



CUSTOMIZING YOUR COURSE LOOK AND FEEL

A QUICK START GUIDE

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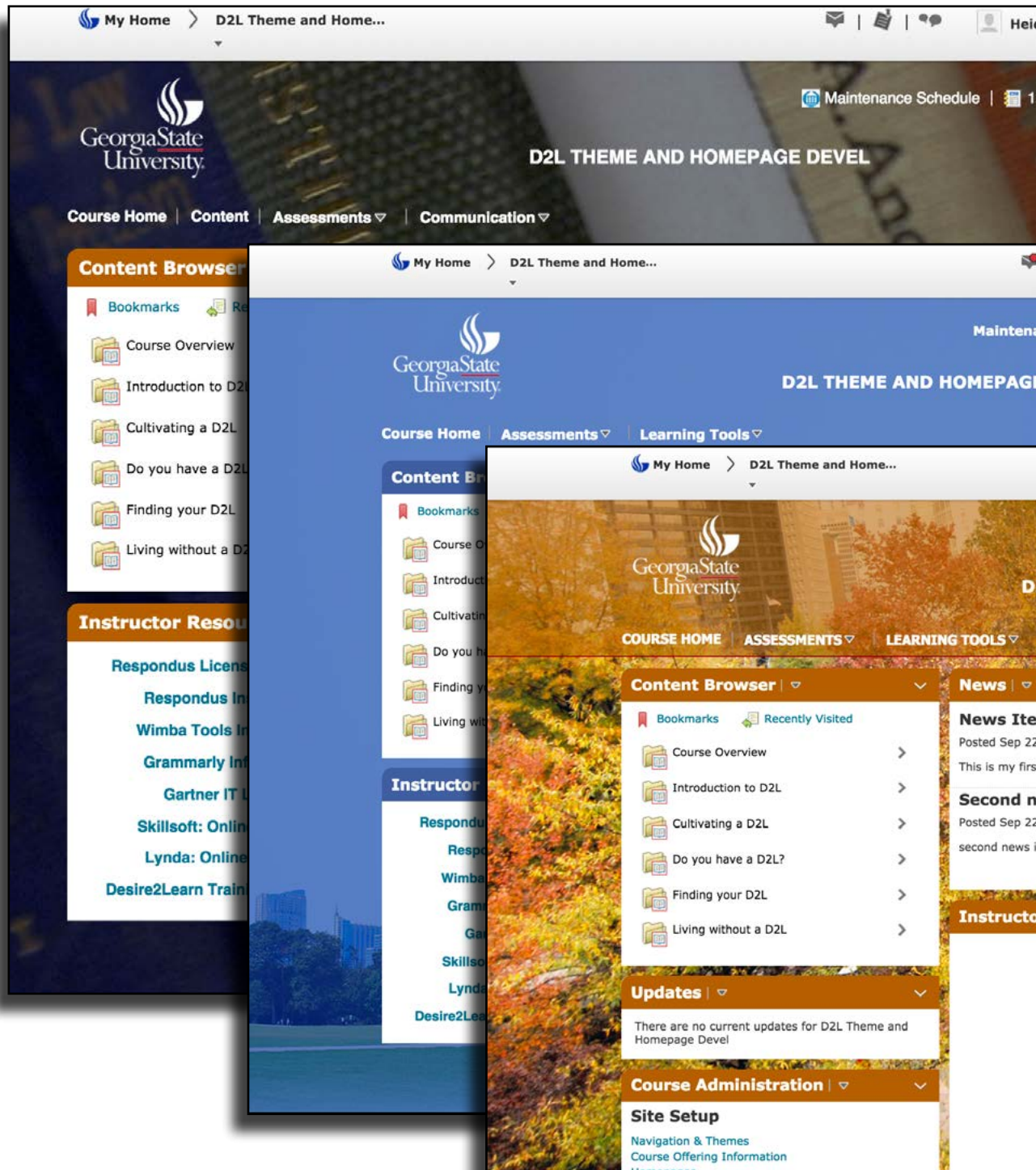
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LOOK AND FEEL OVERVIEW



OVERVIEW: Four Brightspace tools allow you to customize the look and feel of your course to meet your needs.

