Using Dynamic Data within Plone School of Medicine Websites

A short course for DWMs

This document assumes a basic level of knowledge with Plone.
If you haven't used Plone previously, we suggest our
Introduction to Plone class as a prerequisite.

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Introduction

What is Dynamic Data?

For the purposes of our class, dynamic data refers to any information which extracted from a database and displayed as part of a School of Medicine website in Plone. The dynamic data view provides a way of querying and viewing information stored in databases in a user friendly way.

The SOM website makes four different dynamic data views available –

Physician Directory
Research Faculty Directory
Health System Enterprise Calendar
Clinical Trials

<add four small screenshots side by side showing the four types of pages>

You are probably familiar with how dynamic data is displayed, but the windows below demonstrate what you should expect to see.

Using the directions in this handout, you will be able to

- add dynamic data to a page,
- update the selections you have made
- remove dynamic data content from a page

Switching Editors

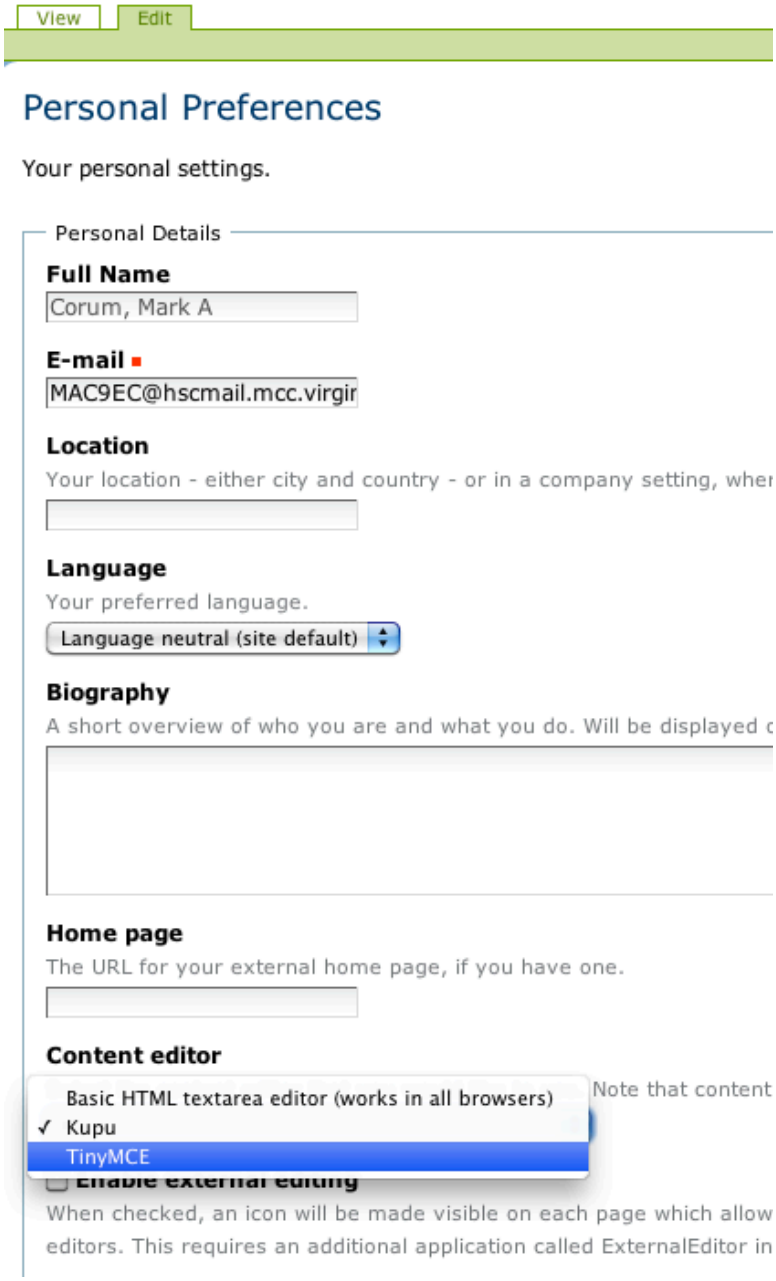
In order to include dynamic data in pages, you will first need to switch from the default Plone editor (Kupu) to the Advanced Editor (TinyMCE)

1. Login to SOM website (lower right of page in the footer).

2. Click on your name (to the left of the logout link in the footer).

3. This will open your dashboard page. Click on the "Edit" link in the upper left hand corner of the page.

4. In the middle of the page you will see a an option titled "Content Editor." Select TinyMCE from the selection menu and click on the "Save" button, is the selected editor and click the "Save" button.



