

Serf[®] User Guide



Version 1.0

by

**Fred T. Hofstetter
University of Delaware**

Last Modified January 22, 1998

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Overview

Welcome to the Serf User Guide! This user guide has five parts. Each part is intended for a different type of Serf user. In order to understand the function that each part of this user guide fulfills, you need to understand the hierarchy of Serf user types. There are five kinds of users in Serf:

1. *Serf Sysadmin.* At the top of the hierarchy is the Serf sysadmin, which stands for system administrator. The sysadmin is in charge of running the Serf server, making periodic backups of the work done by instructors and students, and troubleshooting any problems that may arise. Every Serf server must have at least one sysadmin.
2. *Administrator.* The administrator creates and maintains the lists of objects with which instructors and students work. These lists include rosters, calendars, syllabi, rooms, and styles. The administrator creates courses by linking these objects together and assigning them to an instructor. For institutions with a small staff, it is possible for the Serf sysadmin also to function as the administrator. At larger institutions, the Serf sysadmin can create several administrators to assist in the creation and monitoring of courses.
3. *Instructor.* The instructor is the person to whom the administrator will have assigned the responsibility for teaching a course. Depending on the options chosen by the administrator, the instructor will normally be able to create and edit the course syllabus, add and modify dates on the course calendar, adjust the style parameters that control the on-screen appearance of the course, and add or drop students from the roster. The instructor also has access to the course gradebook, which is used to monitor student progress, grade assignments, and compute final grades.
4. *Teaching Assistant.* Each course can have one or more teaching assistants. The teaching assistant helps the instructor communicate with students, grade assignments, and maintain the course roster. In practice, however, smaller courses tend not to have teaching assistants.
5. *Student.* Last in the hierarchy but certainly not least in terms of importance is the student. The student side of Serf is where all of the options described above combine to create a unique and powerful way of exploring, discovering, and constructing knowledge over the Web.

This user guide consists of a series of booklets intended to instruct each type of user in how to use Serf. The titles of these booklets are listed as follows:

Serf Sysadmin Guide
Serf Administrator Guide
Serf Instructor Guide
Serf Teaching Assistant Guide
Serf Student Jumpstart Pamphlet

Each booklet is paginated separately. Institutions that license Serf are permitted to make multiple copies of these booklets for training and supporting Serf administrators, authors, and users. Please note that the Student Jumpstart Pamphlet will need to have certain modifications made to it before you duplicate it for local use. These modifications are described at the beginning of the Student Jumpstart section of this manual. To facilitate making local modifications to the Student Jumpstart Pamphlet, you can download it from <http://www.udel.edu/serf/jumpstart.doc>. This document is a Microsoft Word for Windows 95 file.

License

Please read the following terms and conditions carefully. Installing this package indicates your acceptance of these terms and conditions. If you do not agree with them, promptly return the package uninstalled, and your money will be refunded.

You may use the University of Delaware product in this package on one server at a time. If you have more than one server running this product, you must purchase a separate license for each server.

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This Agreement will be governed by the laws of the State of Delaware.

Should you have any questions about this agreement, require customer service, or wish to make comments or suggestions about this product, please contact the Serf Helpline at the University of Delaware, Willard 305, Newark, Delaware 19716.

Telephone: (302) 831-8164

FAX: (302) 831-2089

Internet: SerfMaster@udel.edu

Serf Listserv

The University of Delaware hosts an online Serf discussion list, which we encourage all Serf authors and administrators to join. Please follow these steps to join the Serf listserv:

- Address an e-mail message to: majordomo@udel.edu
- Leave the subject line blank.
- In the body of the message, type:

subscribe serf-list *your_email_address*

- Replace *your_email_address* with your actual e-mail address.

Soon after you send the message, you'll receive a reply from Majordomo welcoming you to the list and explaining how to unsubscribe, should you ever decide to leave the list.

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Introduction

Occupying the highest level on the hierarchy of Serf users, the Serf sysadmin has the most power of any user. True to its name, the Serf sysadmin is responsible for administering the Serf system. The sysadmin's duties include installing Serf and operating the Serf server, creating user accounts and monitoring system resources, importing and exporting data to and from the Serf system, and making periodic backups to guard against accidental loss of data due to power failures or equipment problems.

This booklet is a guide to performing the duties of a Serf sysadmin. Please note that the sysadmin should also read the *Serf Administrator Guide*, which is the second booklet in the Serf user manual. To avoid redundancy, information contained in the second booklet has not been repeated here. The Serf sysadmin needs to master the information contained in both booklets. You should study this booklet first, then read the *Serf Administrator Guide*.

Installation

Serf is coded entirely in Java and SQL. Since both Java and SQL are cross-platform industry standard products, Serf should run on a variety of platforms. Installing Serf is a six-step process that involves installing (1) the operating system on which you plan to run Serf, (2) the SQL database in which Serf will store the educational records, (3) the Java Virtual Machine (VM), (4) the Serf files, (5) the Serf launch icon, and (6) the Serf tables.

Important: These instructions assume that when you perform the installation, you are signed on to your system as the system administrator.
--

1. Installing the Operating System

Serf was developed under Windows NT, which is the environment in which it will probably run best initially. Serf should also run, however, on any system capable of supporting the 32-bit Java Virtual Machine and an SQL server. As the University of Delaware gains experience running Serf under other operating systems, information will be added to this manual. So far, the installation instructions provided here cover Windows NT only. Serf runs under both versions of Windows NT, namely, Windows NT Workstation, and Windows NT Server.

2. Installing an SQL Server

While Serf was developed using Microsoft SQL Server, it should work with any SQL server that follows the ANSI/ISO standard SQL-92 version of the Structured Query Language, and for which there is a Java Database Connectivity (JDBC) driver. The instructions provided here tell how to install Microsoft SQL Server and set it up for use with Serf.

a. Installing Microsoft SQL Server

If you haven't already installed Microsoft SQL Server Version 6.5 or later, do so now. During the installation process, SQL Server will give you the options to "start sql server automatically" and "start sql executive automatically." You should choose both of these options. You can leave "Use system account" checked for the SQL executive, or you can create a special account. The SQL Server Setup manual explains this in the chapter "Creating a User Account for SQL Executive." When SQL Server asks how many licenses you own, you will need as many licences as you expect simultaneous connections.

If you get any error messages during the installation, reboot your computer and reinstall MS-SQL Server until you get a clean, error-free installation. After MS-SQL finishes installing with no errors, please reboot your computer before proceeding.

b. Defining the Data Source Name

In order for a Java program to access an SQL database, the database needs to have a Data Source Name (DSN). To create a Data Source Name with Windows NT, follow these steps:

- Go to Control Panel and choose ODBC; the ODBC Data Source Administrator dialog appears.
- Select the User DSN tab to make the User Data Sources dialog appear.
- To add a data source, click the Add button; the Create a New Data Source dialog appears.
- Select the driver for which you want to create a data source; assuming you're using MS-SQL, select the SQL Server driver.
- When the ODBC SQL Server Setup dialog appears, enter the name SERF into the Data Source Name field.
- In the Description field, type Serf Database.
- In the Source field, leave the setting say local.
- Click the option to use trusted connection.
- Click OK to close the Setup dialog.
- SERF should now appear as a DSN in the User Data Sources dialog.
- Click OK to close the User Data Sources dialog.

c. Registering the Server

The rest of the SQL setup instructions are done using the MS-SQL Enterprise Manager. To get the Enterprise Manager running, click the Windows NT Start button, choose Programs, and in the Microsoft SQL Server 6.5 group, choose SQL Enterprise Manager. To register the server, follow these steps:

- Pull down the Server menu and choose Register Server; the Register Server dialog appears.
- In the Server field, type the name of your computer. Note: the name of your computer is determined by the Identification tab of the Network settings on the Windows NT Control Panel.
- Click the radio button that says Use Trusted Connection.
- Click the Register button to register the server.

Important: If you get an error message saying that the server could not be found and asking whether you want to register it anyway, do not say yes. If the server could not be found, you've got a problem. This kind of error probably indicates that your computer is not named properly, or MS-SQL did not install properly. Go to your Windows NT Control Panel, choose the Network settings, and click the Identification tab to set the name of your computer. If that doesn't fix the problem, try reinstalling MS-SQL. Until you get your server registered properly, you should not proceed any further with the installation.

d. Creating the Serf Database Device

In the Enterprise Manager's Server Manager window, your computer should now appear as a registered SQL server. A traffic-light icon appears next to the name of your server. The green light should be on. If the red light is on, your server has not been registered properly, and you will not be able to proceed until you solve the problem. To create the Serf Database Device, follow these steps:

- Click the plus-sign next to your server's traffic light. A list of resources appears. One of the resources is called Database Devices.
- Click the plus sign next to Database Devices. This lets you see the database devices that got created when you installed MS-SQL.
- To create the Serf database device, right-click the line that says Database Devices, and when the menu pops out, choose New Device to make the New Database Device dialog appear.
- In the name field, type Serf.
- The location fields denote which drive will contain the database device, and what directory the device will reside in. While you can make this be anything you want, the typical installation will choose drive C. If you want the database device to get set up a different place than the default directory, use the Windows NT Explorer to create the directory, then insert the directory name in front of the Serf.DAT database name. For example, if you want the database device to be c:\serfdb\serf.dat, make the filename field contain \serfdb\serf.dat instead of \serf.dat.
- A slider lets you set the initial size of the database device, anywhere from 1 megabyte to the amount of disk space available on your computer. You should allocate at least 50 megabytes of space. 250 megabytes is recommended. Since Serf is new, we're not sure whether this much space will be needed. As we gain experience, more guidelines will be added to this manual.
- Click the Create Now button to create the database device.

e. Creating the Serf Database

You create the Serf database with the MS-SQL Enterprise Manager. Click the plus-sign next to the Databases item to display the databases that got created when you installed MS-SQL Server. You should never delete any of these databases. To create the Serf database, follow these steps:

- Right-click the item that says Databases.
- When the menu pops out, choose New Database; the New Database dialog appears.
- In the Name field, type Serf.
- In the Data Device field, pull down the menu and choose Serf (that's the data device you created in the preceding part of these instructions).
- Set the size to be the number of megabytes you allocated for the Serf Database Device in the previous part of these instructions.
- Click the Create Now button to create the Serf Database Device.

Note: Step e, Creating the Serf Database, is not a duplicate of the preceding Step d, Creating the Serf Database Device. You must complete both steps.

3. Installing the Java Virtual Machine

In order to run Serf, you must install the latest version of the Java Virtual Machine. If you're using Windows NT, this is very simple, because the Java Virtual Machine is part of the Microsoft Internet Explorer. Complete instructions for downloading and installing the latest version of the Microsoft Internet Explorer are found at <http://www.microsoft.com>. These instructions explain how you must be running Windows NT Service Pack 3 before you install the Microsoft Internet Explorer. If you are not running Service Pack 3 (or later), click the option to install Service Pack 3 before you install Microsoft Internet Explorer.

You must be running the latest version of the Microsoft Internet Explorer in order to have the correct version of the Java Virtual Machine installed on your server.

4. Installing the Serf Files

Serf ships in a self-extracting, auto-installing archive called *install.class*. To install Serf, you run *install.class* with a program in the Java Virtual Machine called *jview.exe*. Follow these steps:

- Put the Serf disk into your diskette drive.
- Click the Windows NT Start button and choose Run; the Run dialog appears.
- Assuming your diskette drive is drive A, type: `jview a:\install.class`
- Click OK; after the self-extracting archive loads, the Serf Install window will appear.
- Follow the on-screen instructions to install Serf.

After you install Serf, you should use the Windows NT Explorer to inspect the files that got created, so you can become familiar with the Serf file organization. Assuming that you chose to install Serf in the default directory *c:\Serf*, you'll find that the Serf classes now reside in the *c:\Serf* directory. There is a subdirectory named *c:\Serf\serfweb*, which contains the publicly accessible files served by the Serf Web server. There is also a subdirectory named *c:\Serf\serfmanual*, which contains the Microsoft Word 95 file of the *Serf Student Jumpstart* pamphlet. This file is provided so institutions can produce localized version of the pamphlet. The last booklet in the *Serf User Guide* provides instructions for modifying the *Serf Student Jumpstart* pamphlet for local use.

5. Customizing the Serf.cfg File

On startup, Serf looks to the Serf directory to see if a Serf.cfg file is present. If so, Serf reads information from the Serf.cfg file to initialize certain system-wide parameters that affect the operation of Serf. These parameters are as follows:

Serf.cfg Parameter	What It Does
Threads	Specifies the number of threads that Serf will create to serve user requests; the default is 256. The University of Delaware runs 528 threads.
CookieTime	Tells how many minutes the security cookies will remain valid; the default is 90.
Scope	Tells whether you want Serf to run local or global. The default is global; local is for giving demonstrations not connected to the Internet.
jdbcDriver	Specifies the name of the jdbc:odbc bridge driver. The Microsoft default is com.ms.jdbc.odbc.JdbcOdbcDriver; the Sun alternative is sun.jdbc.odbc.JdbcOdbcDriver.
databaseURL	Sets the URL string that will be passed to the jdbc:odbc driver to access the Serf database. The Microsoft default is JDBC:ODBC:dsn=SERF;database=Serf; The Sun alternative is JDBC:ODBC:SERF;database=Serf;
DomainName	Specifies the fully qualified domain name that Serf will use when it creates HTML links referring to resources on the Serf server. Specify your machine's complete domain name; don't use any shortcuts here. For example, if the Serf server has the domain name serf.itc.udel.edu, use that complete name instead of using the abbreviated form of serf.itc.

You can use any text editor to inspect the Serf.cfg file that ships with Serf. The Serf.cfg file resides in your Serf directory. You will notice that a few of the lines begin with a semicolon in column 1. A semicolon in column 1 indicates that the line is to be ignored by Serf.

Note: Before you run Serf the first time, check your Serf.cfg file to make sure that the domain name of your Serf server has been entered correctly.

6. Running Serf

Now comes the fun part: running Serf! After you install Serf, you'll find a Serf launch icon on your Windows start menu. You can run Serf by clicking the Start menu and selecting the Serf launch icon. Since you will be running Serf often, however, you will probably want to put the Serf launch icon on your Windows desktop. To copy the Serf icon from your Start menu to the Windows desktop, follow these steps:

- Click the Windows NT Start button, choose Settings, and click Taskbar; the Taskbar Properties dialog appears.
- Click the Start Menu Programs tab; the Customize Start Menu options appear.
- Click Advanced; the Explorer appears displaying the contents of your Start menu.
- Double-click the Programs folder to expand it; you'll see the Serf launch icon in the list of programs.
- Right-click the Serf launch icon, and when the menu pops out, choose Create Shortcut.
- Drag the newly-created shortcut to the place you want it on your Windows desktop.

To run Serf, double-click the Serf launch icon. Eventually, you'll probably want to drag this icon into your computer's Startup group, so Serf starts up automatically whenever your computer powers up or reboots.

7. Creating the Serf Tables

The first time you run Serf, you will need to create the Serf tables. To do that, click the Create Tables button that you will find in the middle of the Serf window. In addition to creating the tables, this also creates a very powerful Serf user named Serfadmin, with the password Serf. Your next act should be to use a Web browser to go to your Serf server, log on as Serfadmin, and use the Change Password option you'll find in the System group to change the password to something only you will know. Eventually, you can create a new system administrator under your own name, and then delete the user named Serfadmin.

Note: If Serf displays any error messages when you try to create the Serf tables, the errors will indicate that something is wrong with your SQL setup. It's possible that your JDBC driver is not making the connection between Java and the database, for example, or the Serf database may not have been installed properly. No users will be able to sign on to Serf until these problems are solved.

From this point on, Serf's Up, so to speak, and all subsequent operation is done via your Web browser. The Serf window will provide you with a colorful display of activity as Serf answers requests from the Internet, but there's nothing more for you to do via the Serf window. The colored lights you will see on the Serf monitor are keyed as follows:

Serf Activity Codes

Color	Status
Red	A thread of execution is busy answering a request
Green	A thread is free to answer another request

Accessing the Serf System Control Panel

After you've installed Serf and gotten it running, you perform all the rest of your Serf Sysadmin duties via the Serf System Control Panel. This control panel runs over the Web, enabling you to perform these duties from anywhere in the World that you have an Internet connection. To get started, you need to log on to Serf.

Logging On to Serf

To log on to Serf, use your Web browser to go to the URL of your Serf server. If you are running a Serf server for Santa Claus, for example, and the name of your Serf server is Serf.northpole.com, you'd go to that server by following these steps:

- If you have Netscape, pull down the File menu, choose Open Page, type Serf.northpole.com and click Open.
- If you have the Internet Explorer, pull down the File menu, choose Open, type Serf.northpole.com and click OK.

Serf will display the logon screen. As illustrated in Figure 1, the logon screen has blanks where you type your user name and password. When you installed your Serf system, Serf created a sysadmin with the name SerfAdmin, and the password Serf. To log on to a Serf system as a sysadmin for the very first time, follow these steps:

- In the Name field, type: SerfAdmin
- In the Password field, type: Serf
- Click the Logon button



Figure 1. The Serf logon screen.

Perusing the System Options

When you log on and Serf recognizes that you are a Serf sysadmin, Serf will display the System panel pictured in Figure 2. As you scroll down to peruse the system options, you will notice how they are organized in rows according to the kinds of functions they perform. The first row enables you to list, create, and delete users. The second and third rows contain options that you will use to create and manage courses. The fourth row provides access to your personal calendar and the communication options. The fifth and final row contains options you will use to monitor the system, backup the database, and import and export courses and grades.

System Staff	Administrators	Instructors	Assistants	Students
List Create Delete	List Create Delete	List Create Delete	List Create Delete Assign Unassign	List Create Delete Add to Roster Drop from Roster
Users	Courses	Calendars	Rosters	Rooms
List States Records	List Create Delete Edit Switch	List Create Delete Reconfigure	List Create Delete Reconfigure View Current	List Create Delete
System Commands	Syllabi	Current Calendar	Styles	Grading
Logon Logout SQL Your Password Other's Password CD-ROM Setup	List Create Delete Reconfigure	List Edit	List Create Delete Reconfigure Edit Current Edit Default	Gradebook
Change Levels	Current Syllabus	Personal Calendar	Student Views	E-Mail
System Administrator Instructor Assistant Student	List View Edit Brief Edit Index Detailed Index Preamble	Daily Weekly Monthly Add Event Delete Event Change Event	Current Class Brief Index Detailed Index Preamble Search Syllabus	Instructor Assistant Classmate Register
Utilities	Monitor	Import	Export	Database
Clean Database Jumpstart Author	Console Memory Threads Trace Shut Down	Calendar Roster Style Syllabus	Calendar Grades Style Syllabus	Backup Restore

Figure 2. The Serf System panel.

Creating Your System Logon

Your first task as Serf sysadmin is to create a logon that you will use from now on when you log on to Serf as the Serf sysadmin. Then you will either delete the Serfadmin logon or change its password to prevent someone else from logging on to your system as Serfadmin with the password Serf. The reason why you need to delete or change this is because it is not very secure, since it's printed in this manual!

To create a system logon for yourself, follow these steps:

- In the System Staff section of the System Control panel (row 1, column 1), click the Create option.
- The Create a Serf System Staff form appears as shown in Figure 3.
- In the First Name field, enter your real first name.
- In the Last Name field, enter your real last name.
- In the Serf Name field, enter the name by which you want to be known online in Serf. This is the name you will type when you log on to Serf.
- In the Password field, enter the password you want to use as your logon password.
- Leave the ticket field blank.
- Click the Create button to create the new logon.

Enter the real first name and last name of the new system staff member.

First Name Last Name

If you want to preset this person's Serf name and password, do so in the Serf name and password fields.

Serf Name Password

You may also set a unique ticket. If you leave the Serf name and password fields blank, the person using this ticket can choose his or her own Serf name and password on the first logon.

Ticket

Click the Create button to create the new user.

Figure 3. The Create a Serf System Staff form.

