

INSTITUTE for
**DISTANCE and DISTRIBUTED
LEARNING**

Instructor's Quick Guide to Getting Started

This guide will help you install and use Centra Symposium software. Symposium is a powerful tool for multiple user interaction and course organization that includes real-time two-way audio, application sharing, web browsing, whiteboarding, and chats. Once you are familiar with the Symposium environment, you'll be able to design and deliver materials for synchronous and asynchronous use by your students and lead interactive sessions at a distance.

- This guide will cover:
- I. Getting Started
 - II. Editing Your Profile
 - III. Building an Agenda with Agenda Builder
 - IV. Uploading an Agenda
 - V. Leading a Session

I. Getting Started

Because you are an instructor we will have already created an account for you on the Symposium server along with at least one event for your class. This means that while you still need to install the Symposium software and audio tune your system as outlined in the "Symposium Client Download and Installation Instructions", you do not need to create an account on the server. *Please contact Mark Raby (mraby@vt.edu), Gary Whitt (gwhitt@vt.edu), or Dan Yates (dyates@vt.edu) if you have trouble downloading the software or logging in to Symposium.*

Normal Login Procedure:

- Connect to the internet
- open your browser
- enter the URL <http://symposium.iddl.vt.edu> into the address line of your web browser (or through your Windows "Start" menu, select "Programs", "Centra 99", and "Login to Centra 99".
- enter your username (usually your PID) and password (the one you gave us), and click "Enter". (If you don't enter your password or username correctly, a dialog box will appear prompting you to either use a stored/saved Windows password or reenter your password. Passwords and usernames are case sensitive, so make sure you do not have the Caps Lock on. If you cannot remember your password, send an email to us and we will e-mail to you a temporary password that you may use to login).

Next, you should see a screen similar to this

Event	Start Time	Duration	
Gary's Session #2	2/23/00 8:45 AM EST	Always	Lead View Enrollment Unenroll
Gary's Session #1	3/14/00 3:30 PM EST	Always	Lead View Enrollment Unenroll
Symposium Overview	8/25/99 11:30 AM EDT	Always	Lead View Enrollment Playback Browse Content

You should see your course listed in the "View My Schedule" window under "Event". If you are not registered as a Leader or Agenda Builder the controls you will see are limited to *View My Schedule*, *View Event List*, and *Edit Profile*. These controls are seen by all users and will not enable you to perform the necessary tasks of an Event Leader. Leader privileges give you supreme control of the Symposium learning environment once a session has started and Agenda Builder privileges allow you to change what will be seen during a session. If you lack either of these privileges please stop here and contact one of us to secure them for you.

II. Editing Your Profile

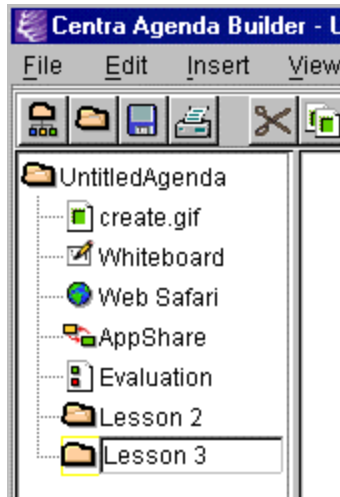
The "Edit Profile" field allows you to edit your password, title, phone number, employee ID, and affiliation with groups outside of Virginia Tech. These are optional fields, so don't feel compelled to add more than you wish.

III. Building an Agenda with Agenda Builder

Good. You have a place to meet your students in Symposium (the event we created at your request) and you have the proper privileges to lead an event. You now need to provide content and structure for your class with Centra's Agenda Builder. Agenda Builder runs native to your machine and does not need to connect to the Symposium server until you upload your agenda.

To begin to work with Agenda Builder, click on your Windows "Start" menu, go to "Programs"→ "Centra 99"→ "Centra Agenda Builder". When the program opens you will see the Agenda column on the left and the large **Media Window** on the right. The Agenda column is a list of agenda items. Clicking once on any single item will display it fully in the Media Window. The five items you can put in a Symposium Agenda are Files, Whiteboard, Web Safari, Application Sharing, and Evaluation.