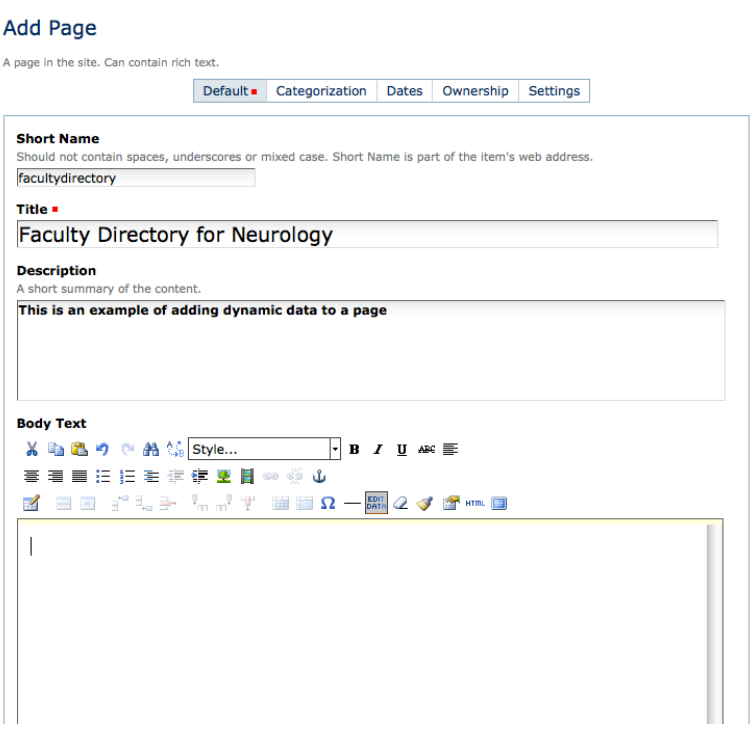
5. Exit the dashboard.

How to Include Dynamic Data in a New Page

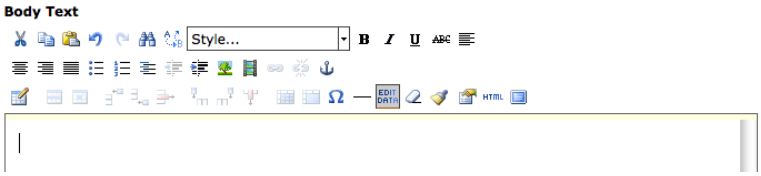
For those who previously used the Toolkit editor to add new dynamic elements to their pages, this will seem all to familiar. In this example, we will work with a Physician Directory, but the process of how to add data is the same for all dynamic data types.

Create a new page

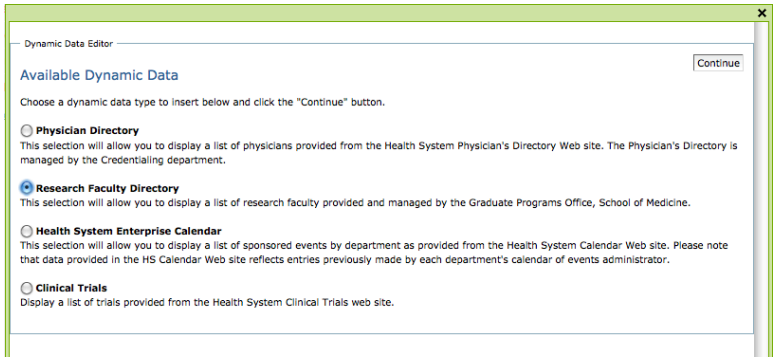
In Plone, go to the place where you will be adding the page and create a new page using the Plone actions menu.



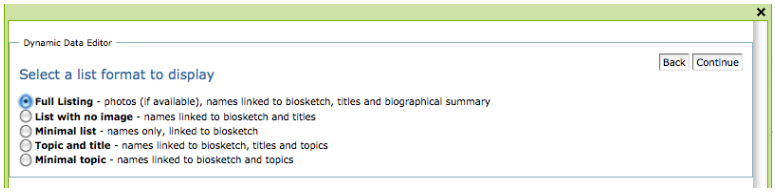
Once you have created the page, you will need to go down to the editable content block, and place your cursor into the page where you want the dynamic data element to appear – then press the dynamic data button, which has an "Edit Data" icon.



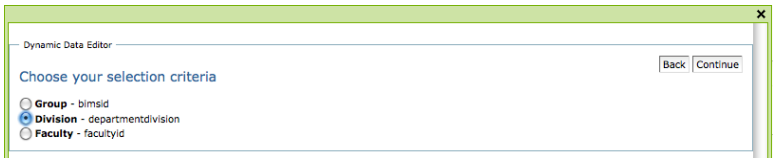
Click the icon will open up a popup window to provide you with an interface to select the dynamic data you want to display. In this case, we will choose the Physician Directory, which provides a list of physicians from the central database containing information about them.