Deleting the Serfadmin Logon

To protect the security of your Serf system, you should delete the Serfadmin logon that you used to create your own logon. Follow these steps:

- Scroll up to the top of the Serf screen and click the Log Out button; Serf logs you out.
- Log on using the name and password you chose when you created your system logon; Serf will display the System Control panel.
- In the System Staff section of the System Control panel (row 1, column 1), click the Delete option.
- The Delete a Serf System Staff form appears as shown in Figure 4.
- Pull down the menu, choose the Serf administrator named Serfadmin, and click the Delete button.
- Serf will delete the user named Serfadmin, who will no longer be able to log on to Serf.

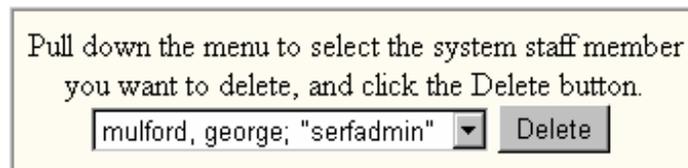


Figure 4. The Delete a Serf System Staff form.

Roleplaying Other User Types

When you are logged on as a Serf sysadmin, you can roleplay the other user types to see the kinds of options they will have when they log on to Serf. To roleplay the other user types, follow these steps:

- Scroll down to the Change Levels options that you will find in row 4, column 1 of the System panel, and click the Administrator option.
- When Serf changes your role to that of an Administrator, notice how some of the options on the system panel become inactive. These are the options that only the sysadmin can perform.
- Scroll down to the Change Levels options (row 4, column 1) and click the Instructor option.
- When Serf changes your role to that of an Instructor, you'll get the Instructor panel, which consists of a single row of options that Instructors use to create and deliver courses. Since you are also a sysadmin, the Serf system panel appears beneath the Instructor panel, but instructors never see this.
- Scroll down to the Change Levels options (row 4, column 1) and click the Assistant option.
- When Serf changes your role to that of a Teaching Assistant, you'll get the Teaching Assistant panel, which consists of a single row of options that Assistants use to help instructors grade assignments and communicate with students. Since you are also a sysadmin, the Serf system panel appears beneath the Teaching Assistant panel, but assistants never see this.
- Scroll down to the Change Levels options (row 4, column 1) and click the Student option.
- When Serf changes your role to that of a Student, you'll get the Student panel, which consists of a single row of options that students use to peruse the course syllabus, submit and inspect their grades, manage their personal calendars, and communicate with classmates. Since you are also a sysadmin, the Serf system panel appears beneath the Student panel, but students never see this.

The Relationship Between the Sysadmin and the Administrator

Scroll down to the Change Levels options (row 4, column 1) and click the Administrator option once again. Notice how the administrator can do almost everything you can with your sysadmin powers. The reason why the administrator layer exists is so large institutions can separate the sysadmin function from the course administration functions. Smaller institutions can have one person perform both roles, and you can perform both roles with your sysadmin logon. Larger institutions, however, will prefer to have the sysadmin just perform the server-specific tasks.

To create an administrator, you click the Create option in the Administrator section of the system panel (row 1, column 2), and follow the on-screen instructions.

To save space in this manual, the course administration features that both the sysadmin and the administrator can perform are described in the *Administrator Guide*, which is the next booklet included in this manual. The remainder of this booklet will describe features that only the sysadmin can perform.

Features Restricted to the Sysadmin

If you compare the options that the sysadmin has to the ones that the administrator can do, you will notice three major categories of things that only the sysadmin can do. First, only the sysadmin can create system staff and administrators. Second, only the sysadmin can configure the system and make backups. Third, and most strategic, only the sysadmin can delete things.

Let's reflect for a moment on why only the sysadmin can delete things. Serf is based on a relational database. The most important aspect of a relational database is how objects get keyed to one another. When objects get created in Serf, they get keyed into the database. The keys relate the objects to one another. If an object gets deleted, other objects that keyed upon become orphaned.

By allowing only the sysadmin to delete objects, Serf protects against the accidental deletion of objects that could adversely affect the system. Not allowing administrators to delete objects enables the sysadmin to find and restore connections that the administrator might accidentally break. If an administrator mistakenly disconnects a syllabus from a course, for example, the syllabus will still exist, and it can be reconnected. If an instructor mistakenly removes a student from a roster, the student can simply be reconnected, and all of the student's records will be intact. If the student had been deleted, on the other hand, all of the student's records would have been orphaned. Serf protects everyone from making this mistake, except for you, the sysadmin.

In general, it is not a good idea even for you to delete things. Your system has plenty of space, and you can clean it at the end of the term. It's foolish to risk the integrity of the database by deleting objects in the midst of a course.

Backing Up and Restoring the Database

As the Serf sysadmin, one of your most important duties is to guard against accidental loss of student records or faculty syllabi due to power failures, equipment breakdowns, or other calamities. To make a Serf backup, follow these steps:

- Scroll down to the Database section in row 5, column 5 of the System panel.
- Click the Backup option. Serf will display the Backup form as illustrated in Figure 5.
- To create a new backup, click the option to backup the Serf database.
- Wait patiently while Serf creates the backup. Depending on the size of the database, and the speed of your system, this could take several minutes. Serf will inform you of the results when the backup has been completed.

To create a new backup, click the option to backup the database. Serf will create a new backup directory in your Serf directory and backup the current contents of the Serf data tables into it.

[Backup the Serf Database](#)

The box below lists the backups that have been made of your Serf database to date. The names of these backups are subdirectories of the Serf directory on your server.

If you want to delete any of these existing backups, click the option to delete the backup you no longer need.

[Delete Backup883253103843 created 27-Dec-97 3:05:03 PM](#)
[Delete Backup883752197609 created 02-Jan-98 9:43:17 AM](#)
[Delete Backup883935443531 created 04-Jan-98 12:37:23 PM](#)
[Delete Backup884462560750 created 10-Jan-98 3:02:40 PM](#)
[Delete Backup884609049593 created 12-Jan-98 7:44:09 AM](#)

Please understand that the Serf backup procedure makes the backup on the same disk drive on which Serf resides. To protect against loss of data in case that drive should fail or crash, you should copy the most recent backup directory to another storage medium, such as a Jaz disk, for safe keeping at another location.

Figure 5. The Serf Backup form.

Serf stores the backups on your Serf server in the Serf\Serfbackup directory. You should periodically copy the most recent backup to a disk drive in another building, to protect against the loss of data in the event of a fire or some other unforeseen catastrophe. The most recent backup will be the one with the largest backup number. For example, a backup created on October 16, 1997 at 12:47:17 pm will be found in the directory Serf\Serfbackup\Backup877020437609. The number 877020437609 is the number of milliseconds that passed between January 1, 1970 and the time the backup was made. This is how Java tells time, using the year 1970 as a point of reference.

Hopefully you will never need to restore your database, but if you do, simply click the Restore option in the Database section in row 5, column 5 of the System panel. Serf will provide you with a directory of the backups you have made. Normally you would restore from the most recent backup. Be aware that restoring the database will erase any records of student or faculty work completed since the date of the backup you restore.

Please note that the only way to make sure you've made a complete backup of the Serf database is to use Serf's built-in Backup option. If you use your database's backup features, such as the automatic backup routine built into Microsoft SQL Server, only the data tables will get backed up. In addition to the data tables, Serf creates text files which hold long strings too long to fit in the data tables. Running your database's built-in backup routine will not back up the text files; running Serf's Backup option, however, will back up all of the essential files.

Cleaning the Database

When a course has ended, and you want to clean up the database by deleting syllabi, rosters, calendars, and records that you no longer need to keep on your Serf server, you should use Serf's built-in Clean option. You should not try to delete individual objects by themselves, unless you really know what you are doing, because if you delete an object upon which another object relies, you can spoil the keying in the relational database.

Complete instructions for using Serf's Clean option are found in the *Serf Administrator Guide*, which is the next booklet in this manual.

Performance Issues

As mentioned earlier, Serf is new, and we will provide more information regarding performance issues as the number of students using Serf increases. You should be aware that if you have authors creating courses on the same Serf server that is delivering courses to students, you could experience some delays if the courses that the instructors are editing are large. When an instructor modifies a course's calendar or syllabus, for example, Serf needs to regenerate the tables related to that course. If students are simultaneously working on that course, they could experience some delay as the course regenerates.

We have never encountered a problem related to system performance, but since computers are by definition limited, there must be some limits somewhere. The University of Delaware is interested in learning where the Serf limits are. If you find that you have exceeded the limits of your server either by enrolling too many students or creating courses too large for your server to handle, please let us know.

We have observed that when Serf is running the Internet Literacy course in the Java Virtual Machine under Windows NT Server, 83 megabytes of RAM are in use. If your server has less RAM, performance could be a little slower.

Serf imposes no practical limits on the number of users, the size of syllabi, or the number of courses that can be offered simultaneously. The long numbers used to keep track of these objects in Serf permits you to create more than 4 billion instances of each kind of object. Any limits you encounter will therefore be hardware-related, as opposed to Serf-imposed.

Learning to Play All of the Roles

This concludes the sysadmin section of the Serf user manual. The sysadmin should keep reading, however, because it is important for the sysadmin to understand the options available to the administrator. In many cases this will be essential, because the serfadmin often doubles as the administrator. Even if you have one or more people serving as administrators, however, you should learn about the administrator options, because if an administrator encounters difficulty, the administrator will turn to you for help.

Serf[®] Administrator Guide



Version 1.0

by

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University of Delaware**

Last Modified January 22, 1998

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Introduction

Welcome to Serf! You're about to enter an educational environment that unleashes the power of the World Wide Web for delivering instruction and improving communications among instructors and students. Before you log on, however, you need to understand the hierarchy of user types that exist in the Serf environment. There are five kinds of users in Serf:

1. *Serf Sysadmin.* At the top of the hierarchy is the Serf sysadmin, which stands for system administrator. The sysadmin, who is the only user above you in the hierarchy, is in charge of running the Serf server. Your Serf logon will have been created by the Serf sysadmin.
2. *Administrator.* The administrator creates and maintains the lists of objects with which instructors and students work. These lists include rosters, calendars, syllabi, rooms, and styles. The administrator creates courses by linking these objects together and assigning them to an instructor.
3. *Instructor.* The instructor is the person to whom the administrator assigns the responsibility for teaching a course. Depending on the options chosen by the administrator, the instructor will normally be able to create and edit the course syllabus, add and modify dates on the course calendar, adjust the style parameters that control the on-screen appearance of the course, and add or drop students from the roster. The instructor also has access to the course gradebook, which is used to monitor student progress, grade assignments, and compute final grades.
4. *Teaching Assistant.* Each course can have one or more teaching assistants. The teaching assistant helps the instructor communicate with students, grade assignments, and maintain the course roster. In practice, however, smaller courses tend not to have teaching assistants.
5. *Student.* Last in the hierarchy but certainly not least in terms of importance is the student. The student side of Serf is where all of the options described above combine to create a unique and powerful way of exploring, discovering, and constructing knowledge over the Web.

Although you, the administrator, are listed second in the Serf hierarchy, the role you will play is in many ways the most important, because you create and assign the resources that instructors use to create and deliver courses to students. Before you learn how to perform this role, it's important for you to understand the nature of a Serf course.

A Serf course is the combination of an instructor, a student roster, a syllabus, a calendar, and a presentation style. Reread this paragraph and reflect on it, because realizing how objects combine to create courses is the key to understanding your role as Serf administrator.

Serf is object-oriented! You can combine a syllabus object, for example, with different calendar objects to create courses that begin and end at different times. Instead of having to retype a syllabus with new dates for use next semester, you can simply attach next semester's calendar, and the syllabus will inherit next semester's dates. If a group of students needs a little more time to complete a course, you can extend the dates on their calendar, to which the events on the syllabus will adjust automatically.

This booklet will teach you how to create and assign these objects for use by instructors, teaching assistants, and students. We begin by learning how to log on to Serf.

Logging On to Serf as an Administrator

To log on to Serf, use your Web browser to go to the URL (Web address) of your Serf server. Imagining that you work for Santa Claus, and your Serf server's address is Serf.northpole.com, you can browse to that server as follows:

- If you have Netscape, pull down the File menu, choose Open Page, type Serf.northpole.com and click Open.
- If you have the Internet Explorer, pull down the File menu, choose Open, type Serf.northpole.com and click OK.

The Serf logon screen will appear as illustrated in Figure 1. Notice how it asks you to enter your Serf name and password to log on. Your Serf sysadmin will have given you either a Serf name and password, or a ticket whereby you can create your own Serf name and password.

Cashing In a Ticket to Use Serf

If your Serf sysadmin gave you a ticket, follow these steps:



ticket

- Click the "Admit One--Ticket" button to make the Ticket Validation screen appear.
- In the blanks provided, type your first name and your last name.
- In the Ticket field, type your ticket number. Most often, this is your social security number. Unless you've been told to enter something different in the Ticket field, type your social security number, without any spaces or hyphens.
- Click the Submit button.

If Serf recognizes your name and ticket number, you'll be taken to a screen that let's you create a Serf name and password. Follow the on-screen instructions until your Serf name and password have been created.

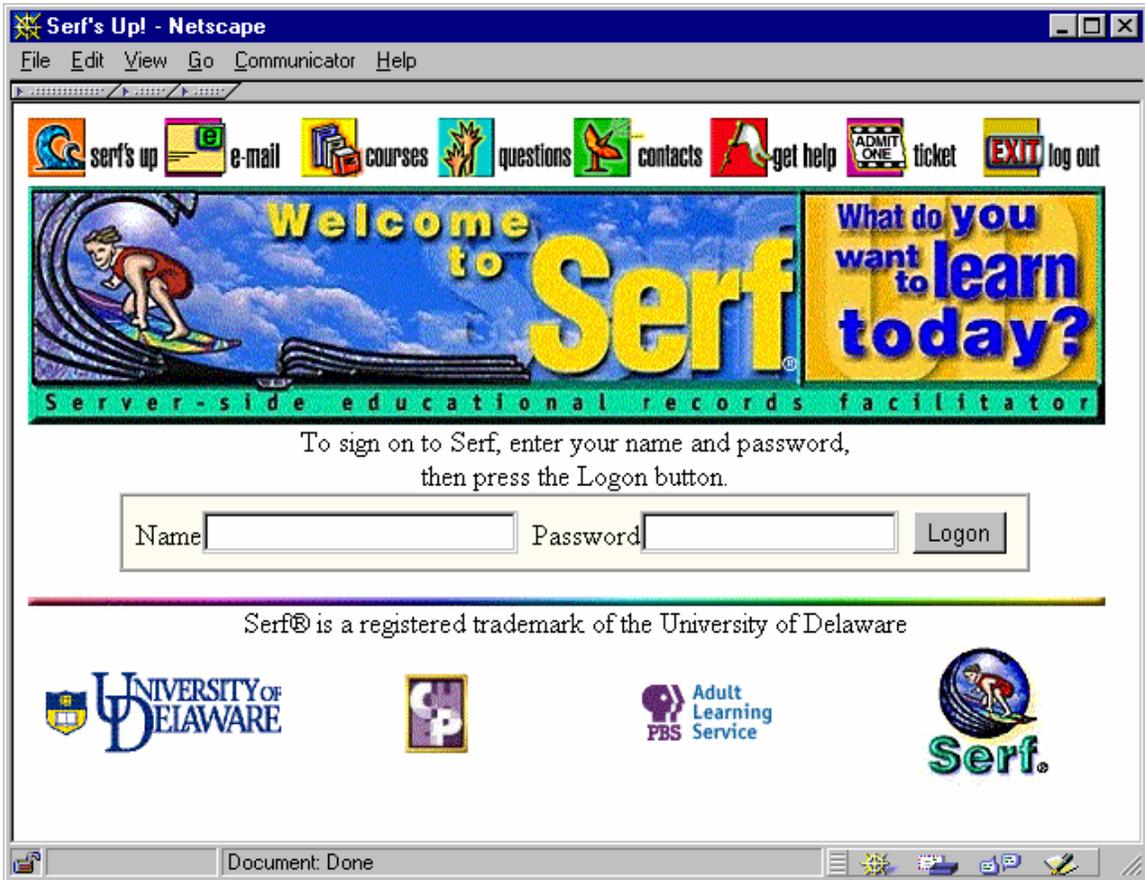


Figure 1. The Serf logon screen.

Logging On to Serf

To log on to Serf, browse to your Serf server's Web address, and when the logon screen appears, type your Serf name and password into the blanks provided, and click the Logon button. Serf will recognize you as an administrator and display the System panel, as illustrated in Figure 2.

System Staff	Administrators	Instructors	Assistants	Students
List Create Delete	List Create Delete	List Create Delete	List Create Delete Assign Unassign	List Create Delete Add to Roster Drop from Roster
Users	Courses	Calendars	Rosters	Rooms
List States Records	List Create Delete Edit Switch	List Create Delete Reconfigure	List Create Delete Reconfigure View Current	List Create Delete
System Commands	Syllabi	Current Calendar	Styles	Grading
Logon Logout SQL Your Password Other's Password CD-ROM Setup	List Create Delete Reconfigure	List Edit	List Create Delete Reconfigure Edit Current Edit Default	Gradebook
Change Levels	Current Syllabus	Personal Calendar	Student Views	E-Mail
System Administrator Instructor Assistant Student	List View Edit Brief Edit Index Detailed Index Preamble	Daily Weekly Monthly Add Event Delete Event Change Event	Current Class Brief Index Detailed Index Preamble Search Syllabus	Instructor Assistant Classmate Register
Utilities	Monitor	Import	Export	Database
Clean Database Jumpstart Author	Console Memory Threads Trace Shut Down	Calendar Roster Style Syllabus	Calendar Grades Style Syllabus	Backup Restore

Figure 2. The System panel for administrators.

Perusing the System Control Panel

As you scroll down to peruse the system options, you will notice how they are organized in rows according to the kinds of functions they perform. The first row enables you to list and create users. The second and third rows contain options that you will use to create and manage courses. The fourth row provides access to your personal calendar and the communication options. The fifth and final row contains options you will use to monitor the system and import and export courses and grades.

You may notice that a few of the options are not active, such as the Backup and Restore options in the Database section in Row 5, Column 5 of the System panel. These options are active only when a Serf sysadmin signs on. If you ever need to use options that are not active, consult with your Serf sysadmin, who can either perform those functions for you, or advise you of another way to complete your task.

Listing, Creating, and Deleting Users

One of your primary tasks as a Serf administrator is to create users. That's why the top row of the System panel is devoted to that purpose. Column 1 contains controls that list, create, and delete Serf system staff, who are the Sysadmins. Column 2 is devoted to administrators. Columns 3, 4, and 5 handle instructors, teaching assistants, and students, respectively.

How to List Users

It's convenient to be able to list users from time to time. You might want to know the name(s) of your Serf sysadmin(s), for example, which you can learn by listing the system staff. To help a student who may be having trouble logging on, you can list the students and check the spelling of their first name and last name. To list users, follow these steps:

- In the first row of the System panel, click the List option in the column representing the type of users you want to list.
- Serf will display the list of users, as illustrated in Figure 3.
- If the list is long, and you're looking for the name of someone specific, pull down your browser's Edit menu, choose the option to Find in Page or Search the Page, and use the Search dialog to find what you're looking for.

UserID	SerfName	Password	FirstName	LastName	UserType	Email	CD	Ticket	CourseID
343	Ben	*****	Ben	Jones	2			999426735	0
344	John Doe	***	John	Doe	2			999874637	0
345	Mary Smith	*****	Mary	Smith	2			999865940	0

Figure 3. How Serf displays the list of users.

How to Create Users

Depending on their level in the Serf hierarchy, Serf users have different levels of creation powers. The sysadmin can create any kind of user, including another sysadmin. Administrators can create instructors, teaching assistants, and students. Instructors can create students. You can tell what kind of users you can create by looking at the Create options in the first row of the System panel. If the Create option is underlined, that means it's active, allowing you to create that kind of user. To create a Serf user, follow these steps:

- In the first row of the System panel, click the Create option in the column representing the type of user you want to create.
- Serf will display the user creation form, as illustrated in Figure 4.
- In the First Name field, type the user's first name.
- In the Last Name field, type the user's last name.
- You must decide whether you want to preset the user's Serf name and password, or give the user a ticket that the user can use to choose their own Serf name and password.
- If you want to preset the user's Serf name and password, enter them in the Serf Name and Password fields, respectively.
- If you want to give the user a ticket, leave the Serf name and password fields blank, and type the ticket into the ticket field. Normally the ticket is the user's social security number, typed without any spaces or hyphens. E-mail addresses can also be used as tickets, since everyone has a unique e-mail address.

