

**Advanced Distributed Learning
Web site (ADLNet.org)**

Forums Tutorial

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FOREWORD

This tutorial is provided for use on the Advanced Distributed Learning Web site (<http://www.adlnet.org>). It may be modified or superceded as work proceeds. Comments and suggestions are welcome.

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1.0 GETTING STARTED

1.1 About FuseTalk

FuseTalk is a powerful forums package that allows people to build interactive communities.

1.2 New Users

If you are new to FuseTalk, please read through this Tutorial to familiarize yourself with the features. If you wish to contact the Forum Administrator, you can send an e-mail to Webmaster@adlnet.org.

2.0 USING FUSE TALK

2.1 Joining

This section explains how to register for FuseTalk Forums.

To join the forums, simply choose the menu tab labeled **Join**. The Terms and Conditions for using the forum will be presented. Before joining, you will be required to agree to the Terms and Conditions of the forum. You will then be presented with a sign-up form that displays various profile fields. Once you have filled out the form, choose **Join Forums**, and your login information will be e-mailed to the address that you submitted during registration. The following information is by default invisible to others in the Forums. Refer below if you wish to have your profile viewable.

Field	Description
First Name	Your first name
Last Name	Your last name
City	The city in which you reside
Province/State	The province or state in which you reside; if it is not listed, choose "Other".
Country	The country in which you reside
Time Zone	For the convenience of those not in the same time zone as the forums, you can select your time zone. All thread and message times will then be displayed in your time zone.
Web site	Your Web site address
ICQ #	If you have an ICQ number, enter it here.
AIM	If you have an AOL Instant Messenger handle, enter it here.
E-Mail Address	Your e-mail address
Profile Visibility	If enabled, there will be an icon in each message to allow the user to view your profile information.
E- mail Visibility	If enabled, allows users to see your e- mail address in your profile, and in other areas of the forum.
Signature	Your signature block that will appear below each message you post. e.g.

	John Doe CEO John Doe Corporation
--	-----------------------------------------

2.2 Logging In

To login to FuseTalk, choose the menu tab labeled **Login**. Enter your username and password that was e-mailed to you after you joined, and choose **Login**. If you forget your login information, choose the menu tab labeled Login and then the hyperlink **Forget your login information?** The checkbox, **Remember my login**, will store your login information in a cookie on your computer, so that the next time you return to the forums, you will be logged in automatically.








2.3 Logging Out

To logout of FuseTalk, choose the menu tab labeled **Logout**. You will be asked to confirm your logout. Once confirmed, you will automatically be logged out.

2.4 Folder Icons






There are three main areas of FuseTalk. The first area is the main page, which displays the categories in the forum. These are essentially the areas of discussion within a particular forum. On the left of each category name is a Folder icon. Below is a table of the different Folder icons that you may encounter on the main page of the forums.

2.4.1 Forum Main Page of Categories

Folder	Description
	Plain folder icon - no status associated with this icon.
	New Messages folder icon - new topics posted in this category since your last visit.
	Locked category icon - category is locked to general users, but you have access to it. You will not see this icon if you do not have access to the locked category.
	New messages locked category icon - category is locked to general users, but you have access to it, and new topics have been posted since your last visit.
	Private category icon - category is confidential and private to general users, but you have access to it. Note: Administrators and Moderators are the only users who can see private categories.
	New messages private category icon - category is confidential and private to general users, but you have access to it, and new topics have been posted in this category since your last visit. Note: Administrators and Moderators are the only users who can see private categories.
	Trash bin - threads that have been marked as deleted are located here before being deleted.

The second key area of the forums is the thread or topic listing for a particular category. Below is a table of the different folder icons used here.

2.4.2 Thread/Topic Listing Page (categories.cfm)

Folder	Description
	Plain Thread/Topic icon - no status associated with this icon.
	New Messages thread icon - new messages have been posted in this thread/topic since your last visit.
	Alert icon - thread contains important information for you to read.
	New Messages alert thread icon - new messages have been posted in this alert thread since your last visit.
	Locked Thread/Topic icon - thread/topic has been locked and no further messages can be posted.

The third area of the forums is for reading messages in the thread. This is discussed in Section 5.4 Viewing.

3.0 CUSTOMIZATION

On the FuseTalk menu, you will see a menu tab labeled **Customize**. This option allows you to tailor the forums to meet your own personal needs. Once you choose the **Customize Tab**, you will see a form with a series of options. Below is an explanation of the function of each option. After setting your options and choosing **Customize** your settings will be saved.