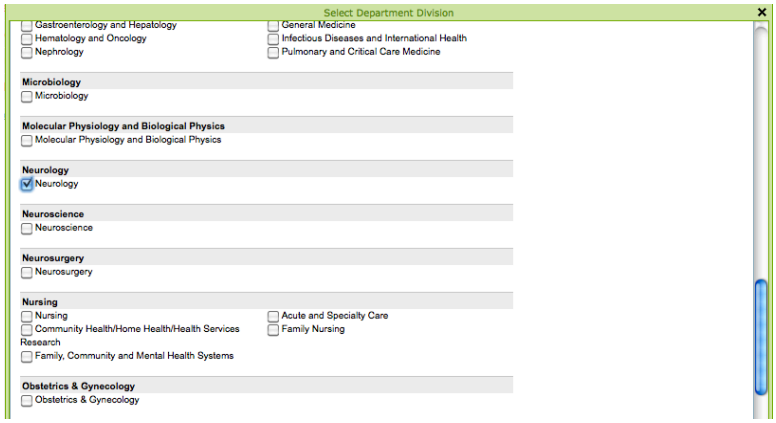
Once you select the type of listing is chosen, you will get a popup wizard to let you choose how the data will be displayed and to control which data is displayed. In this case, we will choose full listing, which provides the most information about the physician available, as well as their photograph.



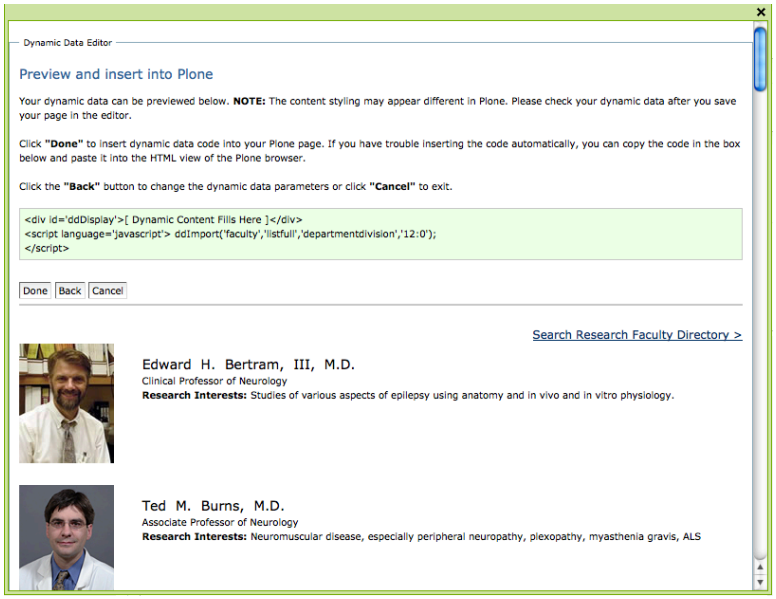
After you choose the type of listing, you will be given a list of criteria to choose from in picking the data you want to display.



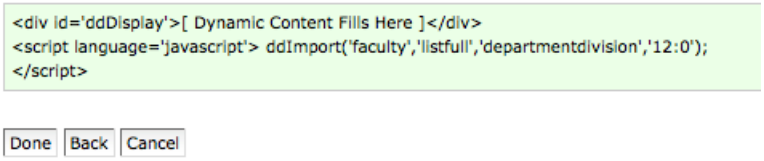
Select checkboxes to choose the information you wish to display, then click the "Submit" button in the upper right corner of the popup.



One you have submitted your selections, your popup will show you a representation of what content the finished dynamic data page will display, as well as how it will be displayed. Scroll down and make sure it displays the way you want it



If you're happy with the results, click on the "Insert" button as shown below:



This will return you to your page editor, and the dynamic data will now show up on the page where you added it.

View | Edit | Sharing

Actions ▾ | State: Private ▾

Info Changes saved.

Faculty Directory for Neurology

by Admin — last modified Jun 30, 2010 01:21 PM

This is an example of adding dynamic data to a page

Search Research Faculty Directory >

Edward H. Bertram, III, M.D.
Clinical Professor of Neurology
Research Interests: Studies of various aspects of epilepsy using anatomy and in vivo and in vitro physiology.