Enter the real first name and last name of the new instructor.

First Name Last Name

If you want to preset this person's Serf name and password, do so in the Serf name and password fields.

Serf Name Password

You may also set a unique ticket. If you leave the Serf name and password fields blank, the person using this ticket can choose his or her own Serf name and password on the first logon.

Ticket

Click the Create button to create the new user.

Figure 4. The Serf user creation form.

If you've given the user a ticket, all you need to tell the user is to browse to your Serf server's address, click the Ticket button at the top of the Serf screen, and follow the on-screen instructions to cash in their ticket and select their own Serf name and password.

Tip: The ticket solves a large problem that institutions offering courses at a distance might otherwise face. If you don't give the user a ticket, then you need to assign the user a Serf name and password. Figuring out what these should be is a huge administrative task that you can avoid by using tickets instead.

How to Delete Users

Only the Serf sysadmin can delete users. The reason why the delete function is available only to the Sysadmin is because deleting a user orphans any work done by that user. If you later discover that the user should not have been deleted, it will be impossible to reconnect that user to the orphaned records, which may contain assignments and grades if the user is a student, or syllabi and calendars if the user is an instructor.

By not permitting you to delete users, Serf is protecting you against unintentionally orphaning someone's work. If you really need to delete a user, ask your Serf sysadmin to perform the deletion for you.

Serf does permit you to add and drop students from rosters, however, as you will see later in this booklet. Dropping a student from a roster is a kind of deletion, because you are deleting that student's entry on the roster. The student's records remain intact, however, even though you've removed the student from the roster. Since you cannot actually delete the student, if you later discover that the student should not have been dropped from the roster, you can simply reattach the student to the roster, and all of the student's records will reconnect automatically.

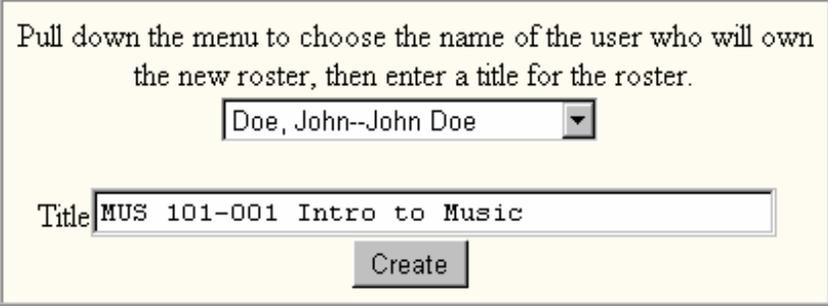
Creating the Objects that a Course Comprises

As mentioned earlier, a course is the combination of an instructor, a student roster, a syllabus, a calendar, and a presentation style. So far, you've only learned how to create the instructor. Now it's time to learn how to create the other objects that a course comprises.

How to Create a Roster

A roster is a list of the students who have enrolled in a course. Creating the course rosters is one of your most important duties as a Serf administrator. There are two ways to create a roster. You can just create the roster by itself, without enrolling any students on it, or you can import a roster, which both creates the roster and enrolls the students listed on it. Described here is the method for creating a roster by itself, without enrolling any students on it. Later on, you will learn how to import a roster from a student information system, as described in the Importing and Exporting section of this booklet. To create a roster without enrolling any students on it, follow these steps:

- Go to the Rosters section of the System panel (row 2, column 4).
- Click the Create option; the Create a New Roster form appears as illustrated in Figure 5.
- Pull down the menu and select the name of the user who will own the roster. If you do not want the instructor to be able to add or drop students from the roster, make yourself be its owner. Otherwise, you should let the instructor who will be teaching the course own the roster.
- In the title field, enter a descriptive title for this roster. It's a good idea to include the name of the course in the roster's title. If the course is Music 101 section 001 in the fall of 1998, for example, you could make the title of the roster be Music 101-001 Fall 98. You are free to title the roster any way you want, however, as long as each roster you create has a unique title.



Pull down the menu to choose the name of the user who will own the new roster, then enter a title for the roster.

Doe, John--John Doe

Title MUS 101-001 Intro to Music

Create

Figure 5. The Create a New Roster form.

Tip: If you make the course instructor be the owner of the roster, both you and the instructor will be able to add and drop students from the roster. If you make yourself be the owner of the roster, the instructor will not be able to modify the roster.

How to Create a Syllabus

A syllabus is an ordered list of the instructional events in a course. There are two ways to create a syllabus. You can just create the syllabus by itself, without entering any events on it, or you can import a syllabus, which both creates the syllabus and enters the instructional events on it. Described here is the method for creating a syllabus by itself. Later on, you will learn how to import a syllabus, as described in the Importing and Exporting section of this booklet. To create a syllabus without importing any events onto it, follow these steps:

- Go to the Syllabi section of the System panel (row 3, column 2).
- Click the Create option; the Create a New Syllabus form appears as illustrated in Figure 6.
- Pull down the menu and select the name of the user who will own the syllabus. If you do not want the instructor to be able to modify the syllabus, make yourself be its owner. Otherwise, you should let the instructor who will be teaching the course own the syllabus.
- In the title field, enter a descriptive title for the syllabus. It's a good idea to include the name of the course in the title. If the course title is Introduction to Music, for example, you could make the title of the syllabus be Introduction to Music. You are free to title the syllabus any way you want, however, as long as each syllabus you create has a unique title.

Pull down the menu to choose the name of the user who will own the new syllabus, then enter a title for the syllabus.

Doe, John--John Doe

Title Introduction to Music

Click the Create button to create the new syllabus.

Create

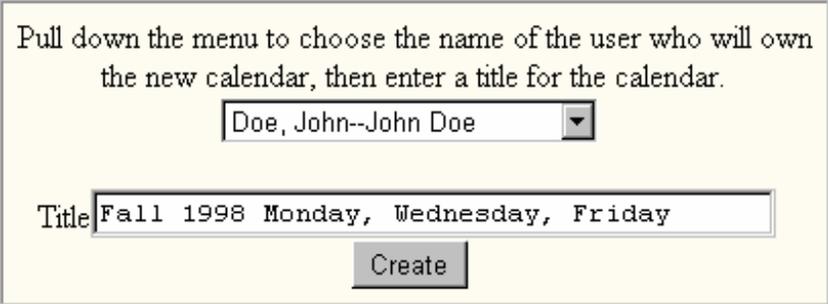
Figure 6. The Create a New Syllabus form.

Tip: If you make the course instructor be the owner of the syllabus, both you and the instructor will be able to modify the syllabus. If you make yourself be the owner of the syllabus, the instructor will not be able to change the syllabus.

How to Create a Calendar

A calendar is a list of dates that schedule the events in a course. There are two ways to create a calendar. You can just create the calendar by itself, without entering any dates on it, or you can import a calendar, which both creates the calendar and enters the imported dates on it. Described here is the method for creating a calendar by itself. Later on, you will learn how to import a calendar, as described in the Importing and Exporting section of this booklet. To create a calendar without importing any dates into it, follow these steps:

- Go to the Calendars section of the System panel (row 2, column 3).
- Click the Create option; the Create a New Calendar form appears as illustrated in Figure 7.
- Pull down the menu and select the name of the user who will own the calendar. If you do not want the instructor to be able to modify the calendar, make yourself be its owner. Otherwise, you should let the instructor who will be teaching the course own the calendar.
- In the title field, enter a descriptive title for the calendar. It's a good idea to include the name of the academic term in the title. If the calendar schedules classes on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday in the Fall of 1998, for example, you could make the title of the calendar be Fall 1998 Monday-Wednesday-Friday. You are free to title the calendar any way you want, however, as long as each calendar you create has a unique title.



Pull down the menu to choose the name of the user who will own the new calendar, then enter a title for the calendar.

Doe, John--John Doe

Title Fall 1998 Monday, Wednesday, Friday

Create

Figure 7. The Create a New Calendar form.

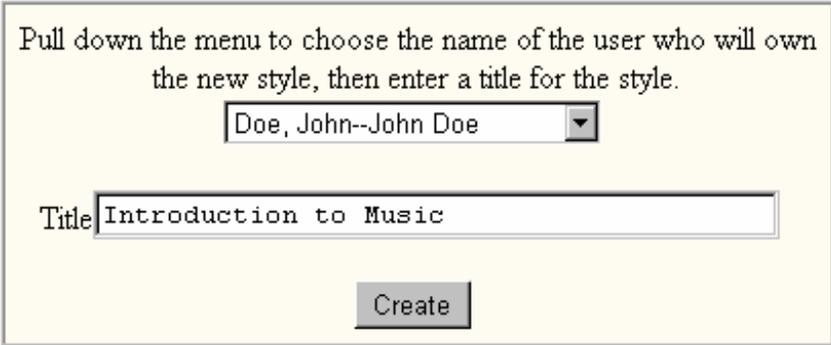
Tip: If you make the course instructor be the owner of the calendar, both you and the instructor will be able to modify the calendar. If you make yourself be the owner of the calendar, the instructor will not be able to change the calendar.

How to Create a Style

A style is a list of parameters that control the look and feel of Serf. These parameters control what icons appear on screen, for example, and what happens when the user clicks the icons. Perhaps the most important style parameter is the course banner, which appears at the top of every student screen to denote what the course is.

There are two ways to create a style. You can just create the style by itself, without entering any parameters into it, or you can import a style, which both creates the style and enters the imported parameters. Described here is the method for creating a style by itself. Later on, you will learn how to import a style, as described in the Importing and Exporting section of this booklet. To create a style without importing any parameters into it, follow these steps:

- Go to the Styles section of the System panel (row 3, column 4).
- Click the Create option; the Create a New Style form appears as illustrated in Figure 8.
- Pull down the menu and select the name of the user who will own the style. If you do not want the instructor to be able to modify the style, make yourself be its owner. Otherwise, you should let the instructor who will be teaching the course own the style.
- In the title field, enter a descriptive title for the style. It's a good idea to include the name of the course in the title. If the style is intended for use in the Introduction to Music course, for example, style be Intro to Music. You are free to title the style any way you want, however, as long as each style you create has a unique title.



Pull down the menu to choose the name of the user who will own the new style, then enter a title for the style.

Doe, John--John Doe

Title Introduction to Music

Create

Figure 8. The Create a New Style form.

Tip: If you make the course instructor be the owner of the style, both you and the instructor will be able to modify the style. If you make yourself be the owner of the style, the instructor will not be able to change the style.

Creating Courses

A course is the combination of a student roster, a syllabus, a calendar, and a presentation style. Once you've created these objects, you're ready to create a course. Follow these steps to create a course:

- Go to the Courses section of the System panel (row 2, column 2).
- Click the Create option; the Create a New Course form appears as illustrated in Figure 9.
- Fill in the blanks at the top of the form to specify the prefix, suffix, section, term, and title of the course. Figure 9 shows how to fill these out for an Introduction to Music course, for example.
- Use the Course Instructor menu to select the instructor who will own this course. If you do not know this, or if you haven't created the instructor yet, choose None Right Now.
- Use the Student Roster menu to select the roster of students who will take this course. If you do not know this, or if you haven't created the roster yet, choose None Right Now.
- Leave the Virtual Room menu set to None Right Now. You will learn how virtual rooms work in the Virtual Room section of this booklet.
- Use the Course Calendar menu to select the calendar that will schedule the classes for this course. If you do not know this, or if you haven't created the calendar yet, choose None Right Now. If you leave the calendar set to None Right Now, the course will be taught without a schedule.
- Use the Presentation Style menu to select the course's style. If you do not know this, or if you haven't created the style yet, choose None Right Now, which will cause this course to inherit the default presentation style.

Fill in the blanks to give this course a name and title.

Prefix Suffix Section Term

Title

If you know the following information, you can pull down the menus and provide it now, or you can make these assignments later on.

Course Instructor	<input type="text" value="Doe, John"/>
Student Roster	<input type="text" value="None Right Now"/>
Syllabus	<input type="text" value="None Right Now"/>
Virtual Room	<input type="text" value="None Right Now"/>
Course Calendar	<input type="text" value="None Right Now"/>
Presentation Style	<input type="text" value="None Right Now"/>

To create the course, press the Create button.

Figure 9. The Create a New Course form.

Tip: If you ever need to change any of the information on this form, you can do so by choosing the Edit option in the Courses section of the System panel (Row 2, Column 2).

Jumpstarting New Authors

To save you some valuable time when you set up an instructor to begin authoring a new course, Serf has an option called Jumpstart Author. In one easy step, the Serf Author Jumpstarter will create a new syllabus, calendar, roster, and style, and combine them to create the new course, which you can assign to an existing instructor, or a newly created author's ticket. The jumpstarter also provides the option of importing into the newly created objects a pre-existing syllabus, calendar, or style.

The Serf Author Jumpstarter is self-documenting. To use it, click the Jumpstart Author option in the Utilities section of the System panel (row 5, Column 1).

Using Teaching Assistants

Earlier in this booklet, in the section on creating users, you learned how to create a teaching assistant. After you create the course roster in which you want to use the teaching assistant, you will need to assign the teaching assistant to the roster.

Assigning a Teaching Assistant to a Roster

To assign a teaching assistant to a course roster, you must first have created the teaching assistant, the course, and the roster. Then, to assign the teaching assistant to the roster, follow these steps:

- Go to the Assistants section of the System panel (row 1, column 4).
- Click the Assign option; the Assign a Teaching Assistant to a Roster form appears as shown in Figure 10.
- The form identifies the name of the current course. To add an assistant to a different course, scroll down and choose the option to switch courses.
- Use the menu to choose the assistant whom you want assigned to the roster.
- Click the Assign button to make the assignment.

When the teaching assistant logs on to Serf, the teaching assistant options will appear. To familiarize yourself with these options, you should study the Teaching Assistant booklet. Basically, the teaching assistant has the same options in a course as a regular student, except that instead of submitting assignments to the instructor, the teaching assignment helps the instructor grade the assignments. The teaching assistant can also view the roster and add and drop students from it. The teaching assistant cannot delete students, however. If the teaching assistant drops the wrong student from a roster, you can put the student back on the roster without losing any of the student's records in the course.

Use the menu to choose the assistant you want to assign, then press the Assign button to assign the assistant to the course
COMM-467-192-F97: Internet Literacy.

To assign an assistant to a different course, scroll down and choose the option to switch courses.

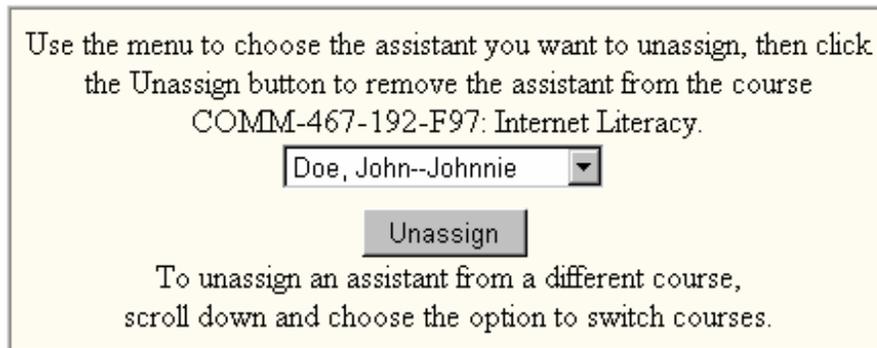
Figure 10. The Assign a Teaching Assistant form.

Unassigning a Teaching Assistant from a Roster

If you ever need to unassign a teaching assistant from a course roster, follow these steps:

- Go to the Assistants section of the System panel (row 1, column 4).
- Click the Unassign option; the Unassign a Teaching Assistant to a Roster form appears as shown in Figure 11.
- The form identifies the name of the current course. To unassign an assistant from a different course, scroll down and choose the option to switch courses.
- Use the menu to choose the assistant whom you want unassigned from the current course roster.
- Click the Unassign button to remove the assistant from the roster.

The teaching assistant assign and unassign options enable you to add or drop teaching assistants as necessary during a course. This has no effect on the student records in the course, other than changing the name of the person assigned to inspect and grade the assignments.



Use the menu to choose the assistant you want to unassign, then click the Unassign button to remove the assistant from the course
COMM-467-192-F97: Internet Literacy.

Doe, John--Johnnie ▼

Unassign

To unassign an assistant from a different course, scroll down and choose the option to switch courses.

Figure 11. The Unassign a Teaching Assistant form.

Adding and Dropping Students from a Roster

It is important for the administrator to know how to add and drop students from a roster. Even when you import an entire roster, as will be explained in the Importing and Exporting section of this booklet, changes in student registrations will sometimes require that you add or drop an individual student from a roster.

The Add to Roster and Drop from Roster options are found in the Students section of the System panel (row 1, column 5). These options are self-documenting. If you have any trouble following the on-screen instructions when you click these options, please refer to the detailed instructions for adding and dropping students that are provided in the *Serf Instructor Guide*.

Virtual Rooms

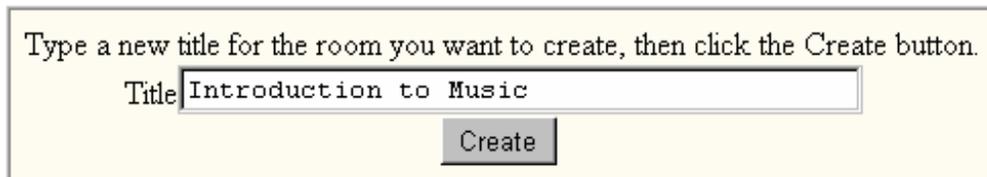
If you assign an instructor to teach many sections of the same course, you may wish to consider creating a virtual room. As you will recall, the course creation form enables you to assign courses to a virtual room. When two or more courses are taught in the same room, special things happen both for the course instructors and the students enrolled in those courses. On the instructor side, when the instructor asks to see the gradebook for a course that's taught in a virtual room, all of the courses being taught in that room appear in the gradebook. This can save the instructor a lot of time grading, because the instructor does not have to switch courses in order to see the other students in the room.

Similarly, on the student side, when a student asks to send e-mail to a classmate, the student will see point-and-click e-mail addresses for every student in the room, instead of just the students in the current course. Thus, the virtual room provides you with a way to create communities of learners inside Serf.

How to Create a Virtual Room

To create a virtual room, follow these steps:

- Go to the Rooms section of the System panel (row 2, column 5).
- Click the Create option; the Create a New Room form appears as illustrated in Figure 12.
- In the title field, enter a descriptive title for the room. It's a good idea to include the subject matter in the title. If the room is for all of the Introduction to Music course sections, for example, you could make the title of the room be Introduction to Music. You are free to title the room any way you want, however, as long as each room you create has a unique title.



Type a new title for the room you want to create, then click the Create button.

Title

Create

Figure 12. The Create a New Room form.

How to Put a Course in a Room

To put a course into a room, follow these steps:

- Go to the Courses section of the System panel (row 2, column 2).
- Click the Edit option; the course edit form appears as shown in Figure 13.
- Use the menu to select the course you want to modify, and click the Edit button.
- When the Edit a Course form appears, pull down the Virtual Room menu and select the room in which you want the course to meet.
- Click the Edit button to record the change.

You are editing the course COMM-467-197-F97.
You may change the course title if you want.

Title	Internet Literacy
-------	-------------------

Pull down the menus if you want to reassign the course.

Course Instructor	Hofstetter, Fred-fth
Student Roster	COMM 467-197 Interlit
Syllabus	Internet Literacy
Virtual Room	Internet Literacy
Course Calendar	Interlit Fall 1997
Presentation Style	Internet Literacy Style

To register your changes, press the Edit button.

Figure 13. The Course Edit form.

