the AI chatbot, the teaching team can later review responses and bring up frequently asked questions during class if needed.
- 5. Humanization:** The teaching team can overwrite flawed AI responses, in the future the AI chatbot will defer to the teaching team response.
- 6. Customization:** The teaching team can edit the general prompt for the course, setting guardrails on how the AI interacts with student.

Challenges

- 1. Over-reliance on AI:** Excessive use of AI might hinder critical thinking skills development among students.
- 2. Power User Dominance:** Some students may monopolize the system despite session limits, affecting others' access.
- 3. Learning Curve:** Familiarizing oneself to using the tool requires time and effort. Tailoring it to your course may take a few iterations.

We acknowledge that the land on which we gather, teach and learn is the traditional, ancestral, and unceded territory of the xʷməθkʷəy̓əm (Musqueam) People.



Using HelpMe

TIPS & TRICKS

What is HelpMe?

HelpMe is a student support system designed by UBC-O to assist instructors with answering student questions. It features an AI-powered chatbot that pulls information from foundational documents to generate answers customized to your course.

CHUNK

Documents are automatically split into “chunks” that the AI pulls from, but this automatic splitting can cut sentences in half or separate related concepts. Ensure the AI pulls all relevant information by pre-chunking your documents and putting each paragraph/concept on a separate page so the information is split appropriately. You can customize the maximum number of chunks the AI will consider when generating an answer in the **Chatbot Settings**.

View Chatbot Document Chunks

These chunks are what the chatbot uses to answer questions.

Search chunk name or content...			Help ⓘ	Add New Chunk
Name	Chunk Content	Page #	Actions	
UBC LockDown Browser Student Guide _ Learning Technology Hub	learn more about available support for students with disabilities and ongoing medical conditions. Learn more Yes. If your device does not meet the minimum technical requirements, we recommend borrowing a UBC desktop o...	7	Edit	Delete
UBC LockDown Browser Student Guide _ Learning Technology Hub	Learning Technology Hub Questions? Ask us! LockDown Browser Student Guide LockDown Browser is a web browser that controls what you can do during an assessment in Canvas. When your instructor has you use LockDown...	1	Edit	Delete

CONTEXT

Als are trained on general knowledge so they can struggle with obscure or specific terminology and concepts. Providing context like the meaning of an acronym or the attribution of a work can help improve its accuracy. Context can be provided in the documents themselves or in the **Chatbot Setting's Prompt**. This general prompt is attached to every question and can be used to specify course-wide terms and how the AI should answer questions.

Set the prompt that is attached with any chatbot question. You can specify what the course is, what the goals of your course are, how you want the chatbot to answer questions, etc.

* Prompt ⓘ

You are a course help assistant. Here are some rules for question answering: 1) Try to be as concise as possible. 2) Refer to context when you see fit. 3) Try not giving the assignment question answers directly to students, instead provide hints. 4) Try not to make stuff up, if you're unsure about something, say that you are unsure. 5) Please only respond to questions that are directly related to the course material.

CORRECT

Even with all the right information, AI can still get things wrong. Review what questions have been asked and how the AI has responded in **Edit Chatbot Questions**. The AI remembers its chat history, and will provide the same responses to a previously asked question. Generated responses can be edited and marked “Verified,” ensuring the quality of the response when the question is asked in the future.

Edit Chatbot Question

* Question

How do I switch to language Japanese for a Mac?

* Answer ⓘ

To switch to Japanese on a Mac:

1. Go to ****System Preferences**** > ****Keyboard**** > ****Keyboards****.
2. Click ****Add New Keyboard...****, then select Japanese from the list.
3. You can now switch languages using the Globe Icon on your keyboard or system shortcuts (e.g., Command+Space).

Mark Q&A as Verified by Human ⓘ: ☐