A screenshot of a Brightspace course homepage. The page has a dark blue background with a grid pattern. At the top left is the Georgia State University logo. The main header area contains the course title 'D2L THEME AND HOMEPAGE DEVEL' and navigation links for 'Course Home', 'Content', 'Assessments', and 'Communication'. There is also an 'Edit Course' button. The page is divided into three main columns. The left column has a 'Content Browser' section with a list of course items like 'Course Overview' and 'Introduction to D2L', and an 'Instructor Resources' section with links to 'Respondus License Information', 'Wimba Tools Information', etc. The middle column has a 'News' section with two news items. The right column has a 'Collaboration' section with four icons representing different tools: 'Q&A - Piazza', 'Online Classroom - Bb Collaborate', 'Discussion Boards', and 'Groups'. The top navigation bar includes 'My Home', 'D2L Theme and Home...', and user information for 'Heidi Beezley'. There are also utility links for 'Maintenance Schedule', '12/8/2014', and 'Email'.

WIDGETS



OVERVIEW: There are a number of existing system widgets that can be added to your course homepage. You can also create custom widgets so that resources most relevant to your course can immediately be available when students enter.

WIDGETS

The widget is a block of content that displays on your course homepage. Widgets can be used to create links to important external resources, embed media or news feeds, or add other types of content that you want available immediately when students enter your course.



SUGGESTED WORKFLOW FOR USING CUSTOM WIDGETS

The trickiest aspect of working with widgets is remembering to add them to the active homepage. We recommend the following workflow.



ACCESSING WIDGETS

Do one of the following:

- Click on **Widgets** in the **Course Administration** widget under **Site Setup**.
- Click **Edit Course** in the right-hand side of the course navigation. Then click on **Widgets**.

WIDGETS



USING AN EXISTING WIDGET

To use an existing widget in your course, you must add the widget to a custom homepage. See the section on [Homepages](#) for information on adding an existing widget to your course homepage.

CREATING A NEW WIDGET


1. At the top of the list of available widgets, click the blue **Create Widgets** button.



2. Enter a name for your widget.
3. (Optional) Click on the **Release Conditions** tab and create conditions that determine who will see your widget.
4. Click on the **Content** tab and enter the contents of your widget.

Note: Your widget will only appear on your course homepage once the widget has been added to the active homepage. See the section on homepages for help.

MODIFYING A WIDGET STYLE

1. In the list of custom widgets, click on the **Customize**  icon.
2. Modify the widget settings, such as titlebar color and shape.
3. Click **Save**.

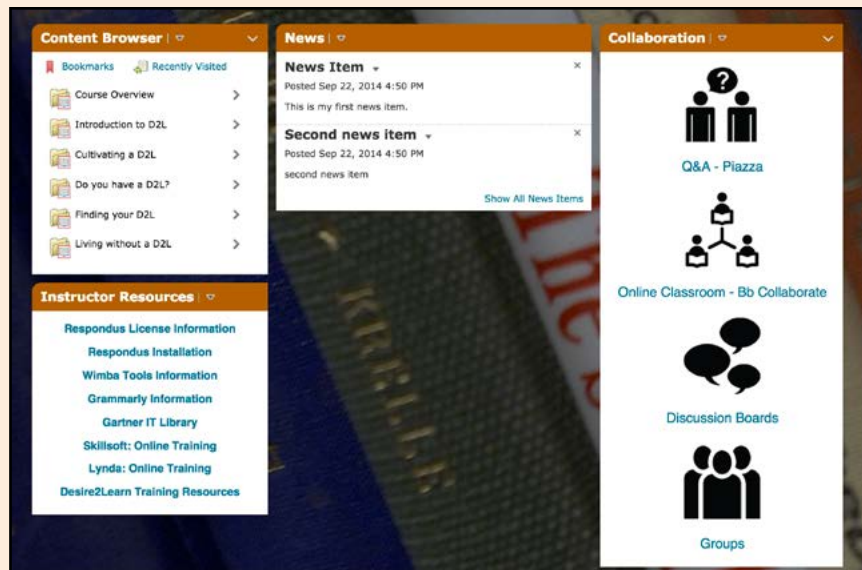
HOMEPAGES



OVERVIEW: Homepages organize all of the information on your course home that is below the navigation. The most typical type of homepage is widget-based, but you can also display a tool like the Content tool or display an external URL. This tutorial offers support on the most common homepage type, the widget-based homepage.

