Be Widget-Wise: Fast-Track Your Students to Academic Information

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Why Create Custom Widgets?

Benefits for Students and Faculty

- Gives faculty more control over where students look for information
- Provides convenient, point of need access to research databases
- Incorporates learning tools at the point of instruction (videos, research guides, citation guides, etc.)
- Pulls course content and resources together in one place
- Makes the D2L Brightspace course pages more interactive
• **SubjectsPlus**
  - Used for general research guides and course-specific guides
  - Open-source library guide software
  - Widget/box-based
  - Easily customizable by librarians

• **D2L Brightspace integration**
  - Copy embed code for a specific box on a guide
  - Paste code into D2L Brightspace New Widget editor
  - Add the widget to your course page
SubjectsPlus and D2L Brightspace Resource Page

https://stcloud.lib.mnscu.edu/subjects/guide.php?subject=widgets
Sample Widgets in D2L Brightspace
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Creating Widgets in D2L: Three Parts

1. Determine what resources you want to display in your widget and find the embed code for those resources.
2. Go to D2L Brightspace and create a new Homepage that allows you to add customized widgets.
3. Create the customized widget using the embed code you found and add the widget to your D2L Brightspace Homepage.

Know your proxy URL: https://libproxy.stcloudstate.edu/login?URL=
Part 1: Explore ideas for widget content

1. Library research database search boxes
2. Tutorials
3. Films on Demand or other streaming media
4. Links to library course or research guides
5. YouTube videos, TedTalks, other online media

Create individual widgets or combine a set of resources in a single widget.
Part 1:

2. Go to vendor or publisher websites to find embed code

https://stcloud.lib.mnscu.edu/subjects/guide.php?subject=vendorcode
Part 2:
3. Go to your course in D2L Brightspace and select Course Admin
4. Click on the Homepages link
5. Click on the Create Homepage button to create a new default homepage.
6. Enter a name for your page, e.g. Fall 2016, a description (not required), and select the layout you want

7. Save and Close
8. When you’re ready, you’ll want to make this new homepage your Active Homepage using the menu option shown here.
9. Click on your new default homepage and add your system widgets again.
Part 3:
10. Go to the Widgets section and click on Create Widget
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12. Click on the Content window and select the \(<\/>\) option for the HTML Source Editor option OR use the “Insert Stuff” icon
13. Paste the embed code from the Widget Generator into the box OR use the options on the “Insert Stuff” menu

14. Click Save

15. Click Save and Close
16. Go back to Homepages and select your new homepage

17. Click on Add Widgets and select your new widget
Basic tweaking

- Homepage layout makes a difference
  - Right size videos
  - Single vs. multiple resource widgets
  - Use basic HTML tags to make adjustments

- Customize
  - Be creative; customize your widget style
  - Adjust size for proper fit
  - Add release conditions
Collaborate

- Faculty – Content Rich
  - Assignments, papers, projects
  - Partner for student success

- Librarians – Info Experts
  - Assist with resource selection
  - Generate appropriate subject/course guides
  - You describe it, we’ll find it!

- Academic Technology Team Assistance – IT Support
  - Deeper understanding of D2L Brightspace
  - Widget-wise
Contact us!

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https://stcloud.lib.mnscu.edu/subjects/guide.php?subject=widgets

Vendor Search Box Builder Instructions
http://stcloud.lib.mnscu.edu/subjects/guide.php?subject=vendorcode