Option	Description
Would you like to draft your messages using the WYSIWYG Editor?	If this is set to Yes , your messages will be composed as they will appear once posted. (WYSIWYG means "What you see is what you get." – your message will appear as typed.)
Turn the buddy list on or off	If this is set to Yes , a floating window will appear, which lists the names of the Buddies who you have added from the Private Messages area.

4.0 PROFILE

This section allows you to customize your profile. Below is an explanation of the function of each option. After setting your options and choosing **Update Profile**, your profile settings will be saved.

Field	Description
First Name	Your first name
Last Name	Your last name
Password	Allows you to change your password
Verify Password	A second password field used to verify your password
City	The city in which you reside
Province/State	The state or province in which you reside; if your state is not listed, choose Other .
Country	The country in which you reside

Time Zone	For the convenience of those not in the same time zone as the forums, you can select your time zone. All thread and message times will then be displayed in your time zone.
Time Zone Adjust	Because some countries update their time systems randomly, rules for daylight savings time, etc. are not always the same. Manually adjust your offset to GMT (Greenwich Mean Time).
Web Site	Your Web site address
ICQ #	If you have an ICQ number, enter it here. If you entered an ICQ number, an ICQ icon will appear in each message that you post so that users can message you.
AIM	If you have an AOL Instant Messenger handle, enter it here.
E- Mail Address	Your e-mail address
Profile Visibility	If enabled, an icon in each message will appear to allow the user to view your profile information.
E-Mail Visibility	If enabled, allows users to see your e-mail address in your profile, and in other areas of the forum.
Allow Private Messages	Allows people to send you private messages using the private messaging module
Receive Messages by e-mail	Allows users to use the forums through e-mail. Users can post, reply and view messages using their e-mail client.
Current Browser	Displays the user's browser and version they are using.
Signature	Your signature block that will appear below each of your posted messages. e.g. John Doe CEO John Doe Corporation

5.0 TOPICS/MESSAGES

The key actions of any forum are, of course, posting, replying and viewing messages. The process of doing each of these tasks is as follows.

Note: At anytime a user posts a message that is inappropriate or appears to be violating the Forum Guidelines contact the Moderator through the **Report this to Moderator** link accessible at the end of every thread.

5.1 Posting a new topic

To post a new topic, enter into a category in which you want to post and choose **New Topic** on the menu. The **Post a Message** form will appear, where you can enter the topic title and description. Choose **Post Message** when completed. Refer below to the list of fields in this form and their descriptions.

Above the message box, you will see a toolbar with symbols like **B** and **I**. This toolbar allows quick access to bolding text, changing font to italics, underlining text and putting

links around words and/or sentences. For a full description of these symbols, choose the **Symbols Link** at the bottom of the form.

Field/Function	Description
Message Title	The title of the message
Message Text	The body of your message. At the bottom of the form is a link that explains how to use HTML in your message posts.
Subscribe to this thread	Allows you to subscribe to the thread; if anyone replies to your new message, you will be notified through e-mail.
Thread/Message rating	Select an icon that best describes the mood of your thread/message. Note: <i>This option will only appear if thread and/or message ratings are enabled for that thread.</i>
Attach Code	Choose this button to attach formatted text to your message. Note: <i>This option will only appear if code attachments are enabled for that thread.</i>
Attach File(s)	Allows you to attach multiple files to your message. Note: <i>This option will only appear if attachments are enabled for that thread.</i>
Clear File(s)	Clears all the attachments in which you have attached to your message. Note: <i>This option will only appear if attachments are enabled for that thread.</i>
Preview Button	Allows you to preview your messages prior to posting.

5.2 Replying

To reply to a message/topic, choose **Reply** or **Quote** located in each message within a thread. The difference between the two options is that by choosing **Quote**, the original message is automatically added to the beginning of your reply message. Refer below for the list of fields in the Reply form that will appear and their descriptions.

Above the message box, you will see a toolbar with symbols like **B** and **I**. This toolbar allows quick access to bolding text, changing font to italics, underlining text and putting links around words/sentences. For a full description of these symbols, choose the **Symbols Link** at the bottom of the form.