To add items to your agenda, choose "Insert" from the menu and scroll down to select the type of item you would like to insert. You may choose:



1. **Files** include PowerPoint slides (converted to .gif images on import), HTML files, graphic images, sound files, movie clips, streaming media, and text. Like all other items in the Agenda, they appear in two ways on the list - as an icon representative of the kind of object/tool it is, and a name. That name is customizable, so for instance, you might have eight images, which would appear as identical icons, but can be renamed just like Windows files by clicking on the text box beside the icon and typing the new name.

2. **Whiteboarding** allows you and your students to graphically interact. While still talking, you can use the Whiteboarding tools: pen, highlighter,

shapes, eraser, text, etc. to draw on a white screen in the Media Window or on your graphics. You can highlight, circle, underline, etc., type equations and other text with the text tool, and even **Snapshot** your Whiteboards to the agenda for later use. Finally, please note that Whiteboards appear blank until the "Begin Session" button is selected.

3. **Web Safari:** Allows collective web browsing. Students see what you see as you follow links. Uses application sharing of your default browser, so rather than having to retype all of your saved URL's, you can use existing Bookmarks or Favorites. Because this is based on Symposium's application sharing architecture, you can even use the mouse as a pointer during the Safari, and all of your users will see what you are pointing to.
4. **Application Sharing:** In the same way that you share your browser when using Web Safari, application sharing allows you to share other software, such as Excel, Mathematica, Word, etc. Applications do not have to reside on student machines but must be resident and open on the presenter's machine.
5. **Evaluations:** Create surveys and tests using the evaluation tool for synchronous or asynchronous use. You'll be able to view the results and you can allow immediate feedback to your students as well. You can set the tests to be anonymously taken or to track individual performance.

Once you've placed some content into your Agenda, you may notice the Folder at the top of the Agenda remains untitled and can't be renamed. The name that you use to save your Agenda becomes the name of that folder, so it is probably best to save the Agenda early, and as something close to the name of the course or lesson. The Agenda is saved to a folder in Program Files, Centra 99, Agendas, Builder, with the file suffix.saz. (Doing a "Find" for files with that suffix will help if you get lost.) Your Agenda can contain within it separate folders which can hold complete lessons. So, you can use a different folder for each lesson and simply add folders as the semester progresses.

IV. Uploading an Agenda

A. The First Time

Once you have created and saved your Agenda, you will want to upload it to the server. Follow these steps to upload your Agenda to the Symposium Server. Login to Centra 99 using your username and password. (<http://symposium.iddl.vt.edu>)

1. Once on your Centra 99 Home Page, under the Agenda Builder subheading, select "Manage Subjects". This should look familiar.
2. Locate the title of your Subject (It should be the name of your course with course number). There are three column headings under Manage Subjects: Title, Status, and Agenda. The very last column, under the heading Agenda, should have a link "Add". Select this, and it should launch a script titled Add Agenda for: [your Subject name].
3. Select "Launch". A dialogue box appears which has three parts to it: Agenda File, Comments, and a check box at the bottom. Select "Browse" beside the Agenda File box. It should open up the **builders** folder where Centra 99 stores agendas. Select the agenda you wish to upload.
4. The "Comment" box is for adding information that will be available to view in the Agenda **History** screen in the Subject Manager.
5. Say "no" to the check box that asks if you want to Add and Check Out immediately. (You'll learn more about checking in and checking out agendas in the next section).
6. When you have finished selecting the file and adding commentary, click "Add" at the bottom of the dialogue box. When you return to the "Launch" screen, be sure to click on the "Continue" button. This completes the upload and returns you to the "Manage Subjects" screen. You are now ready to meet your class in your event.