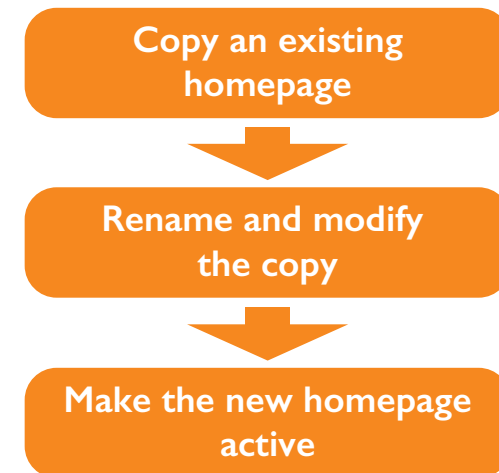
HOMEPAGE

The homepage determines the content displayed beneath the navbar in your course. In most cases, it will be used to organize widgets. It can be one, two, or three columns.



SUGGESTED WORKFLOW FOR USING CUSTOM HOMEPAGES

Because working with homepages can be tricky, we recommend the following workflow. This will allow you to modify a copy of one of the default homepages.



ACCESSING HOMEPAGES

Do one of the following:

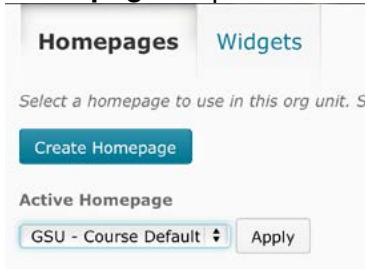
- Click on **Homepages** in the **Course Administration** widget under **Site Setup**.
- Click **Edit Course** in the right-hand side of the course navigation. Then click on **Homepages**.

HOMEPAGES



USING AN EXISTING HOMEPAGE

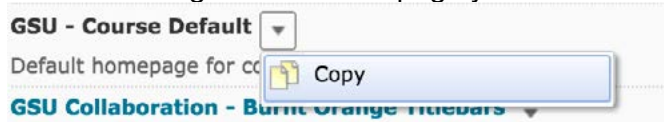
1. At the top of the list of existing homepages, locate the **Active Homepage** dropdown menu.



2. Select the homepage you would like to use from the dropdown menu.
3. Click **Apply**.

COPYING A HOMEPAGE

1. In the list of existing homepages, click on the triangle dropdown menu to the right of the homepage you would like to copy.



2. Select **Copy**.
3. This will create a copy of the homepage that you can edit.

MODIFYING A COPIED HOMEPAGE

Note: *If you make a mistake while modifying a copied homepage, remember you can make a new copy of the homepage.*

1. Locate the copied homepage in the list of available homepages (it should have “-copy” at the end of the name).
2. Click on the name of the homepage.
3. Enter a name for the homepage.
4. In the **Layout** section, select a panel layout and click Update.
5. **To add a widget to a panel**, click the Add Widgets button in the lower right of the panel.
6. **To delete a widget from a panel**, hover over the widget and click the ‘X’.
7. **To move a widget to another panel**, drag and drop the widget in the new location.

SETTING A HOMEPAGE AS ACTIVE

1. Locate the **Active Navbar** heading above the list of navbars available in your course.
2. Select the navbar from the **Active Navbar** dropdown menu.
3. Click **Apply**.

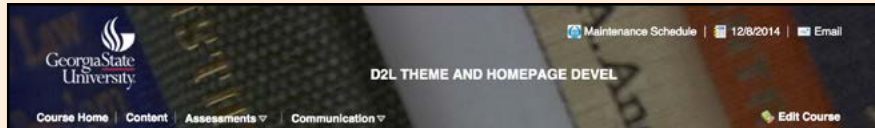
NAVIGATION



OVERVIEW: Default Navbars cannot be modified. However, you can modify copies. When customizing the navigation or theme of your course for the first time, we suggest that you copy an existing Navbar or Theme. Then modify the copy of the Navbar or Theme to suit your needs.

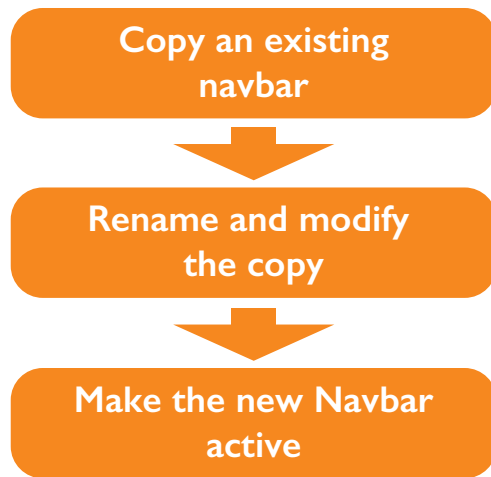
NAVIGATION

The navigation is the set of links that displays at the top of your course. We strongly recommend copying and modifying an existing navigation. It is easy to forget one of the important links like **Course Home** and **Edit Course** when building from scratch.