Field	Description
Message Text	The body of your message. At the bottom of the form is a link that explains how to use HTML in your messages.
Subscribe to this thread	Allows you to subscribe to the thread; if anyone replies to your new message, you will be notified through e-mail.
Thread/Message rating	Select an icon that best describes the mood of your thread and/or message. Note: <i>This option will only appear if thread/message ratings are enabled for that thread.</i>
Attach Code	Click on this button to attach formatted text to your message. Note: <i>This option will only appear if code attachments are enabled for that thread.</i>
Attach File(s)	Allows you to attach multiple files to your message. Note: <i>This option will only appear if attachments are enabled for that thread.</i>
Clear File(s)	Clears all the attachments in which you have attached to your message. Note: <i>This option will only appear if attachments are enabled for that thread.</i>
Preview Button	Allows you to preview your messages prior to posting.

5.3 Editing

You can edit a message that you have posted. To do this, navigate within the forums to locate your posted message. At the bottom right of the message, there is an **Edit** link. Choose this link and the **Edit Message** form will appear. Refer below to the list of the fields in this form and their descriptions.

Above the message box, you will see a toolbar with symbols like **B** and **I**. This toolbar allows quick access to bolding text, changing font to italics, underlining text and putting links around words and/or sentences. For a full description of these symbols, choose the **Symbols** link at the bottom of the form.

Field	Description
Message Title (this will only appear if your message created the thread)	The title of the message
Message Text	The body of your message. At the bottom of the form is a link that explains how to use HTML in your message posts.
Thread/Message rating	Select an icon that best describes the mood of your thread and/or message. Note: <i>This option will only appear if thread/message ratings are enabled for that thread.</i>
Attach Code	Click on this button to attach formatted text to your message. Note: <i>This option will only appear if code attachments are enabled for that thread.</i>
Attach File(s)	Allows you to attach multiple files to your message. Note: <i>This option will only appear if attachments are enabled for that thread.</i>

Clear File(s)	Clears all the attachments in which you have attached to your message. Note: <i>This option will only appear if attachments are enabled for that thread.</i>
Preview Button	Allows you to preview your messages prior to posting.








5.4 Viewing

To view messages in the forum, navigate into a category and choose a thread and/or topic that interest you. A list of messages will appear. If the number of messages in that thread and/or topic exceeds the number of messages that you have allowed to be displayed per page through the **Customize** button, you will see page numbers at the top and bottom of the screen. This will assist you in navigating through the page(s) of messages.

Every message consists of the following features: the message body, the posted date, the author of the message and toolbars at the top right and bottom right of the screen.

5.4.1 Top Right Message Toolbar

The toolbar located at the top right allows you to perform various tasks. The following is a description of each task.

Icon	Description
	Subscribe icon - allows you to subscribe to the thread; if any new messages are posted, you will be notified through e-mail.
	E-mail Thread icon - allows you to send a person the link to this thread by e-mail.
	User Logged In - indicates that the user is logged into the forums.
	User not Logged In - indicates that the user is not logged into the forums.
	View Profile icon - allows you to view the profile of the person who posted the message. (This will only be displayed if the user has allowed people to view their profile.)
	Private Messaging icon - allows you to send the user (who posted the original message) a private message that can only be read by him and/or her. (This will only appear if the Administrator has enabled Private Messaging.)
	Print Thread icon - allows you to view a text version of the thread and print it.

5.4.2 Bottom Right Message Toolbar

The toolbar located at the bottom right allows you to reply to a message, quote a message and navigate through each message by the top, next, previous and bottom links, and edit a message (if you wrote it).

5.4.3 Moderator Tools

If you are using Netscape 6+ or Internet Explorer 4+, this toolbox allows moderators to use extra functions.

5.5 Member Ranking

5.5.1 Ranking

Each author is assigned a ranking based on the number of posted messages they have made. The ranking appears underneath the user's name. Below are the current ranks.

Title	Posts Required
Junior Member	0
Member	20
Senior Member	200

6.0 SEARCH


In FuseTalk, you can search the forum for threads and messages that are of particular interest to you. Refer below for the descriptions of the fields and their functions.

Field	Description
Search Phrase	Enter your search phrase or keywords here.
Author	In addition to using the Search Phrase, you can also filter your search by author name or search for posts by ONLY the author name.
Date Range	There are two options for selecting the date criteria: a) Use the drop down menu and select how many days prior to the current date; or b) Enter a start and end date (mm/dd/yyyy) of the message and/or thread. Date Range is a required selection for performing searches.
Forum Categories	Select the categories from the list in which you want to perform the search.