B. Modifying an Existing Agenda

Checkout-

You may want to make changes to your agenda periodically. Once you have "added" an agenda to your subject, the "add" button is replaced on the "Manage Subjects" page by a "checkout" link. The checkout function allows you to make changes to an existing agenda. (A useful analogy is that of checking out a library book, only this is a book which allows you to add or delete pages.) You will "checkout" your agenda, make changes to it in Agenda Builder, and then check your agenda back in using the "checkin" link. If you wish you can use one agenda for the whole semester and just keep adding folders to it for each lesson. To checkout an agenda:

- go to "Manage Subjects" after logging in at <http://symposium.iddl.vt.edu>
- Left click the green "checkout" link beside your subject.
- Click "launch" in the new window.
- Symposium will report that it is verifying your installation. It will then prompt you for a location to put the agenda. The default location is your c-drive, Program Files, Centra 99, Agendas, Builder. You may want to keep this location as Symposium will look here first when it is time to check the agenda back in.
- After the files transfer from the server to your machine, click the "Continue" button.

Make Changes with Agenda Builder

The agenda is now ready to be opened from within Agenda Builder. Add or delete items and save your changes as you would when building any agenda. **Never change an agenda for a session that has been recorded. Any change to the agenda will erase the recording. Please see "Recording an Event" below.*

Checkin-

Now that you have completed your agenda changes it is time to check it back in to the server. This is accomplished in identical fashion to the checkout.

- go to "Manage Subjects" after logging in at (<http://symposium.iddl.vt.edu>)
- Left click the green "checkin" link beside your subject.
- Click "launch" in the new window.
- Symposium will report that it is verifying your installation. It will then prompt you for a location from which to get the agenda. The default location is your c-drive, Program Files, Centra 99, Agendas, Builder.
- After the files transfer from your machine to the server, click the "Continue" button.
- Your updated agenda is ready to use.

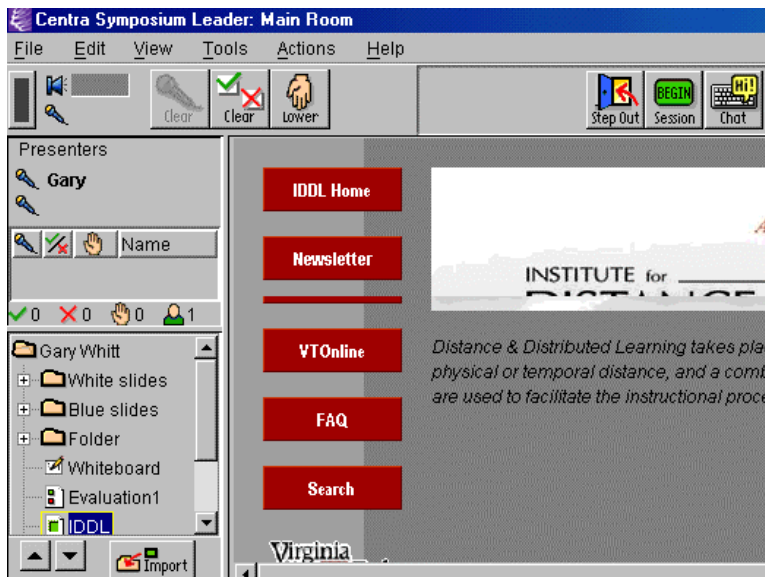
C. Swapping an Old Agenda For a New One

Instead of modifying an old agenda, you may wish to swap it for a new one. As long as you remember that any recordings or evaluation results related to the old agenda will be erased, the process is fairly painless. Checkout the old agenda. Checkin the new agenda just as described above. The new agenda will automatically be renamed with the same name as the old agenda you just checked out. *Given Symposium's insistence about naming current agendas, it is best to save old agendas with a unique name. If not, each checkout will replace the old agenda with the agenda you just checked out because they have identical names.*

V. Leading a Session

You have the event, you have the materials, and now it's time to meet people in your event. We will have already created your event, made you leader, and enrolled you in your course. You need only log in to the Symposium site: <http://symposium.iddl.vt.edu> . Beside your event, which appears in "View My Schedule," should be a green "Lead" link. (Your students have a link that says "Attend".) Left click "Lead" and wait while Symposium verifies your current installation.