Ted M. Burns, M.D.
Associate Professor of Neurology
Research Interests: Neuromuscular disease, especially peripheral neuropathy, plexopathy, myasthenia gravis, ALS

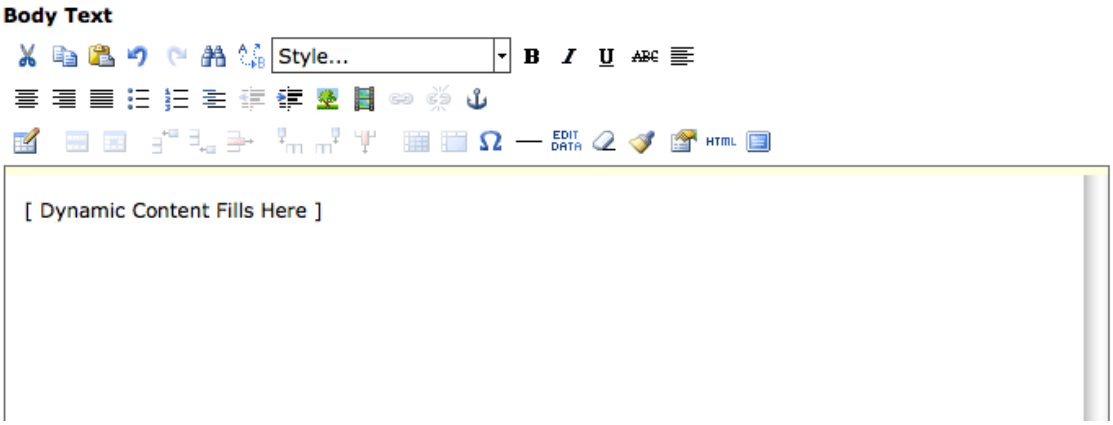
Nathan B. Fountain, M.D.
Professor of Neurology
Research Interests: Experimental antiepileptic drugs, clinical neurophysiology

Editing Dynamic Data in a Page

Once you have created a dynamic data page, it is not unusual to have to go back an tweak the content it displays to more specifically address the group / department / specialty.

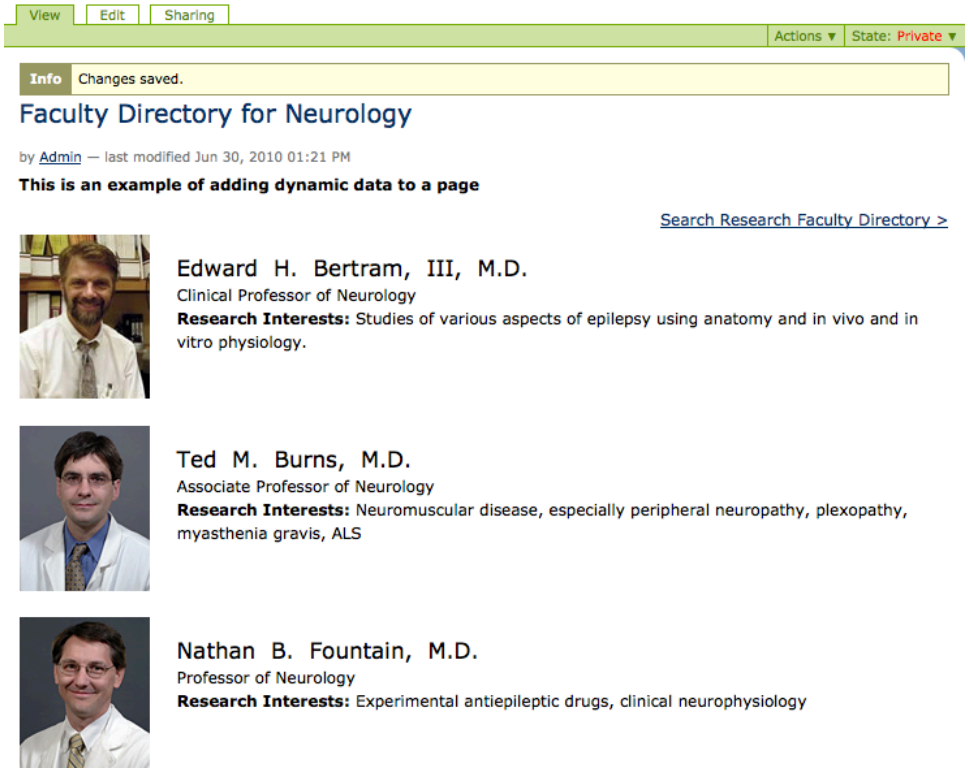
The editing of dynamic data pages in Plone is very similar to the process of creating those pages. Just go back to the page where the dynamic data appears, and click the edit tab.

You will notice that in the body text area, you will see a notation [Dynamic Content Fills Here]. Unlike other editing in Plone, you don't need to select or do anything else to this notation in order to edit it – since only one dynamic element can appear per page. Just click on the "Edit Data" button.



This will take you back to the same selection wizard you used when originally creating the dynamic content – the only difference being that as you go through each step you will see the selections you made instead of blank pages. Just hit the "continue" buttons until you reach the point in the process where you want to make changes, then edit the selections you made and keep going until the final page of the wizard. Once you're happy with the results, click on the "Done" button as shown below:

This will store your changes to the data in the page, and once you save the page you will see your selections displayed in the finished result.



While this example shows the process of adding a faculty directory to a page, the process of adding a physician directory or a clinical trials listings are fundamentally the same.