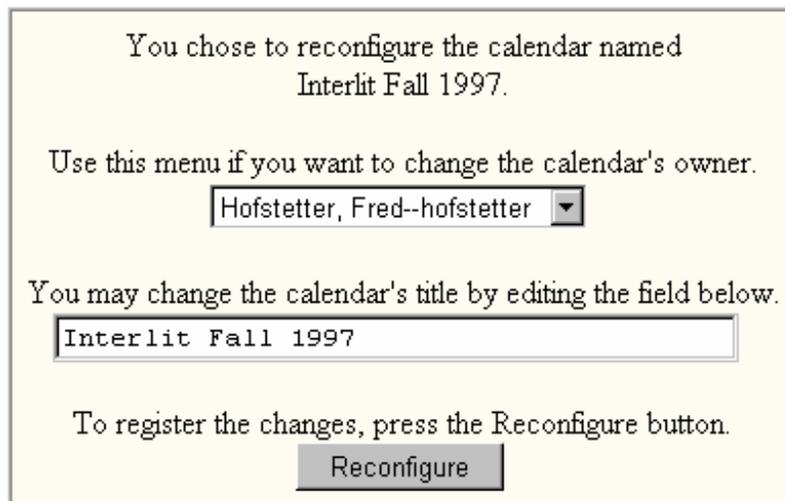
Reconfiguring Things

No matter how carefully you set up your course rosters, calendars, syllabi, and styles, you will inevitably find it necessary to reconfigure something. An instructor who just got a grant may need to be reassigned, for example, or a course name could need to be changed. Happily, Serf makes it easy to reconfigure things.

Reconfiguring a Calendar, Roster, Syllabus, or Style

You have probably noticed by now that the Calendar, Roster, Syllabi, and Style sections of the System panel contain Reconfigure options. To reconfigure one of these objects, follow these steps:

- Go to the section in the System panel corresponding to the object you want to reconfigure; this will either be the Calendars section (row 2, column 3), the Rosters section (row 2, column 4), the Syllabi section (row 3, column 2), or the Styles section (row 3, column 4).
- Click the Reconfigure option; a menu will prompt you to select the object you want to reconfigure; select the object, and click the Reconfigure button to make the Reconfigure form appear.
- Figure 14 shows how the Reconfigure form appears when you ask to reconfigure a calendar, for example.
- Use the menu to change the calendar's owner, if you want, and type the title you want the reconfigured object to have.
- Click the Reconfigure button to record the change.



The screenshot shows a reconfigure form for a calendar. The text reads: "You chose to reconfigure the calendar named Interlit Fall 1997." Below this, it says "Use this menu if you want to change the calendar's owner." and shows a dropdown menu with "Hofstetter, Fred--hofstetter" selected. Then it says "You may change the calendar's title by editing the field below." and shows a text input field containing "Interlit Fall 1997". At the bottom, it says "To register the changes, press the Reconfigure button." and shows a "Reconfigure" button.

Figure 14. The Reconfigure form.

Reconfiguring a Course

To change the instructor, calendar, roster, syllabus, room, or style of a course, you use the Edit option in the Courses section of the System panel. Follow these steps:

- Go to the Courses section of the System panel (row 2, column 2).
- Click the Edit option to make the Select a Course to Edit form appear.
- Pull down the menu, select the course you want to edit, and click the Edit button.
- The Edit a Course form will appear as illustrated in Figure 14.
- You may change the course title if you want by modifying the title as displayed in the Title field.
- Pull down the menus to change the instructor, student roster, syllabus, virtual room, course calendar, or presentation style that has been assigned to this course.
- Click the Edit button to record the changes, which will take effect immediately.

You are editing the course EDDV-667-011-F97.
You may change the course title if you want.

Title

Pull down the menus if you want to reassign the course.

Course Instructor	<input type="text" value="Hofstetter, Fred-fth"/>
Student Roster	<input type="text" value="EDDV 667-011 Multilit"/>
Syllabus	<input type="text" value="Multimedia Literacy Grad"/>
Virtual Room	<input type="text" value="Multimedia Literacy"/>
Course Calendar	<input type="text" value="Multilit Fall 1997"/>
Presentation Style	<input type="text" value="Multimedia Literacy"/>

To register your changes, press the Edit button.

Figure 15. The Edit a Course form.

How to Edit a Course Syllabus, Calendar, and Style

As an administrator, you should become familiar with how instructors create courses with Serf, so you will be able to answer questions your instructors may have. Indeed, if you are using Serf at a small institution, you may be serving both the roles of administrator and instructor! Detailed instructions on how to edit a course syllabus, calendar, and style are provided in the *Serf Instructor Guide*. To save space in this manual, those instructions will not be repeated here.

Administrative Options and Responsibilities

As a Serf administrator, you have the ability to inspect user states and monitor the status of the Serf server. You can switch into any course to inspect what's happening in it. You can enter the course as an instructor, or you can view it through the eyes of a student, to see how it looks on the student side.

Inspecting User States

Many users do not realize that when you're using the Web, the Internet keeps hanging up on you. When a student is using Serf, for example, the connection closes each time the browser finishes painting the screen. The browser does not reconnect the user to the Internet until the student clicks something on the screen. Serf maintains the state of each user between these connections in a special States database. You can inspect the contents of this database by clicking the States option in the Users section of the System panel (row 2, column 1).

Most of the information in the States table is self-evident and requires no special explanation. The token field merits some discussion, however, because of the special way it functions in keeping Serf secure. The token is a randomly generated number that gets created each time the user interacts with Serf. Serf stores the token in the States table, and also writes the token into the user's Cookie, which is a special place in the user's RAM that's kept secret from everyone except Serf. The next time the user interacts, Serf checks to make sure the cookie matches the token value in the States value for the user's location, which is kept in the URL field of the States table.

Important: Since Serf uses cookies to maintain security between user interactions, Serf will not work properly if the user turns the cookies off. If a user reports that Serf keeps giving security violation warnings, that user has probably turned the browser's cookies off. You should advise users who are worried about cookies to choose the option to accept cookies from the current server, instead of turning all cookies off.

Monitoring the Serf Server

As an administrator, you can inspect the status of the Serf server via monitoring options on the System panel. Follow these steps:

- Go to the Monitor section of the System panel (row 5, column 2).
- For a quick, color-coded status report of the Serf threads of execution, click the Console option. Serf will display a table containing one cell for each thread of execution. Green threads are idle, and red threads are busy. To refresh the display, click the option to update this display, which appears above the report. If a lot of threads show red continuously, you may need to restart your Serf server. If this happens often, please inform the University of Delaware, so we can help you look into what might be causing the problem.
- For a more detailed report of what the Serf threads of execution are doing, click the option to monitor the Serf threads. Serf will print a report identifying the URL of the user last served by each thread, along with the most recent command Serf executed on that thread. If you have stuck threads, looking at who last accessed the threads can help troubleshoot the problem.

Restarting Serf will regenerate all of the Serf threads of execution. Since the Serf database maintains the states of all of the Serf users, you can stop and restart Serf without causing any disruption to instructor or student records.

Viewing a Course through the Eyes of a Student

Should you happen to be developing a Serf course via your Administrator logon, you may find it helpful to view the course periodically through the eyes of a student, so you can see how the syllabus you are creating will appear on the student screen. To view a Serf course through the eyes of a student, follow these steps:

- Go to the Student Views section of the System panel (row 4, column 4).
- To view the current class, click the Current Class option.
- To view the brief index, from which you can select any class, click the Brief Index option.
- To view the detailed index, from which you can select any event in any class, click the Detailed Index option.
- To view the preamble, which is the section of the syllabus the students will see if they log on prior to the start of a course, click the Preamble option.
- To search the syllabus for any keyword, phrase, or combination of keywords and phrases, click the Search option.
- To view the complete syllabus, click the Syllabus option. Since you are an administrator, Serf will print warnings at the end of the syllabus if the calendar has too few or too many dates on it; students never see these warnings.

Switching Courses

After you've created more than one course in Serf, you'll want to be able to switch courses, so you can inspect and edit the objects belonging to different courses. When you select the option to edit a syllabus, for example, you'll be presented with the syllabus for the current course. If that's not the syllabus you want to edit, you can easily switch to a different course by following these steps:

- Go to the Courses section of the System panel (row 2, Column 2).
- Click the Switch option to make the Switch Courses form appear.
- Click the name of the course to which you want to switch.
- Serf switches you to that course and makes all of the course-specific options apply to that course.

If you assign one instructor to teach multiple courses, the instructor will be able to use the Switch Courses option on the Instructor panel to work on any one of the courses. Similarly, if you enroll a student in more than one course, the student will be able to work on different courses by using the Switch Courses feature that appears on the Student panel. You should familiarize yourself with the other Serf control panels by studying the *Serf Instructor Guide*, the *Serf Teaching Assistant Guide*, and the *Serf Student Jumpstart Pamphlet*.

Changing Your Password

Because your administrator logon is so powerful, you should periodically change your password, to help guard against anyone finding out what it is or guessing it. To change your password, click the Your Password option in the System Commands section of the System panel (row 3, column 1).

Registering Your E-mail Address

Every Serf user should register their e-mail address. To register your e-mail address, go to the E-mail section of the System panel (row 4, column 5), click the Register option, and follow the on-screen instructions.

Using CD-ROM with Serf

To configure your computer for use with multimedia CD-ROM in Serf courses, click the CD-ROM Setup option in the System Commands section of the System panel (row 3, column 1) and follow the on-screen instructions. The *Serf Instructor Guide* contains detailed instructions on authoring courses that use CD-ROM with Serf. Please note, however, that CD-ROM is an option, not a requirement for using Serf. It is quite possible to create highly effective Serf courses without using CD-ROM.

Importing and Exporting

Up until now, this booklet has been showing you how to create objects from scratch. It's also possible to import pre-existing objects into Serf. When publishers distribute Serf courses, for example, they provide you with an exported syllabus, which you import onto your server. Another use of importing occurs at the beginning of a course, when you can import class rosters from your institution's student information system, instead of having to create the rosters from scratch. At the end of a course, the exporting feature enables you to extract the grades from Serf and submit them electronically to your student information system.

Importing Student Rosters

The biggest time-saver is the option to import student rosters, so let's cover that first. Depending on the computing environment, student rosters get stored in a lot of different formats. Serf is flexible in permitting you to import and export rosters in lots of different formats. As you will see, you can even make your own institution's format become the default method for importing rosters into Serf. To import a roster into Serf, follow these steps:

- In the Import section of the Serf system panel, click Roster; the first half of the Import Roster screen appears as illustrated in Figure 16.
- In the Title field, enter the name that you want the roster to have after you import it.
- The data source can either be a local file, or it can be a URL pointing to a remote file or a CGI server. In the Import From field, enter either the complete local drive:path\filename or the URL of the data source of the roster.
- In the Lines to Skip field, enter the number of line feeds at the start of the data that Serf should ignore. Typically a roster will contain a few lines of information prior to the start of the actual data. The Lines to Skip field provides you with a way to skip these lines.

To create a roster, Serf needs to know the format of the data to be imported. Your Serf system staff can preset the data import parameters in your institution's Serf.ini file. Any preset parameters will appear in the form below. Please begin by pulling down the menu to choose the Serf name that will own the roster you are about to import.

John Doe ▾

Enter the title that you want the imported roster to have.

Title

Serf will import the roster from the local file or URL that you enter in the Import From field.

Import From

At the beginning of the data, if there are any lines to be skipped, enter the number of lines that should be skipped.

Lines to Feed at the Beginning

Figure 16. The first half of the Import a Roster form.

- The second half of the Import Roster field appears as illustrated in Figure 17. For the First Name field, Last Name field, and Ticket field, specify the following information:
 1. The order in which the field will arrive.
 2. Starting Column Number, if any.
 3. Ending Column Number, if any.
 4. Field Number in the Column, if any.
 5. Breaker, if any; this is the character that Serf will use as the delimiter to skip the number of fields specified by the Field Number. In comma-delimited data, for example, the Breaker is a comma.
 6. Terminator; this can be any character, such as a space, comma, semicolon, colon, tab, or line feed; it can even be a string of characters.
 7. The number of lines to skip in order to move to the next field or record
- If you are using social security numbers as tickets, and the ticket fields in the incoming data contain hyphens, you can choose to have Serf remove the hyphens, or you can leave them in, depending on whether it is customary for students at your institution to type hyphens in their social security numbers. Most schools do not have students type the hyphens.
- When you are ready to import the roster, click the Import button.

First Name Data Element			
Arrival Order	<input type="text" value="2"/>	Starting Column	<input type="text" value="7"/>
		Ending Column	<input type="text" value="28"/>
Field Number	<input type="text" value="2"/>	Breaker	<input type="text" value=","/>
		Terminator	<input type="text" value=""/>
		Lines to Feed	<input type="text" value="0"/>
Last Name Data Element			
Arrival Order	<input type="text" value="1"/>	Starting Column	<input type="text" value="7"/>
		Ending Column	<input type="text" value="28"/>
Field Number	<input type="text" value="1"/>	Breaker	<input type="text" value=""/>
		Terminator	<input type="text" value=","/>
		Lines to Feed	<input type="text" value="0"/>
Ticket Data Element			
Arrival Order	<input type="text" value="3"/>	Starting Column	<input type="text" value="30"/>
		Ending Column	<input type="text" value="40"/>
Field Number	<input type="text" value="1"/>	Breaker	<input type="text" value=""/>
		Terminator	<input type="text" value=""/>
		Lines to Feed	<input type="text" value="1"/>
<p>If you are using social security numbers as your tickets, and the incoming tickets contain hyphens, you can have Serf remove the hyphens.</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Remove hyphens from Ticket fields</p> <p>Please understand that importing a roster creates a new roster; it does not replace any existing roster. Click the Import button to import the new roster.</p> <p><input type="button" value="Import"/></p>			

Figure 17. The second half of the Import a Roster form.

Serf will inform you of any problems that may arise while importing the roster. Then Serf will list the roster for you to review. If the roster has not been imported properly, simply delete the roster, then try again. After the roster comes in successfully, you may assign it to a course. Should you ever need to make any changes, deletions, or updates to the roster, you can do so at any time by choosing the option to edit the roster for the current course.

The settings in Figure 17 are the ones used to import rosters at the University of Delaware, which have the format illustrated in Figure 18.

COMM467011.txt - Notepad
File Edit Search Help

107 Class List MULTIMEDIA & INTERNET LITERACY
HOFSTETTER F
 Screen: ___ SID: _____ Course: COMM467011 Term: 97F Fall 1997
Page 1 of 1

Line	Student Name	Student ID	Col	Cls	Maj	Registration Status
1	Smith, Erik E.	964-34-3679	AS	SR	COM	Enrolled
2	Jones, Matthew McCorm	978-53-9634	AS	SR	COM	Enrolled
3	Do, Susan Kate	962-26-2473	AS	JR	COM	Enrolled w/Permit
4	Com, Dot	951-68-6426	CE	ND	NRQ	Enrolled w/Permit

Figure 18. How rosters are formatted by the student information system at the University of Delaware. (The student names and ID numbers are fictitious.)

Setting the Roster Import Default Parameters

Your Serf sysadmin can modify the roster import settings in your server's serf.cfg file to make the Import Roster form come up with your institution's data format parameters preinitialized. If you plan to import a lot of rosters, you should ask your sysadmin to work with you to preset the serf.cfg file to suit your data format. The names of the variables in the serf.cfg file are self-documenting. By comparing the settings in the serf.cfg file to the fields on the Import Roster form, you will see how the parameters in the serf.cfg file preset the form. The only tricky part is that when a parameter's value in the serf.cfg file ends with a space, you won't be able to see the space due to the white space after it, but the space is there, nonetheless! Use your text editor to cursor to the end of any line in the serf.cfg file, and you'll be able to tell whether there is a space at the end of the line.

Exporting Calendars, Rosters, Styles, and Syllabi

When Serf exports calendars, rosters, styles, and syllabi, Serf extracts the data from the columns in the database, and writes it into a plain text file that's very easy to read. You can easily inspect the exported file with any text editor to see how Serf sends you the values of every column in the data table for every record in the table. To export a calendar, roster, style, or syllabus, follow these steps:

- Go to the Export section of the System panel (row 5, column 4).
- Click the option for the kind of object you want to export (Calendar, Roster, Style, or Syllabus).
- When the Export form appears, pull down the menu to select the title of the object you want to export.
- Click the Export button; your browser will display a window giving you the option to save the exported file.
- When you name the file, make sure you give it a name that makes sense (such as IntroMusicSyllabus) and put it into a sensible folder on your hard drive (such as SerfMusicBackups) so it will be easy for you to find the file later on.
- After the file gets downloaded to your computer, you'll be able to inspect it with any text editor. Do not modify the file, however, in case you really know what you are doing, because if you spoil the syntax of the exported file, you will not be able to import it.

Importing Calendars, Styles, and Syllabi

The purpose of Serf's options for importing calendars, styles, and syllabi is to enable the publishing and distribution of courses from one Serf system to another. To import a calendar, style, or syllabus into Serf, follow these steps:

- Go to the Import section of the System panel (row 5, column 3).
- Click the option for the kind of object you want to import (Calendar, Style, or Syllabus).
- When the Import form appears, pull down the menu to select the name of the person who will own it.
- In the Title field, type the title that the imported object will have. Note: due to the relational nature of the Serf database, imported objects do not replace any existing objects. Each imported object is treated as a newly created object and must have a unique title.
- In the Import From field, enter the data source of the object to be imported. The data source can be either a local file (in which case you enter its complete drive:path\filename), or a URL if the data source is available electronically over the Internet.
- Click the Import button to import the object into the Serf database.

Tip: Do not confuse Serf's import/export options with the backup/restore functions. It is *not* the purpose of the import/export options to provide a way of backing up the database. Serf's database is relational, and in order to back it up, you need to copy more than a dozen data tables, not just the calendars, styles, and syllabi. The Serf sysadmin uses the backup/restore options to backup the Serf database. The import/export options are for publishing, not for backing up and restoring the database.

Exporting Grades

One of the most popular Serf features for faculty is the ability to export grades. Due to the wide variation in the manner in which different institutions handle grades, Serf's Export Grades form lets the faculty member or administrator adjust the parameters that determine how the grades will flow into the output file. In the serf.cfg file, there is a section called "Grade Export Parameters" that the Serf sysadmin can use to preset the manner in which the Grade Export Parameters get present on the Export Grades form. To export grades from Serf, follow these steps:

- Go to the Export section of the System panel (row 5, column 4).
- Click the Grades option; the Export Grades form appears, as illustrated in Figure 19.
- Pull down the menu to select the title of the class whose grades you want to export. Instructors can only export a grade report for the classes they teach. Administrators can export grade reports for any Serf course.
- Following the on-screen instructions, set the export parameters to define how you want the grade report formatted. For each data element, you can modify the following parameters:
 1. The order in which the data element will be exported.
 2. Starting column number, if any; if you omit this, the data element will be exported in the next available column of the exported record.
 3. Ending column number, if any; if you omit this, the data element will be exported in its entirety.
 4. Leader, if any; this is a string that will always appear at the start of the exported data element.
 5. Terminator, if any; this is a string that will always appear at the end of the exported data element.
 6. Lines to feed, if any; this tells Serf how many linefeeds to append after this data element.
 7. Left or right justification. You must specify an ending column number (see step 3) in order for right justification to take effect.
- Click the Export button; your browser will display a window giving you the option to save the exported grade file.
- When you name the grade file, make sure you give it a name that makes sense (such as IntroMusicGradesFall98) and put it into a sensible folder on your hard drive (such as SerfGrades) so it will be easy for you to find the file later on.
- After the file gets downloaded to your computer, you'll be able to inspect it with any text editor. This enables the instructor to make any changes to the grades prior to forwarding the grade report to your student information system.
- Figure 20 shows a sample grade report printed out according to the University of Delaware format that faculty use to e-mail grades to the student information system.

Tip: At the University of Delaware, faculty submit grades by e-mailing them to the student information system in a prescribed file format. Serf's Export Grades form enables the faculty to extract the grades in precisely the same format as that required by the student information system.

Pull down the menu and choose the course for which you want to export the grades.
EDDV-885-010-F97: Advanced Multimedia Design & Development

Click the Export button to make Serf export the grade file.
Your Web browser will prompt you to save the file on your computer.

Serf will export the grades according to the export format specified in the Serf configuration file. Your Serf system staff can preset the data export parameters in your institution's Serf.cfg file. The preset parameters appear in the form below. Before you click the Export button to export the grades, you can scroll down and modify the parameters if you want to change the export format.