SUGGESTED WORKFLOW FOR USING CUSTOM NAVIGATION

Because it is easy to forget important links when creating a navigation, we recommend the following workflow. This will allow you to modify one of the default navbars.



ACCESSING NAVIGATION

Do one of the following:

- Click on **Navigation & Themes** in the **Course Administration** widget under **Site Setup**.
- Click **Edit Course** in the right-hand side of the course navigation. Then click on **Navigation & Themes**.

USING AN EXISTING NAVBAR

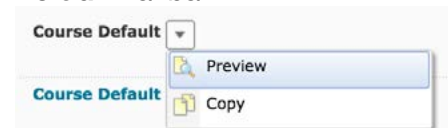
1. Make sure that you are in the **Navbar** section in **Navigation & Themes**.
2. At the top of the list of existing navbars, locate the **Active Navbar** dropdown menu.



3. Select the Navbar you would like to use from the dropdown menu.
4. Click **Apply**.

COPYING THE COURSE DEFAULT NAVBAR

1. Make sure that you are in the **Navbar** section in **Navigation & Themes**.
2. Click on the triangle dropdown menu to the right of the **Course Default** navbar.



NAVIGATION



3. Select **Copy**.
4. This will create a new navbar called **Course Default – Copy** that you can now modify.

MODIFYING THE COPIED NAVBAR

Note: *If you make a mistake while modifying a copied navigation, remember you can make a new copy of the default navigation.*

1. Locate the **Course Default – Copy** navbar in the list of navbars.
2. Click on the linked words **Course Default – Copy** to begin editing the navbar.
3. Edit the name of the navbar.
4. (Optional) Click **Change Theme** to alter the theme.
5. The default navigation has four zones where you can add or remove links. In most cases we recommend that you **ONLY** make changes to the bottom-left navigation zone.
6. The bottom-left navigation zone has one individual link and four link groups. (See chart)

<u>LINK</u>	<u>TYPE</u>	<u>DESCRIPTION</u>
Course Home	Individual Link	Returns students to the course homepage. Please do not remove this link.
Assessments	Link Group	A group of links to assessment tools including Dropbox, Grades, Quizzes, Rubrics, Self Assessments, and Surveys.
Communication	Link Group	A group of links to communication tools including Chat, Classlist, Discussions, Email, Groups, and News
Resources	Link Group	A group of links to resources including Attendance, Calendar, Content, Checklist, FAQ, Glossary and Links

<u>LINK</u>	<u>TYPE</u>	<u>DESCRIPTION</u>
Learning Tools	Link Group	A group of links to learning tools including Online Rooms, Wimba Voice Board, Wimba Voice Podcaster, Wimba Voice Presentation, ShareStream Pick and Play, and i>clicker Remote Registration

7. **To Add a Link to a Zone:**
 - Click the **Add Link** button in the bottom right of the zone.
 - Select the link to add.
 - Click the **Add** button at the bottom of the window.
8. **To Edit a Link Group in a Zone:**
 - Click on the link group.
 - Click **Edit** group properties
 - Click the **'X'** next to any link you would like to remove.
 - Click **Save**.
 - Click **Hide Properties** to return to the editing **Navbar**.
9. Click **Save and Close**.

SETTING A NAVBAR AS ACTIVE

1. Locate the **Active Navbar** heading above the list of navbars available in your course.
2. Select the navbar from the **Active Navbar** dropdown menu.
3. Click **Apply**.