The next thing you should see is the graphic interface of your event. Your name will appear at the top with each of your students appearing under the "Name" column as they log on. Gary is leading the event at left and no students have logged in to view the gif file selected in the agenda entitled "IDDL" (notice the blue highlight at the bottom of the picture).



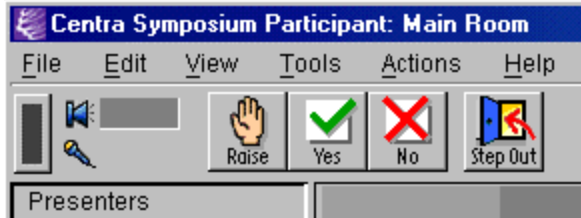
As students log in, their names appear in the "Name" window. To lead class simply make yourself familiar with the tools described below.

Beginning the session-The session does not automatically begin once the presenter arrives. The presenter must left click the green "BEGIN Session" button near the top of the screen. Until this button is clicked, the session has not officially started and everyone has much the same privileges. Once the session is begun, the Presenter has control of the audio and visual environment. Also, any pre-arranged recording of the event will not begin until the session starts.

Talking- Press the "Ctrl" key on your keyboard and hold it down while you are speaking. If you plan on speaking for awhile, left click once on the vertical bar just below the file menu item. This is called the "Lock to Talk" button and lets you speak hands-free until you click the lock button again.

Letting others talk- Because you have control of the audio environment (as well as the visual environment) you must grant speaking privileges to participants. This is accomplished by left clicking beside the participant's name in the microphone column. A single click puts a small microphone icon beside their name. With this icon, they may interact orally and visually with everyone in the event until you remove their microphone with a click identical to that which you used to give them the privilege. If you want everyone to be silent, simply click the "Clear" microphone button just below the "View" menu. Your class won't be able to speak until you give them back their microphones.

Calling on students All students have the ability to raise their hands to signal their desire to speak. A number appears beside their names indicating the chronology of raised hands in the class. Therefore, you always know who has had their hand up the longest or who had the first question. The instructor may lower one hand at a time or all hands at once. To lower one hand, simply left click in the hand column beside the participant's name. To lower all hands at once, click the "Lower" hands button at the top of the screen.

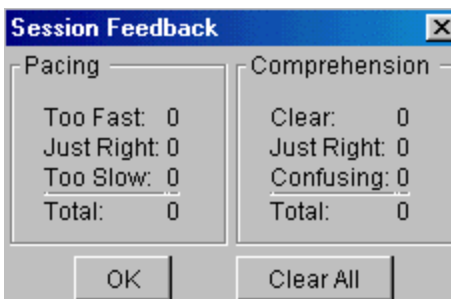
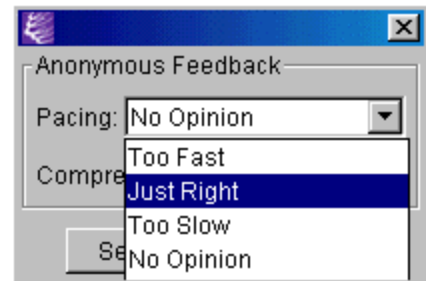


Signals from your class-

Notice that the icons at the top of the window are different for your participants than for you. Symposium has some built in feedback mechanisms for your students. When they left click the "Yes" icon a green check

appears by their name in the participant list. Clicking the "No" icon places a red X by their name. A tally of all the checks and x's appears at the bottom of the participant list. This way, you'll know immediately how many of your students agree and how many disagree with what you said. A single click on your "Clear" checks and x's button will wipe these clean.