First Name Data Element

Export Order Starting Column Ending Column

Leader Terminator Lines to Feed

Left Justify Right Justify

Last Name Data Element

Export Order Starting Column Ending Column

Leader Terminator Lines to Feed

Left Justify Right Justify

Ticket Data Element

Export Order Starting Column Ending Column

Leader Terminator Lines to Feed

Left Justify Right Justify

Grade Data Element

Export Order Starting Column Ending Column

Leader Terminator Lines to Feed

Left Justify Right Justify

Prefix Data Element

Export Order Starting Column Ending Column

Leader Terminator Lines to Feed

Left Justify Right Justify

Suffix Data Element

Export Order Starting Column Ending Column

Leader Terminator Lines to Feed

Left Justify Right Justify

Section Data Element

Export Order Starting Column Ending Column

Leader Terminator Lines to Feed

Left Justify Right Justify

Academic Term Data Element

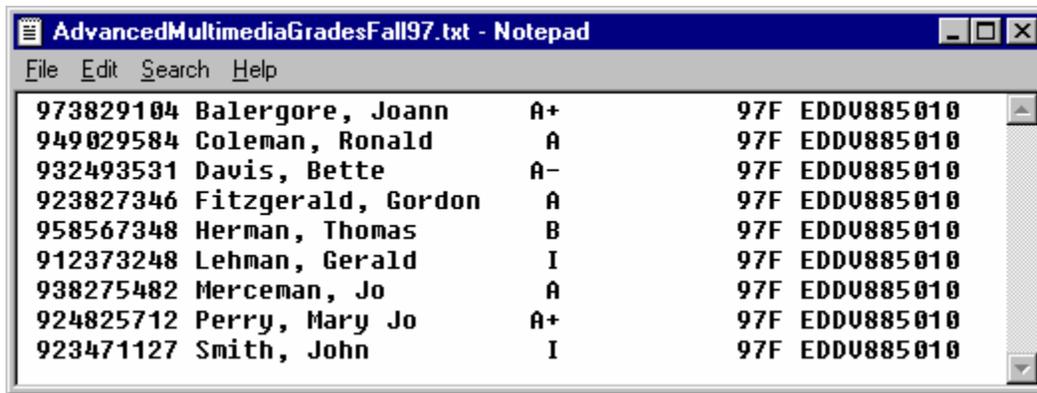
Export Order Starting Column Ending Column

Leader Terminator Lines to Feed

Left Justify Right Justify

Click the Export button to make Serf export the grade file.
Your Web browser will prompt you to save the file on your computer.

Figure 19. The Export Grades form.



ID	Name	Grade	Course ID
973829104	Balergore, Joann	A+	97F EDDU885010
949029584	Coleman, Ronald	A	97F EDDU885010
932493531	Davis, Bette	A-	97F EDDU885010
923827346	Fitzgerald, Gordon	A	97F EDDU885010
958567348	Herman, Thomas	B	97F EDDU885010
912373248	Lehman, Gerald	I	97F EDDU885010
938275482	Merceman, Jo	A	97F EDDU885010
924825712	Perry, Mary Jo	A+	97F EDDU885010
923471127	Smith, John	I	97F EDDU885010

Figure 20. A fictitious grade report generated according to the export settings in Figure 19.

Serf[®] Instructor Guide



Version 1.0

by

**Fred T. Hofstetter
University of Delaware**

Last Modified January 22, 1998

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Introduction

Welcome to Serf! You're about to enter an educational environment that unleashes the power of the World Wide Web for delivering instruction and improving communications among instructors and students. Before you begin creating your first course, however, you need to understand the hierarchy of user types that exist in the Serf environment. There are five kinds of users in Serf:

1. *Serf Sysadmin.* At the top of the hierarchy is the Serf sysadmin, which stands for system administrator. The sysadmin is in charge of running the Serf server, making periodic backups of the work done by instructors and students, and troubleshooting any problems that may arise. Every Serf server must have at least one sysadmin.
2. *Administrator.* The administrator creates and maintains the lists of objects with which instructors and students work. These lists include rosters, calendars, syllabi, rooms, and styles. The administrator creates courses by linking these objects together and assigning them to an instructor. For institutions with a small staff, it is possible for the Serf sysadmin also to function as the administrator. At larger institutions, the Serf sysadmin can create several administrators to assist in the creation and monitoring of courses.
3. *Instructor.* The instructor is the person to whom the administrator will have assigned the responsibility for teaching a course. Depending on the options chosen by the administrator, the instructor will normally be able to create and edit the course syllabus, add and modify dates on the course calendar, adjust the style parameters that control the on-screen appearance of the course, and add or drop students from the roster. The instructor also has access to the course gradebook, which is used to monitor student progress, grade assignments, and compute final grades.
4. *Teaching Assistant.* Each course can have one or more teaching assistants. The teaching assistant helps the instructor communicate with students, grade assignments, and maintain the course roster. In practice, however, smaller courses tend not to have teaching assistants.
5. *Student.* Last in the hierarchy but certainly not least in terms of importance is the student. The student side of Serf is where all of the options described above combine to create a unique and powerful way of exploring, discovering, and constructing knowledge over the Web.

As you can see from this list, you, the instructor, are in the middle of the hierarchy. In terms of organizing and presenting instructional events, interacting with students, and assessing performance, you are in many ways the most important part of the process. Serf has been designed to make your role enjoyable, efficient, and effective.

When a user logs on, Serf checks the database to determine what role the user plays in the Serf hierarchy. When a student logs on, for example, Serf displays a very simple screen containing the student options. When a system administrator logs on, on the other hand, Serf displays a more comprehensive screen consisting of many more options. You should be happy to know that when you log on as an instructor, you will get a set of instructor options that have been specifically designed to make the role of the instructor easy to learn and pleasurable to fulfill.

Serf Instructor Options

When an instructor logs on, Serf presents a screen similar to the one shown in Figure 1. Depending on the Serf style parameters in use at your institution, some of the icons and logos may differ. All instructors get the same control panel, however, which has five columns: Syllabus, Student Views, Administrative, Personal Calendar, and System.



Figure 1. When an instructor logs on, Serf displays the Instructor panel, which contains five columns of options.

Column 1: Syllabus Options

Instructors use the options in column 1 of the control panel to create, view, and edit the course syllabus and calendar, and to edit the style that determines how the information will appear on screen.

Column 2: Student Views

The student views let the instructor see how the course will appear to the student. At any time during course creation, the instructor can inspect one of the student views to see the course through the eyes of a student. If the instructor is teaching more than one Serf course, the Switch Courses option enables the instructor to switch courses. The control panel options always apply to the current course, which is identified in the line immediately above the control panel, where Serf says what course the instructor is working on.

Column 3: Administrative

Column 3 of the control panel provides the instructor with administrative options. These include the gradebook, with which the instructor inspects the student's work and assigns grades, and the roster, to which the instructor can add or drop students.

Column 4: Personal Calendar

Every Serf user has a personal calendar that you can use to keep track of important dates and reminders. The Personal Calendar options enable you to see daily, weekly, or monthly views of your personal calendar, and add events, change, or delete events from the calendar. Please note that your personal calendar is different from the syllabus calendar in column 1. Personal dates do not appear on the syllabus calendar; neither do syllabus dates appear on your personal calendar.

Column 5: System

Every Serf user gets the system options displayed in column 5. These options enable you to log on and off and change your password. You can register your e-mail address and send e-mail to any member of the class. You can also set up your CD-ROM drive for use as a multimedia resource in support of a course. This CD-ROM feature, which is described fully in the CD-ROM section of this manual, is optional; you do not need to use CD-ROM in order to create and deliver courses with Serf.

Authoring Courses with Serf

In Serf, a course consists of the combination of a syllabus with a calendar, a roster, and a style. The syllabus, calendar, roster, and style are objects, which Serf combines to create courses. The syllabus object contains the instructional events that will be presented in the course. The calendar object determines when these events will occur. The roster object lists the students who can log on to the course, and the style object determines how the course will appear on screen. Because Serf creates courses by combining objects, Serf is an object-oriented authoring environment.

Object orientation provides you with more flexibility than you would have if you put everything into the same structure. Keeping the dates in calendar objects instead of typing them into the syllabus enables you to use the same syllabus to teach courses that begin and end at different times. Instead of having to retype your syllabus at the beginning of the next academic term, you can simply attach a different calendar object, and all of the events on the syllabus will inherit dates from the new calendar. If this sounds complicated, just read on, and you'll soon see how easy it is to create object-oriented courses with Serf.

Creating and Editing a Syllabus

A syllabus is an ordered list of the instructional events that occur in a course. Figure 2 illustrates the kinds of events that can occur on a Serf syllabus. Before you begin inserting events into your course syllabus, you should reflect on the function each kind of event plays on a Serf syllabus.

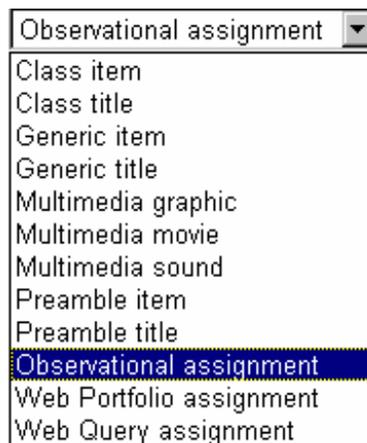


Figure 2. Kinds of Syllabus Events.

Kinds of Events

The three Title events (Class Title, Generic Title, and Preamble Title) create new sections in the syllabus. Each Class Title event that you put on the syllabus begins a new class. Generic Title events create places on the syllabus where you can put generic information such as the course description, textbook ordering instructions, and other logistical information that is not part of a class. Preamble Titles create information that gets presented if the student logs on prior to the scheduled beginning of a course.

Within each section of a syllabus, you insert the appropriate kinds of events. If you've just created a Generic Title, such as "Computer Logistics" for example, you would follow that by inserting one or more Generic Items providing the computer logistics information. Likewise, you would follow each Preamble Title with one or more Preamble Items. Class Titles are the most significant category because they key to dates in the calendar. Each class must begin with a title. Following the title there can be class items, multimedia resources, and assignments.

There are three kinds of assignments that an instructor can insert on a syllabus:

- *Web Query.* The Web Query assignment lets you ask a question directly on the syllabus. The student answers the question by typing a response into an answer box provided on screen.
- *Web Portfolio.* Use the Web Portfolio assignment when you want students to submit the URL of a Web page, to which you will assign a grade. This can be used to have students submit term papers over the Web, for example, or you can have each student working on a cooperative learning assignment log their contributions to the project at a personal Web page. You can also assign students to find things on the Web, and report the URL of what they found.
- *Observational.* Insert an Observational assignment when you want to grade something the student is not going to submit through a Web Query or Web Portfolio assignment. The Observational assignment is so-named because you will be basing your grade on some activity that you will be observing, such as class participation.

Inserting Events

Now that you understand the different kinds of events that can occur on a Serf syllabus, you're ready to find out how easy it is to create these events. If you're not already logged on to Serf, please log on now. The Serf Instructor panel will appear. To insert an event on your syllabus, follow these steps:

- In the Syllabus column of the Instructor panel, click the Edit option, which is the first option in the column.
- Serf will display the Edit Syllabus form. If Serf tells you that you are not permitted to edit the syllabus for this course, that means someone else besides you has been identified as the owner of the syllabus. See your Serf system administrator if you think you should be permitted to edit the syllabus.
- The Edit Syllabus form consists of a series of wide, rectangular boxes. Each box represents an event on the syllabus. If you're editing a brand new syllabus that doesn't have any events in it yet, there will be just one box, which will appear as shown in figure 3.



Figure 3. An empty syllabus edit box.

- Notice how the box contains options to Insert, Edit, Move, and Delete. To insert an event, click the Insert option. Serf will display the Insert Syllabus Event form shown in Figure 4.
- The form tells you to use the menu to choose the kind of event you want to create. The choices are: Class item or Class title; Generic item or Generic title; Multimedia graphic, movie or sound; Preamble item or Preamble title; and Observational, Web Portfolio, or Web Query assignment.
- Choose the kind of event you want to create, and then click the Create button.

Syllabi consist of a time-ordered series of different kinds of events.
Use the following menu to choose the kind of event you want to create.

Class item ▼

Then click the Create button to create the event,
or scroll down for other options.

Create

Figure 4. The Insert Syllabus Event form.

Depending on the kind of event you chose, Serf will provide you with a form to fill out in order to create the event. As illustrated in Figure 5, the form is self-documenting.

In the following field, enter the heading or title that will identify this event.

Enter the block of text that will appear on screen to provide the content for this event. The text may contain HTML tags.

Check the tracking box if you want student progress logged for this event.

Tracking

If this event counts toward the student's grade in the course, specify the relative weight.

If this event has a deadline, specify how many days the student has to complete it.

Weight Days Allowed

Click the Insert button to insert this item, or scroll down for other options.

Figure 5. Fields and options used in creating syllabus events.

Depending on the kind of event you are creating, the form will contain fields asking you to supply the following information:

- *Heading or Title.* Enter the heading, or title, that will identify this event. What you type here will appear on the syllabus and in the course index. Keep the title short.
- *Optional Block of Text.* In the large edit box, you may enter a block of text that will appear on the syllabus next to the heading of this event. There are three kinds of events, however, for which the text block is not provided, namely, Class titles, Generic titles, and Preamble titles, which do not use text blocks.
- *Tracking.* All of the events except for titles have a tracking box that you can check. If you check the tracking option, the student will get a tracking box displayed along with this event, and Serf will ask the student to check the box when the student has completed the event. The instructor can inspect the status of the check boxes to track student progress in the course. You should not overuse this feature, however, because the syllabus can become overly cluttered with checkboxes. Use this only for an event you really want to track.
- *Weight.* Assignments have weight boxes. If you want the assignment to count toward the student's grade in the course, type a number into the Weight field to indicate how much this event will count. Serf will sum all of the weights, compute the relative weight of this event, and use the relative weight in computing the student's final grade in the course.
- *Days Allowed.* If you want to set a time limit for the completion of an assignment, enter the number of days the student may work on the item into the Days Allowed field. Serf will warn the student that the assignment is late if it does not get submitted on time.

When you are done filling out the form, click the Submit button. If Serf detects any errors on the form, you will get a friendly message explaining how to correct the problem.

Figure 6 shows an example of a syllabus that's being created by an instructor, and figure 7 shows how the events will appear on the student's screen. If you compare figures 6 and 7, you will see how the class items and assignments get displayed beneath the class titles.

Tip: When you're creating instructional events on a Serf syllabus, try to resist the temptation to copy huge blocks of text into the text boxes. Instead of swamping the student with long narratives, it's better to organize your instruction into small chunks. Think modular, and present the instruction in short steps that progressively lead to mastery of the material.



Figure 6. A syllabus created by an instructor using the Serf syllabus editor. Compare this to Figure 7.

Summative Evaluation **Class 12: Mon 1 Dec 1997**

Classroom	Present the expert judgment phase and the field-trial phase of summative evaluation.
Portfolio	Each team creates a checklist for the content analysis and the design analysis of their project. To judge the project's utility, each team creates a form for feasibility analysis.
Reading	Dick and Carey, Chapter 12.

Final Project Presentations **Class 13: Mon 8 Dec 1997**

Classroom	Teams will present their multimedia projects. Each team will have thirty minutes. After each presentation, fellow students will comment on the strengths and special features of the project, while the next team gets its project running and ready to show.
Portfolio	Final versions of portfolios and projects must be mounted on the Web for Dr. Hofstetter to review and grade.

✳	This is a Web Portfolio assignment. Click Submit when you're ready to submit it.
🔊	This item counts 33 points toward your grade in the course.

You are working on the course **Advanced Multimedia Design & Development**.

Syllabus	Assignments	Calendar	E-Mail	System
Current Class		Daily		Logon
Brief Index	Inspect	Weekly	Instructor	Logout
Detailed Index	Submit	Monthly	Assistant	Password
Preamble	Grades	Add Event	Classmate	CD-ROM Setup
Search		Delete Event	Register	Switch Courses
View Complete		Change Event		

Document: Done

Figure 7. How the student will view the instructional events listed in Figure 6.

Editing Events

After you've entered a few events onto your syllabus, you will undoubtedly encounter situations in which you want to modify the content of an event. You might want to correct a grammatical error, for example, or update some old information. To edit an event on your syllabus, follow these steps:

- If the syllabus event you want to edit is not visible on your screen, click the Detailed Index option in the Syllabus column of the Instructor panel; when the index appears, as illustrated in Figure 8, click the title of the event you want to edit.
- The event will appear inside a wide box containing options to Insert, Edit, Move, or Delete the item. To edit the event, click the Edit option.
- The Edit Syllabus screen will appear, presenting you with the same form you used to create the event in the first place. This time, the form is filled out with the information for this event.
- Follow the on-screen instructions to make any changes you desire.
- Click the Edit button to record the changes.



Figure 8. The index provides a quick way to find the event you want to edit on your syllabus.

Tip: Don't be afraid to experiment when you're learning how to use Serf. It's so easy to edit events on the syllabus that you can quickly try things out and see how they will appear on screen.

Moving Events

No matter how well you plan your syllabus in advance, you will inevitably encounter the need to move things around on your syllabus. Serf uses a pull-down menu to make moving events easy. To move an event on a syllabus, follow these steps:

- If the syllabus event you want to move is not visible on your screen, click the Detailed Index option in the Syllabus column of the Instructor panel; when the Index appears, click the title of the event you want to move.
- The event will appear inside a wide box containing options to Insert, Edit, Move, or Delete the item. To move the event, click the Move option.
- When the Move Syllabus Event form appears as illustrated in Figure 9, pull down the menu to reveal the titles of all the events on your syllabus, and select the event in front of which you want to move this event.
- Click the Move button when you're ready to make the move.



Pull down the menu and choose the event that you want to move this one in front of.

30: Defining the Internet

Press the Move button when you're ready to make the move.

Move

Figure 9. The Move Syllabus Event form.

Tip: As your syllabus grows longer, Skip Ahead and Skip Back options will begin to appear at the top and bottom of your screen. Use the Skip options to move forward or backward in your syllabus, or use the index to jump to a specific event.

Deleting Events

If you need to delete an event from your syllabus, follow these steps:

- If the syllabus event you want to delete is not visible on your screen, click the Detailed Index option in the Syllabus column of the Instructor panel; when the Index appears, click the title of the event you want to delete.
- The event will appear inside a wide box containing options to Insert, Edit, Move, or Delete the item. To delete the event, click the Delete option.
- There is no “Undo” option, so make sure you really want to delete the event before you click the Delete button. If you accidentally delete something you need to restore, click your browser’s back button until you come to the screen displaying that event, use your mouse to select the information, and use your browser’s Edit menu to copy the selected text to your clipboard, from which you can paste it back into your syllabus on the syllabus Insert option.

Creating and Editing a Calendar

A calendar provides dates for the instructional events on a syllabus. When Serf displays the syllabus for a course, Serf looks to that course's calendar to find out what dates to present each class. When the syllabus is complete, there should be one class title for each class date on the calendar. If you've been creating more classes on your syllabus than there are dates on your calendar, Serf will have been providing you with warnings that only the instructor sees, informing you that you've created more classes than your calendar has dates. Not to worry, because creating a calendar is even easier than creating a syllabus.

Inserting Dates

To insert a date on a Serf calendar, follow these steps:

- In the Syllabus column of the Instructor panel, click the Edit Calendar option.
- The Editing Calendar form will appear, displaying each date on the calendar inside a wide box. Each box has options to insert, edit, or delete a date. If there are no dates on the calendar yet, there will only be an option to Insert a date on the calendar.
- Click the Insert option; the Insert Calendar Date form appears as shown in Figure 10.
- Pull down the menu to choose the kind of date you want added to the calendar. The menu contains options to create a class, holiday, reminder, vacation, or announcement. Most of your dates will be classes, which is the menu's default setting.

Calendars consist of a time-ordered series of different kinds of dates.
Use the following menu to choose the kind of date you want to add to the calendar.

Class

Click the Create button to create the date,
or scroll down for other options.

Create

Figure 10. The Insert Calendar Date form.

Serf will provide you with a form to fill out to create the date. Depending on the kind of date you are creating, the form will contain the following options, which are illustrated in Figure 11:

- Pull down the year, month, and date menus to set the date. You may also set the hour, minute, and second, but unless you are scheduling more than one class per day, you should leave the hour, minute, and second set to zero.
- In the Heading field, which appears for every kind of date except class dates, type the title that will identify this date. If you are putting the dates for Spring Break on the calendar, for example, type "Spring Break" into the heading field.
- The text block is optional. It appears for every kind of date except class dates. Anything you type here will appear on the syllabus along with this date. It is OK to leave the text block empty.
- Click the Insert button when you are ready to insert the date into the calendar.