7.0 TODAY

The Today page is a summary of what is currently happening in the forums as it relates to the user. If you subscribe to threads or have private messages, these will be displayed here. Hot Threads is defined by how many messages are in a thread. Also listed are the 20 most recent messages that you have posted to the forum and the ten users who have posted the most messages.



8.0 PRIVATE MESSAGES

Private Messaging allows users to send each other private messages that can only be read by the recipient. To send a private message, choose the **Send Private Message** icon  on the message toolbar. Type the message and choose **Send Message**.

8.1 Sending

To send a private message, type in the recipient's name beside **Send a Private Message to** and choose **Send Message**. You will then be sent to the Private Message User screen, where you will type in your message and choose **Send Private Message**.

8.2 Receiving

To let you know when new private messages arrive, the padlock icon  will flash red and orange . The text beside the icon will also alert you to how many new private messages you have received.

8.3 Viewing

To view private messages, choose the **Private Message** icon and your new private messages will be displayed, along with the date and the name of the sender. Choose the **Read** icon corresponding to the message you want to read. If you wish to reply to the message, choose **Reply**, otherwise, choose **Done**.

8.4 Ignore

If you are receiving unsolicited messages, you can use the Ignore feature. Enter the nickname and add the name to the Ignore list from within the Private Messaging area.

8.5 Deleting

To delete Private Messages, view **Message History** and search for a sender. When you have the history listing of that sender, you can delete each individual message, or choose **Delete All** (in the top right of the page), which will delete the history associated with that sender. Another option is to clear Private Messages by date. In the **View History page**, enter a date and the system will remove all messages preceding that date.

8.6 Search

To search your private messages, simply type in a keyword and press **Search**.

8.7 Add Buddy

If you have enabled Buddy List in the Customize area, then you can add Buddy's to your list here. Once added, they will appear in a floating window, **The Buddy List**.

9.0 WHO'S ON

On the main page of the forum, located above the category list to the right, is a link, **WHO'S ON**, which directs you to a list of users who are currently logged in. This information is accurate to approximately 15 minutes. You can view User profiles, send e-mail or send a private message to any one of these users.

10.0 E-MAIL POSTING

With the E-mail Posting feature, you will be able to view, post and reply to messages through your e-mail client. To activate the feature, set the **Receive Messages by E-mail** option to **Yes** in the Profile area. When e-mail posting has been activated, you will receive e-mail for every message that is posted to the forum.

After a message has been received, you may reply to it by replying to your e-mail. Be certain that you do not edit the subject line. The subject line contains crucial information needed by FuseTalk to process the message into the correct thread.

If you want to post a new thread to the forum send e-mail to forums@adlnet.org. The new thread will be created in a pre-determined category that the Administrator has selected.

11.0 MODERATION

If you are a Moderator, you will have access to the Moderator functions built into FuseTalk. In each message, a Moderator toolbar will be displayed. You will see the IP address of the user who posted the message (this is used for banning purposes). The Moderator drop down menu and its functions are explained below.

Option	Description
Move Thread	By selecting this option, you can move a thread to another category if it was posted in the wrong category. This option also allows you to notify the thread creator and its participants that the thread was moved.
Delete Message	By selecting this option, you can delete a message within a thread. If there is only one message in the thread, the entire thread will also be deleted.
Delete Thread	By selecting this option, you can remove an entire thread from the forum. When you remove a thread, it is first stored in the trash bin; by deleting the thread from the trash bin, you have successfully deleted the thread. Note: <i>All messages contained in the thread will also be deleted.</i>
Edit Message	By selecting this option, you can edit the content of a message.
E-Mail User	By selecting this option, you can send e-mail to the user who posted the message.
Lock Thread	By selecting this option, you can lock a thread, denying further postings by all users.
IP Banning	By selecting this option, you can ban a user by identifying his and/or her IP address. When the IP Banning screen appears, enter the IP.
E-Mail Banning	By selecting this option, you can ban a user by their e-mail address.
View Profile	By selecting this option, you can view more detailed information about a user.
User Banning	By selecting this option, you can ban a user by his and/or her username.
Don't Archive	By selecting this option, you can set a thread not to be archived (only if the administrator has the Archiving feature on).
Empty Trash	By selecting this option, the trash bin will be emptied of all threads and messages.