THEMES



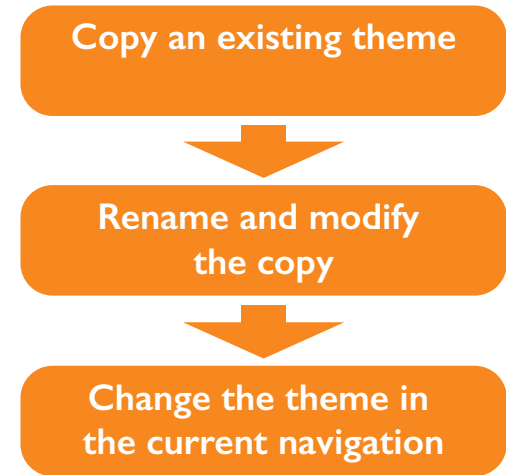
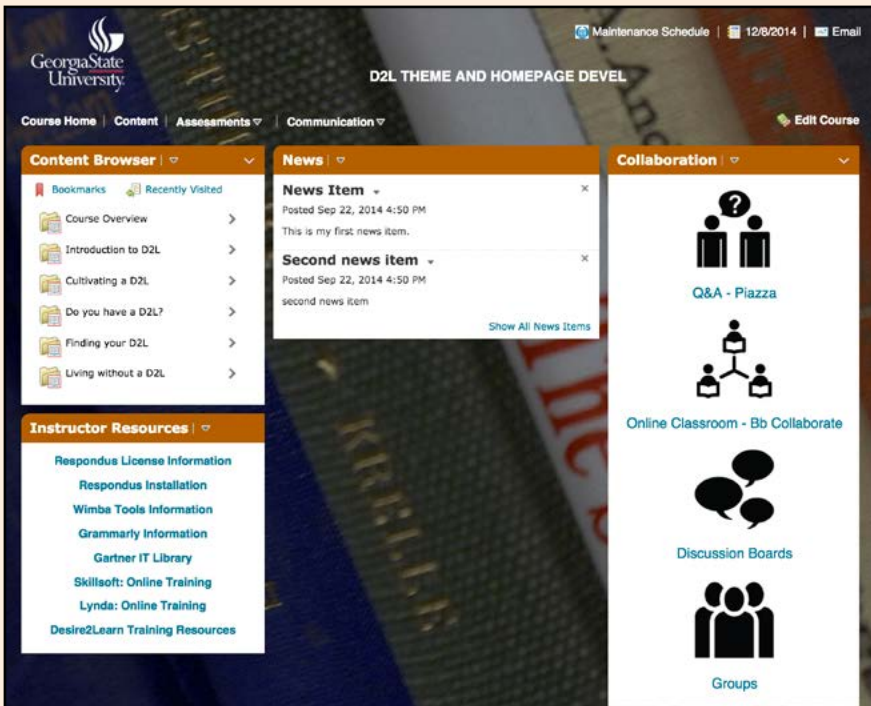
OVERVIEW: Default Navbars and Themes cannot be modified. However, you can modify copies of these items. When customizing the navigation or theme of your course for the first time, we suggest that you copy an existing Navbar or Theme. Then modify the copy of the Navbar or Theme to suit your needs.

THEME

The theme is what governs the overall look and feel of your course. It determines the fonts, the background, and other aspects of your course appearance.

SUGGESTED WORKFLOW FOR USING CUSTOM THEMES

Because themes are the most complicated tool used to customize the course look and feel, we recommend the following workflow. This will allow you to modify one of the default themes.



ACCESSING THEMES

Do one of the following:

- Click on **Navigation & Themes** in the **Course Administration** widget under **Site Setup**. Then click on the **Themes** button at the top of the page.
- Click **Edit Course**. Then click on **Navigation & Themes**. Then click on the **Themes** button at the top of the page.

THEMES

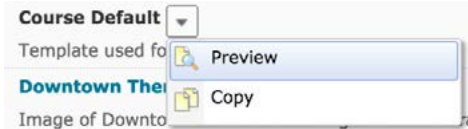


USING AN EXISTING THEME

To use an existing theme in your course, you select theme when modifying a custom navbar. See the section on [Navigation](#) for information on using an existing theme for your course.

COPYING A THEME

1. Make sure that you are in the **Themes** section in **Navigation & Themes**.
2. Click on the triangle dropdown menu to the right of a theme.



3. Select **Copy**.
4. This will create a new theme that you can now modify.

MODIFYING A COPIED THEME

1. Locate the copied theme (it should have “-copy” at the end of the name).
2. Click on the linked name of the theme to begin editing the theme.
3. Enter a name for the theme.
4. Click in a zone in either the navbar or the page section to modify its look and feel.
5. Click **Save and Close**.

ADDING A THEME TO THE CURRENT NAVIGATION

1. While viewing the list of available themes, click on the **Navigation** link to the left of the **Theme** and **Navigation** links at the top of the page.
2. Click on the name of the current active navigation. (If the current active navigation is one of the default system-level navigations, you will have to make a copy of the default navigation in order to change the theme.)
3. Click on the **Change Theme** button and select your new theme.
4. Click **Save**.