Use the following menus to set the year, month, date, hour, minute, and second, if any.

1997 January 1 0 : 0 : 0

Enter the title, or heading, that will identify this date:

You may supply an optional block of text to appear on screen along with this date. The text may contain HTML tags.

Click the Insert button to insert this item, or scroll down for other options.

Insert

Figure 11. Fields and options used in creating calendar dates.

Editing Dates

Just as you can edit events on a syllabus, so also can you edit events on a calendar. To edit an event on the calendar, follow these steps:

- If the calendar is not visible on your screen, click the Calendar option in the Syllabus column of the Instructor panel.
- Each date will appear in a wide box containing Insert, Edit, and Delete options.
- Scroll down to the date you want to edit, and click its Edit option.
- The Edit Calendar Date screen will appear, presenting you with the same form you used to create the date. This time, the form is filled out with the settings for this date.
- Follow the on-screen instructions to make any changes you desire.
- Click the Edit button to record the changes.

Deleting Dates

If you ever need to delete a date from a calendar, follow these steps:

- If the calendar is not on your screen, click the Calendar option in the Syllabus column of the Instructor panel.
- Each date will appear in a wide box containing Insert, Edit, and Delete options.
- Scroll down to the date you want to delete, and click its Delete option.
- There is no “Undo” option, so make sure you really want to delete the date before you click the Delete button. If you accidentally delete something you need to restore, click your browser’s back button until you come to the screen displaying the date, use your mouse to select the information, and use your browser’s Edit menu to copy the selected text to your clipboard, from which you can paste it into your calendar via the calendar Insert option.

Tip: To view the effect on your syllabus of inserting a date into the calendar, click the View option in the Syllabus column of the Instructor panel.

Jumpstarting Class Dates

To save you time when creating a calendar for a class that has lots of periodic dates, Serf has a Calendar Jumpstarter feature. To jumpstart a calendar, follow these steps:

- In the Syllabus column of the Instructor panel, click the Edit Calendar option.
- The Editing Calendar form will appear, displaying any dates on the calendar inside a wide box.
- At the end of the calendar, you will see the option to jumpstart the calendar.
- Click the Jumpstart option, and the Class Dates Jumpstarter will appear, as shown in Figure 12.
- Follow the on-screen instructions to jumpstart the calendar.

The class dates jumpstarter enables you to enter a series of class dates into your calendar, all in one step. To begin, use the following menus to set the year, month, and date of the first class you want to insert.

1998 January 1

Use the following menu to tell Serf how many class dates you want to insert.

1

Use the check boxes to indicate which days of the week you want included.

Sundays
 Mondays
 Tuesdays
 Wednesdays
 Thursdays
 Fridays
 Saturdays

Click the Jumpstart button to insert the class dates, or scroll down for other options.

Jumpstart

After Serf jumpstarts the calendar, you will be able to use the calendar editing options to do any fine-tuning you desire.

Figure 12. The Class Dates Jumpstarter.

Creating and Editing a Style

There are two styles that affect the appearance of a Serf screen, namely, the default style and the course style. If the course style does not override one of the settings in the default style, then the setting in the default style is used. Everything you see on the Serf screen can be changed by editing the course's style. The buttons at the top of the screen can be changed, for example, and you can even modify the links to those buttons. The course banner can be changed, and you can replace the logos and links at the bottom of the screen with your own graphics and Web addresses. You can change the foreground and background colors of the text and the tables that Serf uses to create the shaded backgrounds in your syllabus. You can even change the icons that are used to denote the different kinds of items on the calendar and on the syllabus.

Changing all of these style parameters is a lot of work, however, and in practice, the only graphic you'll really need to change will be the course banner. You should have a graphic artist create your course banner and design it to fit the context of the other graphics on the screen.

Two reserved words that you'll need to know when editing style parameters are "none" and "null." Enter the keyword "none" (without quotes) into a style parameter field when you want that field to have no entry in it. Enter the keyword "null" (without quotes) when you want to prevent a style parameter from inheriting the settings in the default style.

Changing the Course Banner

To change the course banner, follow these steps:

- In the Syllabus column of the Instructor panel, click the Edit Style option.
- Figure 13 shows how an index will appear above the style settings on the Edit Style screen. This index provides you with a way to jump down to the style settings you want to change.
- Click the Course Banner item in the index; your browser jumps down to the Course Banner settings.
- The course banner can have up to five bitmaps in it, designed to fit side-by-side across the screen. Most schools only use one banner, however, which stretches all the way across the screen. To specify the first (and usually the only) bitmap in the course banner, click the parameter that says Course Bitmap 1.
- The Edit Style Parameter form will appear, showing the current setting for this parameter, if any.
- Type the filename of your course banner (either a GIF or JPEG image) into the edit box. Do not type a path in front of the filename. Serf graphics are kept in a special Web space on the Serf server. To mount your graphics into that Web space, see your Serf system administrator.
- Click the Edit button to register the change.
- When the Edit Style screen reappears, click the Course Banner item in the index to jump back down to the Course Banner settings. You must now set the width and height parameters of the bitmap. Click Course Bitmap 1 Width to set the width, then click Course Bitmap 1 Height to set the height. If you are having graphics designed for use with Serf, the recommended size for banners is 600 pixels wide by about 70 pixels high.

Tip: Serf can resize graphics. If you enter numbers into the height and width settings for a bitmap that are different than the actual size of that bitmap, your Web browser will resize the graphic to the size you specify. You need to be careful doing this, however, because some graphics do not look good when they are resized, especially if you are making a small graphic a lot larger.

Menu Bar	Screen	Logon Banner	Course Banner	Tables	Columns	Column 1	Column 2
	Option Cluster	Logos	Bullet Icons	Buttons	Dividers	Trailers	

Menu Bar Parameters	Values (if any)
• Menu Bitmap 1	chat.gif
• Menu Bitmap 1 Width	76
• Menu Bitmap 1 Height	33
• Menu Link 1	ChatInterlit
• Menu Bitmap 2	email.gif

Figure 13. The style index appears above the parameters listed on the Edit Style screen.

Changing the Internet Resources Links

If you are using a chatroom, listserv, or newsgroup to support communications among the students in your course, you will want to modify the links to the buttons at the top of the screen so the links go to your own Internet resources. Follow these steps:

- In the Syllabus column of the Instructor panel, click the Edit Style option.
- You will find the Internet Resources bitmaps in the Menu Bar section of the style parameters; since this is the first section of the style parameters, you can just scroll down instead of using the index to find this section.
- The links for each Menu Bar bitmap are listed right after the width and height parameters for that bitmap. To edit the links, click the Menu Link for the bitmap whose link you want to change.

ParaChat Chatrooms

Serf has special support for the ParaChat network, which provides real-time communication options for students in Serf courses. To get a ParaChat chatroom for use in your course, follow these steps:

- Go to <http://www.parachat.com> and follow the instructions you will find there to get a free chatroom for use in your course. When you specify a name for the chatroom, choose a name that fits the topic of your course. The Internet Literacy chatroom, for example, is called Interlit.
- To link a ParaChat chatroom to the Serf menubar, click the Edit Style option in the Syllabus column of the Instructor panel, and when the Edit Style screen appears, scroll down to the menu bar bitmap settings for the chatroom icon.
- Click the Menu Bitmap *n* (where *n* is the number of the menu bitmap you're using for the chatroom) to make the Edit Style Parameter form appear. Make the MenuBitmap parameter read as follows (unless you want to use a different bitmap here): *chat.gif*
- Click the chatroom bitmap's link parameter to make the Edit Style Parameter form appear. Make the chatroom link read as follows: *ChatName* where *Name* is the name of your chatroom. For example, if your chatroom is called Interlit, make the link read: *ChatInterlit*
- Click Edit to register the change. Now when you click the chatroom icon in the Serf menu bar, it will launch your chatroom.

Note: In a Serf link, Chat is a reserved prefix that causes Serf to look to the ParaChat network for the name of the chatroom you specify after the reserved word Chat. The link ChatInterlit, for example, makes Serf launch the chatroom called Interlit on the ParaChat network.

Listserv Links

To link a Serf menubar icon to a listserv, follow these steps:

- Click the Edit Style option in the Syllabus column of the Instructor panel, and when the Edit Style screen appears, scroll down to the menu bar bitmap settings for the listserv icon.
- Click the Menu Bitmap n (where n is the number of the menu bitmap you're using for the listserv) to make the Edit Style Parameter form appear. Make the MenuBitmap parameter read as follows (unless you want to use a different bitmap here): *listserv.gif*
- Click the listserv bitmap's link parameter to make the Edit Style Parameter form appear. Make the listserv link read as follows: `mailto:Address` where *Address* is the e-mail address of your listserv. For example, if your listserv is called SantaClaus-list@northpole.com, make the link read:
`mailto: SantaClaus-list@northpole.com`
- Click Edit to register the change. Now when you click the listserv icon in the Serf menu bar, it will launch an e-mail window pre-addressed to the listserv.

Newsgroup Links

There's a technique you can use to simplify the setup required on the part of your students to access your course newsgroup. If you include the name of the news server in the URL that you link to the newsgroup icon, the students will not need to configure their Web browsers for use with newsgroups. To create such a newsgroup link, follow these steps:

- Click the Edit Style option in the Syllabus column of the Instructor panel, and when the Edit Style screen appears, scroll down to the menu bar bitmap settings for the newsgroup icon.
- Click the Menu Bitmap n (where n is the number of the menu bitmap you're using for the newsgroup) to make the Edit Style Parameter form appear. Make the MenuBitmap parameter read as follows (unless you want to use a different bitmap here): *news.gif*
- Click the newsgroup bitmap's link parameter to make the Edit Style Parameter form appear. Make the newsgroup link read as follows: `news://Server/Newsgroup` where *Server* is the name of the server that hosts the newsgroup, and *Newsgroup* is the name of the newsgroup. For example, if your newsgroup is called wish.list.requests, and its news server is news.northpole.com, make the link read: `news://news.northpole.com/wish.list.requests`
- Click Edit to register the change. Now when you click the newsgroup icon in the Serf menu bar, it will launch the newsgroup without requiring the user first to register a news server and subscribe to that group.

Rostering Students

Depending on local customs at your institution, an instructor may be given the power to add and drop students from the course roster. Before you add or drop a student from a roster, however, you should make sure that the student actually has enrolled in or withdrawn from your course.

Viewing the Roster

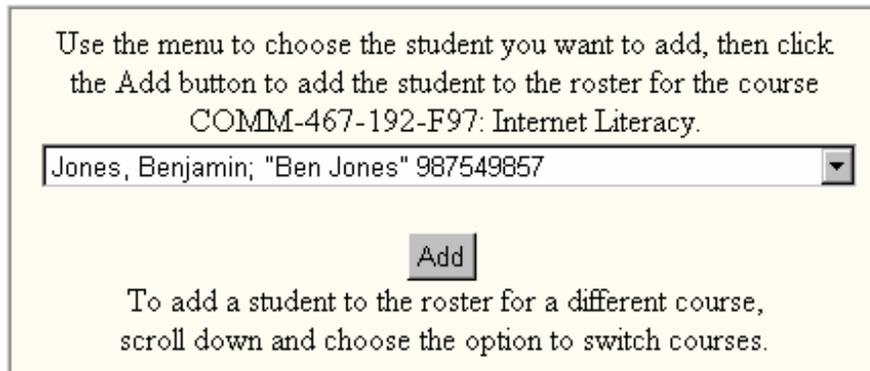
To view the roster of students enrolled in your course, click the View Roster option in the Administrative column of the Instructor panel. Serf will display the roster for the current course. If you are teaching more than one course, and you want to see the students enrolled in a different course, click the Switch Courses option to change courses, then click the View Roster option to see the roster of students enrolled in that course.

Adding a Student to the Roster

To add a student to the roster for a course, follow these steps:

- Click the Add to Roster option in the Administrative column of the Instructor panel. Serf will display the Add a Student to the Roster form illustrated in Figure 14.
- Use the menu to select the user you want to add to the roster. If the user you want to add does not appear in this menu, then that user has never been given a ticket to use Serf. See the section below on Creating a Student for instructions on how to give a user a ticket.
- Click the Add button to add the user to the roster.
- After informing you of the results of adding the user to the roster, Serf will reprint the Add Student to a Roster form, enabling you to add another user to the roster if you want.

When you're done adding students to the roster, you can verify the results by clicking the View Roster option in the Administrative column of the Instructor panel. When the roster appears, the students you added will appear on it.



Use the menu to choose the student you want to add, then click the Add button to add the student to the roster for the course
COMM-467-192-F97: Internet Literacy.

Jones, Benjamin; "Ben Jones" 987549857

Add

To add a student to the roster for a different course, scroll down and choose the option to switch courses.

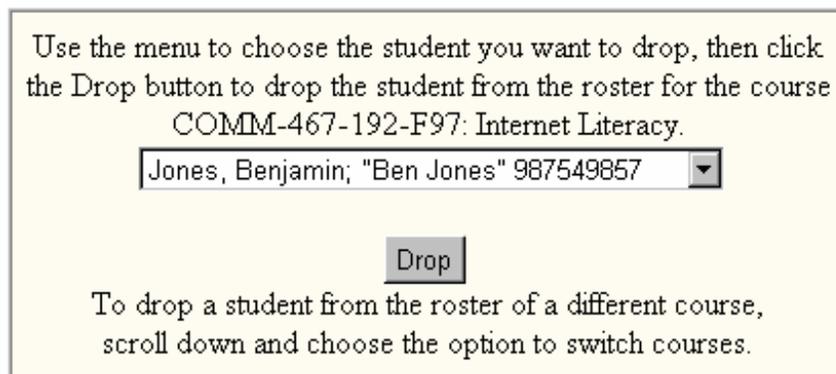
Figure 14. The Add Student to the Roster form.

Tip: The Add a Student to the Roster form adds a student to the current course's roster. If you want to add a student to the roster for a different course, scroll down and choose the option to switch courses.

Dropping a Student from the Roster

To drop a student from a roster, follow these steps:

- Click the Drop from Roster option in the Administrative column of the Instructor panel. Serf will display the Drop a Student from the Roster form illustrated in Figure 15.
- Use the menu to select the user you want dropped from the roster. If the user you want to drop does not appear in this menu, then that user does not belong to the roster.
- Click the Drop button to drop the user from the roster.
- After informing you of the results of dropping the user from the roster, Serf will reprint the Drop a Student from the Roster form, enabling you to drop another user from the roster if you want.



Use the menu to choose the student you want to drop, then click the Drop button to drop the student from the roster for the course
COMM-467-192-F97: Internet Literacy.

Jones, Benjamin; "Ben Jones" 987549857

Drop

To drop a student from the roster of a different course, scroll down and choose the option to switch courses.

Figure 15. The Drop a Student from the Roster form.

When you're done dropping students from the roster, you can verify the results by clicking the View Roster option in the Administrative column of the Instructor panel. When the roster appears, the students you dropped will no longer appear on it.

Note: If Serf does not permit you to add and drop students from a roster, that means your Serf system administrator did not assign you ownership of the roster. Depending on local customs, an institution may decide to retain control of student rosters at the administrative level. If you believe that a student needs to be added to or dropped from a roster, and Serf refuses to let you do so, contact your Serf system administrator.

Creating a Student

If you try to add a student to a roster and find that the student does not exist, you can create the student by following these steps:

- In the Administrative column of the Instructor panel, click the Create a Student option.
- Serf will display the Create a Student form, as illustrated in Figure 16.
- In the First Name field, type the student's first name.
- In the Last Name field, type the student's last name.
- You must decide whether you want to preset the student's Serf name and password, or give the student a ticket that the student can use to choose their own Serf name and password.
- If you want to preset the student's Serf name and password, enter them in the Serf Name and Password fields, respectively.
- If you want to give the student a ticket, leave the Serf name and password fields blank, and type the ticket into the ticket field. Normally the ticket is the student's social security number, typed without any spaces or hyphens. E-mail addresses can also be used as tickets, since everyone has a unique e-mail address.

Enter the real first name and last name of the new student.

First Name Last Name

If you want to preset this person's Serf name and password, do so in the Serf name and password fields.

Serf Name Password

You may also set a unique ticket. If you leave the Serf name and password fields blank, the person using this ticket can choose his or her own Serf name and password on the first logon.

Ticket

Click the Create button to create the new user.

Figure 16. The Create a Student form.

If you've given the student a ticket, all you need to tell the student is to browse to your Serf server's address, click the Ticket button at the top of the Serf screen, and follow the on-screen instructions to cash in their ticket and select their own Serf name and password.

Tip: Before you create a student, make sure the student does not already exist by clicking the option to Add to Roster and pulling down the menu to see if the student is listed there. Creating duplicate logons for your students will not make you popular with your Serf administrator. If you try to create a student with the same ticket or Serf name as an existing student, Serf will inform you that the student already exists. When you create the student, make sure you follow the ticket conventions in use at your institution. If your institution uses social security numbers for tickets, for example, make sure you enter the student's social security number into the Ticket field.

Using the Gradebook

The Serf gradebook makes it quick and easy for you to view the status of each student in the course with regard to the assignments you have given and the work students have submitted. Assignments that you have not yet graded will display a *Grade Me* link that you can click to review the assignment and submit a grade. You can also leave a comment that the student will receive along with the grade you give.

Viewing the Class Gradebook

You begin the grading process by viewing the gradebook. To view the gradebook, click the Gradebook option in the Administrative column of the Instructor panel. Serf will display a summary of the grades in your course, as illustrated in Figure 17. The summary has six columns. Columns one and two identify the student's real name and Serf name. Column three is the Pending column; if the student has submitted assignments that are waiting for you to grade, a *Grade Me* link will appear in the Pending column. The last three columns provide some statistics, telling how many assignments have been graded for this student so far, the running average of the grades you've assigned, and the student's final grade in the course. The final grade will show as an I, which stands for Incomplete, until all of the assignments have been graded.

Student Name	Serf Name	Pending	Graded	Average	Final
Doe, John	jdoe		6 of 6	B	B
Jones, Benjamin	Ben Jones	Grade Me	4 of 6	B+	I
Smith, Mary	mary		6 of 6	A	A

Figure 17. The Class Grades report.

Viewing Individual Grades

To view the grades for any student in your course, follow these steps:

- If you are not already viewing the gradebook, click the Gradebook option in the Administrative column of the Instructor panel.
- When the Class Grades report appears, click the name of the student whose grades you want to view.
- Serf will display the individual's grade report, as illustrated in Figure 18.

The grade report has three columns. Column 1 contains the name of the assignment. Column 2 contains the grade. Column 3 displays the date on which the student submitted the assignment.

Assignment	Grade	Date
E-mail	<u>B+</u>	Sun 12 Oct 97
Listserv	<u>A+</u>	Sat 27 Sep 97
Newsgroup	<u>B</u>	Sun 12 Oct 97
Home Page		
Term Paper		
Multimedia Project	<u>B+</u>	Sun 12 Oct 97
Graduate Research Project		
	Final Grade: I	

Figure 18. The Individual Grades report.

Assigning Grades

To assign a grade for a student assignment, follow the steps provided above in the section entitled “Viewing Individual Grades” to display the individual grade report for that student. If the student has submitted an assignment that is waiting to be graded, a *Grade Me* link will appear in the Grade column. If the assignment is a so-called “observational” assignment that does not require the student to submit anything over the Web, a blank underline will appear in the Grade column. Click either the Grade Me link or the blank underline to display the Grade Event form.

Depending on the type of assignment you are grading, the Grade Event form may or may not provide you with an answer to read or a URL to review. If the assignment is a Web Query, for example, Serf will print the question you asked, followed by the answer the student wrote. For a Web Portfolio assignment, Serf will provide you with the URL of the student’s work, which you should click to assess before assigning a grade.

In all cases, Serf displays a Letter Grade menu and a Percent menu, as illustrated in Figure 19. To assign a grade, pull down either the Letter Grade menu and choose a letter grade, or use the Percent menu to choose a percent. In addition to assigning a grade, you may also leave a comment about the assignment by typing a message into the comment box. When the student inspects the grade, any comment you type into the comment box will appear on screen along with the grade.

After you have completed the Grade Event form, click the Grade button to submit the grade. The grade you assign will take effect immediately. The student’s running average in the course will be updated immediately, for example, as soon as you click the Grade button. Both your grade and any comment you provided will be available for student view immediately. Students can only view their own grades in the course; an individual student is unable to see the grades of other students in the course.

To assign a grade to the student named Benjamin Jones,
whose Serf name is Ben Jones,
for the assignment named Term Paper,
use either the Letter Grade menu, or the Percent menu,
to select the grade you want to assign.

Letter Grade ▾ Percent: ▾

The URL submitted by the student is:

<http://www.udel.edu/benjones/mpeg.html>

If you want to leave a comment for the student regarding this assignment,
you may do so in the box below.

You could improve this paper by visiting <http://www.mpeg.org> and
searching the MPEG FAQ for information on the scalability of
digital video recordings.

Click the Grade button to record the student's grade.

Grade

Figure 19. The Grade Assignment form.

Ungrading an Assignment

Serf provides you with the opportunity to give the student another chance if the student performs poorly on an assignment. If a student asks you for another chance to do better, you may, at your option, decide to remove the bad grade you assigned. Once the bad grade is removed, the student is permitted to change the answer to the assignment. Then you can grade the revised assignment, and hopefully the student will have attained a higher score. Note that this ungrading procedure is totally optional. If you do not want to give the student a second chance, just say no! Anyone teaching from a cognitive perspective, however, would normally grant the second chance, because the student's desire to improve presents a powerful teaching and learning moment. To ungrade an assignment, follow these steps:

- Click the Gradebook option in the Administrative column of the Instructor options; the class gradebook appears.
- Click the name of the student for whom you want to ungrade an assignment; the individual grades appear for that student.
- In the Grade column, click the grade you want to remove; the Grade Event form appears.
- If you had assigned a letter grade, pull down the letter grade menu and choose Ungrade. If you had assigned a percentage, pull down the percent menu and choose Ungrade. In both cases, the Ungrade option appears at the very bottom of the menu.
- Click the Grade button to submit the grade. Immediately, the student will be permitted to submit a different answer for this assignment.

Grading Students in a Virtual Room

If you're teaching several sections of a course, your Serf system administrator may have grouped your sections into a virtual room. If so, when you click the Gradebook option, you'll see grades for all of the students in all of the sections assigned to that room. The virtual room makes it quicker for you to assign grades if you are teaching many sections of a course, because you do not have to switch courses to enter the gradebook for each section.

Whether to use a virtual room is a matter of personal preference. If you are teaching several sections of a course, and you would like all of the sections to appear in your gradebook at once, ask your Serf system administrator to assign your sections to the same virtual room.

Another advantage of the virtual room is that when students click the Class E-mail option that lets them address mail to any student in the class, all of the students taking courses assigned to the virtual room will appear in the point-and-click directory of student e-mail addresses.

Instructor and Classmate E-Mail

Serf makes it easy for students and instructors to communicate via electronic mail. Every user has a Register E-mail option in the System column of their Serf options panel. When users tell Serf that they want to send e-mail to their instructor or to a classmate, Serf makes their Web browser launch an e-mail window pre-addressed to the targeted user's e-mail address. To enable this powerful mode of communication over the Internet, every user should register their E-mail address. It is doubly important for you, the instructor, to register your e-mail address. If you do not register your e-mail address, nothing will happen when the student clicks the option to send you mail. To register your e-mail address, follow these steps:

- Click the Register E-mail option in the System column of the Instructor panel.
- The Register Your E-mail Address form will appear as shown in Figure 20.
- Enter your e-mail address in the blank provided.
- Click the Register button to register your e-mail address.

Should your e-mail address change in the midst of a course, simply repeat these steps, and enter the revised e-mail address.



Enter your e-mail address in the blank provided.

Then click the Register button to record your e-mail address.

Register

Figure 20. The Register Your E-mail Address form.

Multimedia CD-ROM Option

In many courses, instructors use audio and video as multimedia resources to help students visualize and understand complex phenomena. The Web is still too slow, however, to handle the real-time streaming of audio and video on a worldwide basis. Serf solves this problem by providing authors with a way to include in their online syllabi links to multimedia resources on a CD-ROM.

The cost of creating multimedia CDs has fallen dramatically. It now costs relatively little to duplicate a multimedia CD containing the audio and video resources needed to enhance a course. The Serf-delivered Internet Literacy course, for example, uses a multimedia CD-ROM to provide more than two hundred “Show-Me” videos that illustrate how to do things on the Internet.

Serf enables you to use a multimedia CD to support an online syllabus by means of a special symbol known as /cd|. When Serf encounters the symbol /cd| in the midst of a hyperlink, Serf replaces the cd| by the Windows drive letter or the Macintosh name of the user’s CD-ROM. To create such a link in an online syllabus, all you need to do is enter the symbol /cd| where the drive letter or name would normally go.

The best way to understand this is to study an example. Chapter 2 of the Serf-delivered Internet Literacy course uses a movie called *models.mov* to demonstrate how the Web is being used to improve teaching and learning. To create an online link to this movie, the author of the Internet Literacy course entered the following text into the text block of the Insert Syllabus Event form:

There's a movie on the Internet Literacy CD in which your textbook's author demonstrates how the World Wide Web helps achieve the goals of the constructivist movement in education. As you watch this movie, you'll see demonstrations of some exciting software applications that involve students actively in discovering and constructing knowledge.

Notice how the symbol /cd| appears in the spot where the CD-ROM drive letter or name would normally go. At runtime, when Serf displays this instructional event to the student, Serf replaces the cd| by the CD-ROM drive letter or name that the student will have entered by pressing the CD-ROM Setup option in the System column of the student options panel.

If you decide to author a Serf course using a multimedia CD, you will need to set up your CD-ROM drive for use with Serf, so that you can test the CD-ROM links on your syllabus as you create it. To set up your CD-ROM drive for use with Serf, click the CD-ROM Setup option in the System column of the Instructor panel, and follow the on-screen instructions.

Export Features

Serf's export features enable you to extract objects into computer files that you can use for backup purposes or for exporting grades from Serf to your institution's student records systems. Running parallel to Serf's export options is a set of import features that the Serf system administrator can use to read objects into Serf. This import/export facility is how publishers distribute courses created with Serf.

Making Backups

Your Serf system administrator is most likely creating daily backups to guard against accidental loss of your materials. Many users like to be able to make their own backups, however, as an added safeguard. Serf enables the instructor to make backups of the course syllabus, calendar, style, and roster. When you ask to make a backup, Serf responds by sending you a file. Your Web browser will give you the option of saving that file under any filename and in any directory on your computer's hard drive. When you name the file, choose something sensible. If you are backing up a course syllabus, for example, and the name of the course is music 101, name the backup something like *c:/syllabi/music101*. To create a backup, follow these steps:

- Click the Export option in the Administrative column of the Instructor panel.
- Serf will ask what kind of object you want to export: syllabus, calendar, style, or roster. Make your choice.
- Serf will create the backup and export it to your browser as a plain text file.
- Your browser will ask you where to save the file, and what name to give it. Choose a name appropriate for the kind of backup you are making.

Tip: Since the backup is a plain text file, you can inspect it with any text editor after your computer saves it on your hard disk drive.

Exporting Grades

At the end of a course, after you have graded all of the assignments, you may want Serf to export the final grades to save you the work of having to enter the grades by hand into whatever system your institution uses for handling grades. Serf has a very flexible Export Grades routine that enables you to specify the format in which Serf will export the grades. After you set the format, Serf returns the grades to you in a computer file, which you can forward on to whatever administrative system your institution uses to report grades. At the University of Delaware, for example, faculty members can e-mail grades to the Student Information System (SIS) that handles grades at Delaware. By setting the parameters of the Export Grades routine to match the format of an e-mailed grade report, Delaware faculty can make Serf export grades in a file that the faculty member can simply e-mail to the SIS system.

To export grades from Serf, follow these steps:

- Click the Export option in the Administrative column of the Instructor panel.
- When Serf asks what kind of object you want to export, choose Grades.
- Serf will present you with a form that lets you specify the format in which the grades will be exported. Your system administrator should have preset these settings for you to fit the manner in which your institution handles grades. You can modify the settings as you wish.
- When you are ready to receive the grades, press the Export button.
- Serf will send the grades to your browser as a plain text file. Your browser will ask you where to save the file, and what name to give it. Choose a name appropriate for the class whose grades you are exporting.

Tip: Since Serf exports grades in a plain text file, you can inspect the grades with any text editor prior to sending them on to your institution's student information system. You should check the grade report carefully, and make any changes needed before submitting the grades to your administrative system.

Serf Helpline and Listserv

Please let us know if you encounter any problems using Serf by contacting the Serf Helpline at the University of Delaware, Willard 305, Newark, Delaware 19716.

Telephone: (302) 831-8164

FAX: (302) 831-2089

Internet: SerfMaster@udel.edu

Serf Listserv

The University of Delaware hosts an online Serf discussion list, which we encourage all Serf authors and administrators to join. Please follow these steps to join the Serf listserv:

- Address an e-mail message to: majordomo@udel.edu
- Leave the subject line blank.
- In the body of the message, type:

subscribe serf-list *your_email_address*

- Replace *your_email_address* with your actual e-mail address.

Soon after you send the message, you'll receive a reply from Majordomo welcoming you to the list and explaining how to unsubscribe, should you ever decide to leave the list.

Serf[®] Teaching Assistant Guide



Version 1.0

by

**Fred T. Hofstetter
University of Delaware**

Last Modified January 22, 1998

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Introduction

Welcome to Serf! You're about to enter an educational environment that unleashes the power of the World Wide Web for delivering instruction and improving communications among instructors and students. As a teaching assistant, you'll be helping your course instructor communicate with students, assign grades, and maintain the student roster.

The Serf system is arranged hierarchically. There are five kinds of users in the Serf hierarchy. At the top of the hierarchy is the Serf sysadmin, who is in charge of running the Serf server. Next in the hierarchy is the administrator, who creates courses and allocates resources to instructors and teaching assistants. Third is the Instructor, whom you will be assisting. As a teaching assistant, you're in the fourth position in the hierarchy. Last in the hierarchy, but certainly not the least important, are the students.

When a user logs on, Serf checks the database to determine what role the user plays in the Serf hierarchy. When a student logs on, for example, Serf displays a very simple screen containing the student options. When a system administrator logs on, on the other hand, Serf displays a more comprehensive screen consisting of many more options. You should be happy to know that when you log on as a teaching assistant, you will get a set of teaching assistant options that have been specifically designed to make the role of the assistant easy to learn and pleasurable to fulfill.

One of the first tasks that a Serf teaching assistant should perform, however, is to become familiar with the *Student Jumpstart Pamphlet* that is used to get students started in your course. Ask your instructor for a copy of the *Student Jumpstart Pamphlet*, and study it carefully.

Serf Teaching Assistant Options

Your instructor or Serf administrator will have given you a Serf ticket or logon to use when you want to log on to Serf as a teaching assistant. When a teaching assistant logs on, Serf presents a screen similar to the one shown in Figure 1. Depending on the Serf style parameters in use at your institution, some of the icons and logos may differ. All teaching assistants get the same control panel, however, which has five columns: Syllabus, Student Records, Calendar, E-Mail, and System.

Syllabus	Student Records	Calendar	E-Mail	System
Current Class		Daily		Logon
Brief Index	Gradebook	Weekly	Instructor	Logout
Detailed Index	View Roster	Monthly	Assistant	Password
Preamble	Add to Roster	Add Event	Classmate	CD-ROM Setup
Search	Drop from Roster	Delete Event	Register	Switch Courses
View Complete		Change Event		

Figure 1. When a teaching assistant logs on, Serf displays the Assistant panel, which contains five columns of options.

Column 1: Syllabus Options

Assistants use the options in column 1 of the control panel to view the course syllabus. There are options to view the current class, jump to specific classes or events via the indexes, or search the syllabus for keywords and phrases.

Column 2: Student Records

The student records options enable you to help the instructor handle administrative aspects of the class. These include the gradebook, with which you can inspect student work and assign grades, and the roster, to which you can add or drop students.

Column 3: Calendar

Every Serf user has a personal calendar that you can use to keep track of important dates and reminders. The Calendar options enable you to see daily, weekly, or monthly views of your personal calendar, and add events, change, or delete events from the calendar.

Column 4: E-Mail

The E-mail options enable you to send mail to your instructor, fellow teaching assistants, if any, and students. You should click the option to register your E-mail address so students will be able to send you messages as well.

Column 5: System

Every Serf user gets the system options displayed in column 5. These options enable you to log on and off and change your password. You can also set up your CD-ROM drive for use as a multimedia resource in support of a course. This CD-ROM feature is optional; you do not need to use CD-ROM in order to deliver courses with Serf. If you are assisting more than one Serf course, the Switch Courses option enables you to switch courses. The control panel options always apply to the current course, which is identified in the line immediately above the control panel, where Serf says what course you are working on.

Rostering Students

Depending on local customs at your institution, a teaching assistant may be given the power to add and drop students from the course roster. Before you add or drop a student from a roster, however, you should make sure that the student actually has enrolled in or withdrawn from your course.

Viewing the Roster

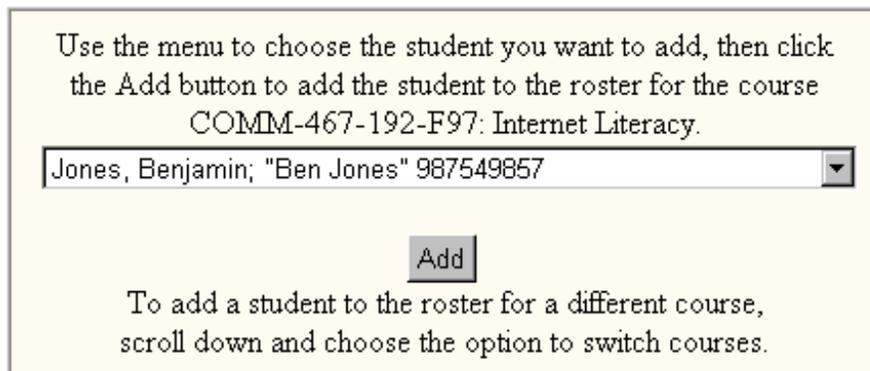
To view the roster of students enrolled in your course, click the View Roster option in the Student Records column of the Instructor panel. Serf will display the roster for the current course. If you are assisting more than one course, and you want to see the students enrolled in a different course, click the Switch Courses option to change courses, then click the View Roster option to see the roster of students enrolled in that course.

Adding a Student to the Roster

To add a student to the roster for a course, follow these steps:

- Click the Add to Roster option in the Administrative column of the Instructor panel. Serf will display the Add a Student to the Roster form illustrated in Figure 2.
- Use the menu to select the user you want to add to the roster. If the user you want to add does not appear in this menu, then that user has never been given a ticket to use Serf. See the section below on Creating a Student for instructions on how to give a user a ticket.
- Click the Add button to add the user to the roster.
- After informing you of the results of adding the user to the roster, Serf will reprint the Add Student to a Roster form, enabling you to add another user to the roster if you want.

When you're done adding students to the roster, you can verify the results by clicking the View Roster option in the Administrative column of the Instructor panel. When the roster appears, the students you added will appear on it.



Use the menu to choose the student you want to add, then click the Add button to add the student to the roster for the course
COMM-467-192-F97: Internet Literacy.

Jones, Benjamin; "Ben Jones" 987549857

Add

To add a student to the roster for a different course,
scroll down and choose the option to switch courses.

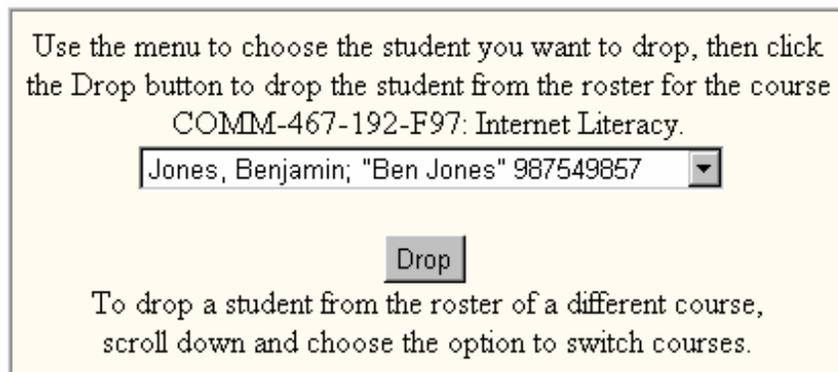
Figure 2. The Add Student to the Roster form.

Tip: The Add a Student to the Roster form adds a student to the current course's roster. If you want to add a student to the roster for a different course, scroll down and choose the option to switch courses.

Dropping a Student from the Roster

To drop a student from a roster, follow these steps:

- Click the Drop from Roster option in the Administrative column of the Instructor panel. Serf will display the Drop a Student from the Roster form illustrated in Figure 3.
- Use the menu to select the user you want dropped from the roster. If the user you want to drop does not appear in this menu, then that user does not belong to the roster.
- Click the Drop button to drop the user from the roster.
- After informing you of the results of dropping the user from the roster, Serf will reprint the Drop a Student from the Roster form, enabling you to drop another user from the roster if you want.



Use the menu to choose the student you want to drop, then click the Drop button to drop the student from the roster for the course
COMM-467-192-F97: Internet Literacy.

Jones, Benjamin; "Ben Jones" 987549857

Drop

To drop a student from the roster of a different course,
scroll down and choose the option to switch courses.

Figure 3. The Drop a Student from the Roster form.

When you're done dropping students from the roster, you can verify the results by clicking the View Roster option in the Administrative column of the Instructor panel. When the roster appears, the students you dropped will no longer appear on it.

Note: If Serf does not permit you to add and drop students from a roster, that means your Serf system administrator did not assign you ownership of the roster. Depending on local customs, an institution may decide to retain control of student rosters at the administrative level. If you believe that a student needs to be added to or dropped from a roster, and Serf refuses to let you do so, contact your Serf system administrator.

Using the Gradebook

The Serf gradebook makes it quick and easy for you to view the status of each student in the course with regard to the assignments your instructor has given and the work students have submitted. Assignments that you have not yet graded will display a *Grade Me* link that you can click to review the assignment and submit a grade. You can also leave a comment that the student will receive along with the grade you give.

Viewing the Class Gradebook

You begin the grading process by viewing the gradebook. To view the gradebook, click the Gradebook option in the Student Records column of the Assistant panel. Serf will display a summary of the grades in your course, as illustrated in Figure 4. The summary has six columns. Columns one and two identify the student's real name and Serf name. Column three is the Pending column; if the student has submitted assignments that are waiting for you to grade, a *Grade Me* link will appear in the Pending column. The last three columns provide some statistics, telling how many assignments have been graded for this student so far, the running average of the grades you've assigned, and the student's final grade in the course. The final grade will show as an I, which stands for Incomplete, until all of the assignments have been graded.

Student Name	Serf Name	Pending	Graded	Average	Final
Doe, John	jdoe		6 of 6	B	B
Jones, Benjamin	Ben Jones	Grade Me	4 of 6	B+	I
Smith, Mary	mary		6 of 6	A	A

Figure 4. The Class Grades report.

Viewing Individual Grades

To view the grades for any student in your course, follow these steps:

- If you are not already viewing the gradebook, click the Gradebook option in the Student Records column of the Assistant panel.
- When the Class Grades report appears, click the name of the student whose grades you want to view.
- Serf will display the individual's grade report, as illustrated in Figure 5.

The grade report has three columns. Column 1 contains the name of the assignment. Column 2 contains the grade. Column 3 displays the date on which the student submitted the assignment.

Assignment	Grade	Date
E-mail	B+	Sun 12 Oct 97
Listserv	A+	Sat 27 Sep 97
Newsgroup	B	Sun 12 Oct 97
Home Page		
Term Paper		
Multimedia Project	B+	Sun 12 Oct 97
Graduate Research Project		
	Final Grade: I	

Figure 5. The Individual Grades report.

Assigning Grades

To assign a grade for a student assignment, follow the steps provided above in the section entitled “Viewing Individual Grades” to display the individual grade report for that student. If the student has submitted an assignment that is waiting to be graded, a *Grade Me* link will appear in the Grade column. If the assignment is a so-called “observational” assignment that does not require the student to submit anything over the Web, a blank underline will appear in the Grade column. Click either the Grade Me link or the blank underline to display the Grade Event form.

Depending on the type of assignment you are grading, the Grade Event form may or may not provide you with an answer to read or a URL to review. If the assignment is a Web Query, for example, Serf will print the question you asked, followed by the answer the student wrote. For a Web Portfolio assignment, Serf will provide you with the URL of the student’s work, which you should click to assess before assigning a grade.

In all cases, Serf displays a Letter Grade menu and a Percent menu, as illustrated in Figure 6. To assign a grade, pull down either the Letter Grade menu and choose a letter grade, or use the Percent menu to choose a percent. In addition to assigning a grade, you may also leave a comment about the assignment by typing a message into the comment box. When the student inspects the grade, any comment you type into the comment box will appear on screen along with the grade.

After you have completed the Grade Event form, click the Grade button to submit the grade. The grade you assign will take effect immediately. The student’s running average in the course will be updated immediately, for example, as soon as you click the Grade button. Both your grade and any comment you provided will be available for student view immediately. Students can only view their own grades in the course; an individual student is unable to see the grades of other students in the course.

To assign a grade to the student named Benjamin Jones,
whose Serf name is Ben Jones,
for the assignment named Term Paper,
use either the Letter Grade menu, or the Percent menu,
to select the grade you want to assign.

Letter Grade ▾ Percent: ▾

The URL submitted by the student is:

<http://www.udel.edu/benjones/mpeg.html>

If you want to leave a comment for the student regarding this assignment,
you may do so in the box below.

You could improve this paper by visiting <http://www.mpeg.org> and
searching the MPEG FAQ for information on the scalability of
digital video recordings.

Click the Grade button to record the student's grade.

Grade

Figure 6. The Grade Assignment form.

Ungrading an Assignment

Serf provides you with the opportunity to give the student another chance if the student performs poorly on an assignment. If a student asks you for another chance to do better, you may, at your option, decide to remove the bad grade you assigned. Once the bad grade is removed, the student is permitted to change the answer to the assignment. Then you can grade the revised assignment, and hopefully the student will have attained a higher score. Note that this ungrading procedure is totally optional. If you do not want to give the student a second chance, just say no! Anyone teaching from a cognitive perspective, however, would normally grant the second chance, because the student's desire to improve presents a powerful teaching and learning moment. To ungrade an assignment, follow these steps:

- Click the Gradebook option in the Student Records column of the Assistant options; the class gradebook appears.
- Click the name of the student for whom you want to ungrade an assignment; the individual grades appear for that student.
- In the Grade column, click the grade you want to remove; the Grade Event form appears.
- If you had assigned a letter grade, pull down the letter grade menu and choose Ungrade. If you had assigned a percentage, pull down the percent menu and choose Ungrade. In both cases, the Ungrade option appears at the very bottom of the menu.
- Click the Grade button to submit the grade. Immediately, the student will be permitted to submit a different answer for this assignment.

Grading Students in a Virtual Room

If you're assisting several sections of a course, your Serf system administrator may have grouped your sections into a virtual room. If so, when you click the Gradebook option, you'll see grades for all of the students in all of the sections assigned to that room. The virtual room makes it quicker for you to assign grades if you are teaching many sections of a course, because you do not have to switch courses to enter the gradebook for each section.

Another advantage of the virtual room is that when students click the Class E-mail option that lets them address mail to any student in the class, all of the students taking courses assigned to the virtual room will appear in the point-and-click directory of student e-mail addresses.

Communication Options

An important duty of a Serf Teaching Assistant is to help the instructor communicate with students enrolled in the course. Depending on how your course has been configured, this is done via e-mail, a chatroom, a listserv, or a newsgroup. Many Serf courses use all three ways of communicating.

Electronic Mail

Serf makes it easy for students and instructors to communicate via electronic mail. Every user has a Register E-mail option in their Serf control panel. When users tell Serf that they want to send e-mail to their instructor or to a classmate, Serf makes their Web browser launch an e-mail window pre-addressed to the targeted user's e-mail address. To enable this powerful mode of communication over the Internet, every user should register their E-mail address. It is doubly important for you, the assistant, to register your e-mail address. If you do not register your e-mail address, nothing will happen when the student clicks the option to send you mail. To register your e-mail address, follow these steps:

- Click the Register E-mail option in the E-mail column of the Assistant panel.
- The Register Your E-mail Address form will appear as shown in Figure 7.
- Enter your e-mail address in the blank provided.
- Click the Register button to register your e-mail address.

Should your e-mail address change in the midst of a course, simply repeat these steps, and enter the revised e-mail address.



Enter your e-mail address in the blank provided.

Then click the Register button to record your e-mail address.

Figure 7. The Register Your E-mail Address form.

ParaChat Chatrooms

Serf has special support for the ParaChat network, which provides real-time communication options for students in Serf courses. If your instructor has provided a chatroom for your course, a chatroom icon will appear at the top of your Teaching Assistant screen. You should enter the chatroom periodically to help students who may be chatting in it. Students will probably ask you to set up specific times when you'll be in the chatroom, available to dialog with them.

Listserv

If your instructor has linked a listserv to your course, a listserv icon will appear at the top of your Teaching Assistant screen. You should join the listserv so you will receive in your e-mail copies of the messages that your students and the instructor send the listserv.

Newsgroup

If your instructor has linked a newsgroup to your course, a newsgroup icon will appear at the top of your Teaching Assistant screen. You should participate in the newsgroup on a regular basis, ideally every day, to help students with topics under discussion. Try to set a good example by maintaining threads of discussion in the newsgroup. Instead of beginning a new topic with every message you write, respond to an existing topic if your message fits the discussion going on in it. Begin a new topic only when your message really is on a new topic.

Serf Helpline

Please let us know if you encounter any problems using Serf by contacting the Serf Helpline at the University of Delaware, Willard 305, Newark, Delaware 19716.

Telephone: (302) 831-8164

FAX: (302) 831-2089

Internet: SerfMaster@udel.edu

Serf[®] Student Jumpstart



Version 1.0

by

**Fred T. Hofstetter
University of Delaware**

Last Modified April 8, 1998

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Introduction for the Instructor

While Serf is very easy to use, your students will need a little instruction prior to logging on. You will need to tell them the name of your Serf server, for example, and how to get there. If the student does not have an Internet account, you will want to tell them how to get one. If your course uses a textbook, you'll want to tell the students how to get a copy. And you'll want to give the students an orientation to Serf, letting them know about the rich set of options Serf provides for navigating a syllabus, submitting assignments, viewing the grade report, using multimedia, and communicating with their instructor and fellow students.

To save you the time and energy it might normally require to write such instructions from scratch, we're providing you with a document called the Student Jumpstart Pamphlet. When a student enrolls in a course that uses Serf, you simply send the student a copy of the Student Jumpstart Pamphlet, and, true to its name, the pamphlet jumpstarts the student into the course.

The remainder of this document consists of the Student Jumpstart pamphlet. The word processor file of this document can be found in the *serfmanual* subdirectory of your Serf directory. This particular file is the jumpstart pamphlet for Internet Literacy, which is a Serf-based course that is being distributed by PBS. In order to customize this file for local use, use Microsoft Word to scan the document for the following phrases, and replace the surrounding text to make any local modifications you may require:

Phrase to Search	How to Replace It
Internet Literacy	Internet Literacy is the name of a Serf-based course that PBS is marketing. Replace this term with the name of the course your students are taking. If you happen to be offering the Internet Literacy course, there is no need to change this.
Delaware	Scan for the word Delaware to find any places where instructions specific to Delaware are given, and replace them with your local instructions.
What You Will Need	The section on what you will need tells the students that they will need Web space to mount their term papers on the Web. Submitting term papers over the Web is an option in Serf, which the sample Internet Literacy course happens to require. If you are teaching a course that does not require students to submit term papers over the Web, you can reword the list of what your students will need.
Serf.udel.edu	You will need to tell your students the name of the Serf server to which they should log on. Use Microsoft Word to scan the jumpstart pamphlet for Serf.udel.edu, which is the name of one of the University of Delaware's Serf servers, and replace it with the name of your own server.
Social Security Number	If your institution issues tickets that are not social security numbers, you will need to modify the part of the pamphlet that talks about tickets.
Show-Me Movies	If your course is not using Show-Me movies, you can delete the part that tells how to watch them.
FOCUS Online	FOCUS Online is the name of the office that offers distance learning courses over the Web at the University of Delaware. Scan for the phrase FOCUS Online, and replace the name of this office and its telephone number with your local information.

Note: The student version of the *Student Jumpstart* pamphlet begins on the next page. All of the preceding information, including the title page, is *not* part of the pamphlet that students receive.

-----Cut Here-----



Serf Student Jumpstart Pamphlet

Welcome to the course *Internet Literacy*! This pamphlet is designed to jumpstart you into the course. Once you follow the jumpstart instructions provided here, you will be taken online into a virtual learning environment on the World Wide Web. Describing how exciting it is to learn this way, a student once described this environment as an E-ticket ride. We hope you will find *Internet Literacy* just as exciting. Soon you will get your ticket to ride; keep on reading!

What You Will Need

In order to take this course, you will need a Windows or Macintosh computer and an Internet account. Many schools and businesses provide Internet accounts to their students and employees. If you don't have an Internet account, check with your school or business to find out if you can get an account with them. If not, you can get an Internet account either from a local or a national Internet service provider (ISP). You can find your local ISP in the yellow pages of your telephone book listed under Internet services. The most popular national ISP is America Online (telephone 800-827-6364), which provides the kind of Internet service you need for around \$19.95 per month.

The specifications for the kind of Internet account you will need are described as follows:

- It must provide the basic Internet services of e-mail and access to the World Wide Web via Netscape Communicator or the Microsoft Internet Explorer.
- It must include at least four megabytes of Web space in which you will create your Web page assignments in this course.

All of the exercises in this course can be completed via modem over an ordinary telephone line. If you have a higher-speed connection, screens will appear more quickly, but the course has been designed to work over an ordinary telephone line.

Textbook

The textbook for this course is *Internet Literacy* by Dr. Fred T. Hofstetter, professor and director of instructional technology at the University of Delaware. You can purchase a copy of this textbook at your campus bookstore. Most retail bookstores, such as Borders and Barnes & Noble, will begin carrying this book in January 1998. Until then, the text is available only through your campus bookstore.

Going Online

Once you have the textbook, an Internet account, and either the Netscape Communicator or Microsoft Internet Explorer Web browser, you're ready to go online and begin the course. To logon to the course, use your browser to go to the following Web site:

Serf.udel.edu

If you don't know how to go to a Web site, follow these steps:

- If you have Netscape, pull down the File menu, choose Open Page, type Serf.udel.edu and click Open.
- If you have the Internet Explorer, pull down the File menu, choose Open, type Serf.udel.edu and click OK.



Logging On

The first screen you will see is the Serf logon screen. Serf is the name of the Web-based distance learning environment you'll be using in this course. Before you can log on, you need to create a Serf name and password. To create your Serf name and password, follow these steps:



ticket

- Click the “Admit One--Ticket” button to make the Ticket Validation screen appear.
- In the blanks provided, type your first name and your last name.
- In the Ticket field, type your ticket number. Most often, this is your social security number. Unless you've been told to enter something different in the Ticket field, type your social security number, without any spaces or hyphens.
- Click the Submit button.

If Serf recognizes your name and ticket number, you'll be taken to a screen that let's you create a Serf name and password. Your Serf name is the name you will type every time you log on to the course, and your password is a secret word that you will be required to type in order to log on. When you choose a password, pick something you can remember. Do not use easily-guessed names such as your first or last name, your nickname, your hobby, or other words that people associate with you. Mixing letters and numbers in a password makes it harder for people to guess. Most important, remember your password. Although your instructor can reset your password in case you forget it, you should try to avoid needing to have this done by remembering your password. To select a Serf name and password, follow these steps:

- Type your Serf name into the Serf Name field.
- Type your password into the first Password field; asterisks will appear to keep your password secret.
- Type your password again into the second Password field. What you type in the second Password field must match exactly what you typed in the first Password field.
- Click the Create button to create your new Serf name and password.

If the Serf name you chose has already been taken by another user, Serf will inform you and ask you to choose a different name. Follow the on-screen instructions until your Serf name and password have been created.

From now on, you can sign on quickly and easily by going to Serf.udel.edu, where the on-screen instructions will prompt you to enter your Serf name and password and press the Logon button.

Beginning the Course

Once you log on, you're jumpstarted into the course. From now on, all of the class instructions and assignments will come from the Web. As the course progresses, you'll notice how Serf knows where you are in the course, what you have and have not done, and what you should be working on each day. You'll also notice icons that denote different kinds of events on your syllabus, assignments you need to complete, how much each assignment counts toward your grade in the course, and how much time you have to complete them. There are dozens of features that make it easy to move around the course, study the materials it delivers, submit your assignments, and see your grades. The course delivery system used to create this environment is called Serf. The remainder of this pamphlet describes some of the options available to you while using Serf.

Note: When you log on, if you're enrolled in more than one Serf course, you'll be taken to the course you were working on last. To switch to a different course, scroll down to the System Options, and choose the option to Switch Courses.

What is Serf?



Serf is an acronym that stands for Server-side educational records facilitator. It's your servant on the Internet; hence the name Serf. Serf provides an environment for delivering courses anywhere in the world, using the World Wide Web as a distance education medium.

Serf provides support for students, teaching assistants, instructors, and administrators. The administrators use Serf to create courses and enroll students. Instructors use Serf to create their course syllabus, which consists of an ordered list of instructional events, assignments, and multimedia resources. Teaching assistants help the instructor provide services to students, and may assist in the grading of the assignments. The beneficiary is you, the student, who partakes in a learning environment rich in multimedia resources and Internet services.

How to Use Serf

At the top of every Serf screen is a menubar that provides you with communication and navigation options. You'll find links to e-mail, news, and an index of items contained on the course syllabus. For more options, click the Options button, which will bring up a detailed list of the options available to you in this course.



Most of the pages are too long to fit on the screen all at once. Use the scroll bar at the right edge of the Serf window to scroll up and down the page. Click the arrows to move by small amounts, or click the blank space between the arrows to page up and down. You can also drag the slider to move to any place on the page. Remember that the Serf menubar will always be at the top of every page, and the detailed navigation options will always be near the bottom.

You are working on the course Internet Literacy.

Syllabus	Assignments	Calendar	E-Mail	System
Current Class		Daily		
Brief Index	Inspect	Weekly	Instructor	Logon
Detailed Index	Submit	Monthly	Assistant	Logout
Preamble	Grades	Add Event	Classmate	Password
Search		Delete Event	Register	CD-ROM Setup
View Complete		Change Event		Switch Courses

The detailed navigation options are divided into five sections. Here's a summary of what you can do with the options in each section.

1. *Syllabus options.* In the syllabus section, you'll find buttons that let you see the current class, which is the class that the instructor scheduled for the day you logged on. To move to any other class, use the Brief Index button, which lists the classes in the course. The Detailed Index button will bring up a complete list of all of the events in the course; use the detailed index when you're looking for a specific event. The Preamble button will display the course preamble, which is the information you get when you log on prior to the start of a course. If you want to search the syllabus for a particular word or phrase, click the Search button. Finally, to view the complete course syllabus, click the View Complete button.
2. *Assignment options.* In the assignment section, you can click the Inspect button to see a list of all the assignments in the course. If the list seems overwhelming, remember that you're looking at a complete list of all of the assignments, and you have the entire course to complete them. There's a Submit button that you'll use to submit assignments, and a Grades button that'll show you the grade you got on each assignment, along with a prediction of your final grade based on the work you've done so far. If you're curious, go ahead and click the Grades button. If you haven't submitted any assignments yet, no grades will be filled in, but you'll be able to see how convenient this will make getting a grade report during the course.
3. *Calendar options.* The calendar section provides buttons for seeing daily, weekly, and monthly views of the calendar. There's even a button that adds an event to the calendar. When you add an event, it gets added to your personal copy of the calendar. No one else in the course can see your personal calendar. You can add birthdays and anniversaries or other kinds of reminders to your personal calendar, and Serf will remind you as the date approaches.
4. *E-mail options.* The e-mail options make it quick and easy to send messages to your course instructor, teaching assistant, and classmates. When you click the Classmates button, you'll get an e-mail grid showing the names of all the students in the class. To send e-mail, simply click the name of a student. Before people can send you e-mail, however, you'll need to click the Register button and register your e-mail address in the course.
5. *System options.* You'll find system-related options in the System section. You can log off or change your password, for example. If you're enrolled in more than one Serf course, you can switch courses. There's also an option for setting up your CD-ROM drive. If a CD-ROM is being used along with this course, you should click the CD-ROM Setup option, and follow the on-screen instructions to set up your CD drive for use with this course.

Serf/Event120 - Netscape

File Edit View Go Communicator Help

chat e-mail listserv news options index search EXIT log out

< Internet Literacy >

Course Syllabus

Communicating in Real Time **Class 9: Mon 22 Sep 1997**

Reading *Internet Literacy*, chapter 9.

Topics E-mail, listserv, and newsgroups are great ways to communicate, but all three suffer from the lack of real-time interaction between you and the person with whom you're communicating. Historically, real-time communication has occurred either in face-to-face conversation or over the telephone. Now it is also possible to converse in real-time over the Internet. If the person you're talking to has a video capture card, you can even see the other person on screen. This chapter covers four kinds of environments used to communicate in real time over the Internet: chat rooms, white boards, videoconferencing, and MUDs (multi-user domains).

Internet Relay Chat There's a movie on the Interlit CD that shows you how to do an IRC chat. You can view the movie either for a [Windows PC](#) or for the [Macintosh](#).

Document: Done

Show-Me Movies

 The Internet Literacy course comes with a CD-ROM containing more than a hundred “Show-Me” movies that illustrate the step-by-step instructions and tutorials in the textbook. Each movie is linked to an event on the course syllabus. To play a movie, you simply click the hotspot in the syllabus that launches the movie.

The first time you launch a movie from the syllabus, your Web browser will probably ask how you want it to handle this kind of file. Tell your browser to “open” it (not save it). If your browser asks whether you want to be asked this question for files of this type in the future, say no. Otherwise, you’ll keep seeing this question.

If your Web browser has trouble finding the movies, scroll down to the Options grid, and in the section on System options, click CD-ROM Setup. Follow the on-screen instructions to set up your CD drive. Then the movies should play back fine.

Troubleshooting



If you encounter any trouble in this course, here's how to go about getting help. First, if your question has to do with how to use Serf, click the Help button at the top of the Serf screen. This will connect you to the online Serf documentation and help system, which is full of helpful hints and suggestions.



Second, if your question is related to the course, click the Questions button at the top of the Serf screen. This will bring up a list of frequently asked questions (FAQ), along with answers. Chances are that if other students have encountered the same problem you're having, you'll find the answer in the FAQ.



Third, if your question deals with course content, scroll down to the e-mail options at the bottom of the screen, and send e-mail to your course instructor or teaching assistant, who are online frequently.

Finally, if you cannot solve the problem and you need to speak with someone in person, call the FOCUS Online office at (302) 831-3146. During normal working hours, there's always someone there to assist you.

Sign Your E-mail Messages

Whenever you send an e-mail message to your course instructor or teaching assistant, please remember to sign your message by including your full name and e-mail address at the bottom of the message. If you do not do this, your instructor may not be able to respond to you if the mailer you're using does not automatically include your correct e-mail address. This is especially frustrating at the beginning of a course, when the instructor wants to help you, but cannot respond because your correct e-mail address does not appear in your message.

Please form the habit of always including your full name and e-mail address at the bottom of any messages you send your course instructor or teaching assistant.

Remember to Log Out



When you're done using Serf, remember to log out and shut down the Web browser. This is especially important if you're using Serf in a computer lab where other students will be using your computer. If you do not log out, the student who uses the computer next could gain access to your records. You wouldn't want that to happen, so please remember to log out. Your records will expire after a while, but until then, the next user could possibly gain access. The best way of making sure your work remains private is to shut down the Web browser when you're done using the computer. Shutting down the Web browser guarantees that no one can gain access to any of your Serf screens.