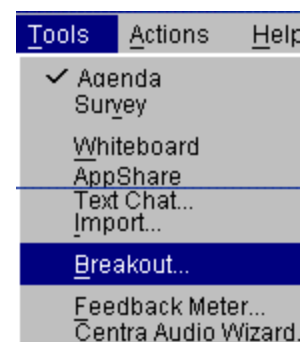
Your students are also able to send you feedback concerning the pacing and clarity of your instruction. At right, a student has selected "Send Feedback" from their "Actions" menu and is informing you that your pacing is "just right". Below "Pacing" is the "Comprehension" menu which students can use to let you know if your instruction is clear or confusing to them.



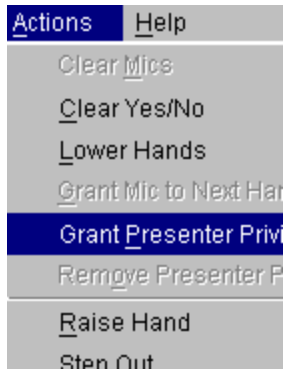
You have a "Feedback Meter" which you may keep open during the session. If monitored, it can give you valuable feedback concerning your instruction. Just place it in a corner of the screen and look at it as you have time.

Breakout Rooms

Occasionally, you'll want your students to be able to "break out" into small groups. Symposium lets you create assigned or random groups and then allows you to visit each group individually much as you would in a traditional classroom. When you're ready, a single click puts them back in the main room again. To create groups make sure that the class is "In Session". Select "Breakout" under the "Tools" menu. When prompted, create the number of breakout rooms you want and either let Symposium randomly assign students to groups or "drag and drop" students into the desired group. You simply drag the student's name into the folder representing the appropriate group and release. The student's name will be listed below the group folder and he/she will be able to see the names of all those in the group. When you click the "Start" button the group members will be able to interact in group fashion without interference from other groups. When you click "Stop", everyone is placed back in the main session and the class continues.



Granting "Presenter" Status

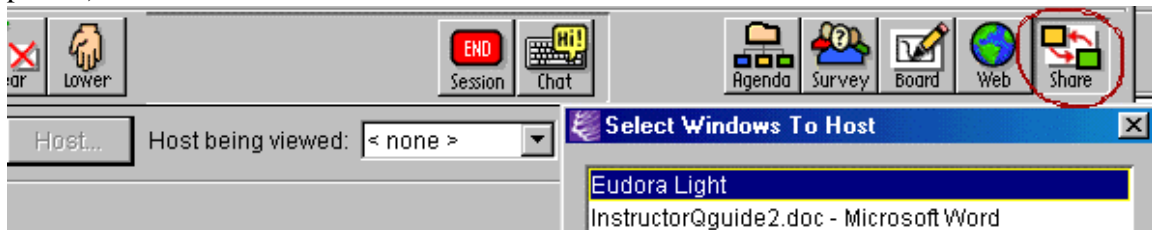


From time to time you may wish to give the control of the class to a student, perhaps during a presentation or demonstration. While you remain, as always, the ultimate control in the session, granting Presenter privileges to a student enables him/her to do many of the things you do as leader: control student microphones, lower hands, erase checks and x's, navigate the agenda, create and assign breakout groups, and share applications. To grant Presenter privileges to a student, left click the students name, go to the "Actions" menu and select "Grant Presenter Privileges". The students name will be removed from the class listing and placed underneath yours to signify this change in status. When you wish to remove these privileges simply select "Remove Presenter

Privileges" from the "Actions" menu.

Application Sharing

Symposium also enables you to share your applications in an active session. After you have begun the session, launch your application. Select the rightmost icon at the top (circled in the picture)



Click the "Host" button to select the application you wish to share (above there are two applications that may be shared, *Eudora Light* and *Microsoft Word*). Next you need to select your name from the "Host being viewed" menu. This let's Symposium know who is sharing the application from the list of presenters. After the application sharing has started, any students with microphone privileges will be able to interact with you in the application. For example, in Microsoft Word, students may type and delete words, make tables, and open new files. Application sharing ends when you select another menu item or agenda item.

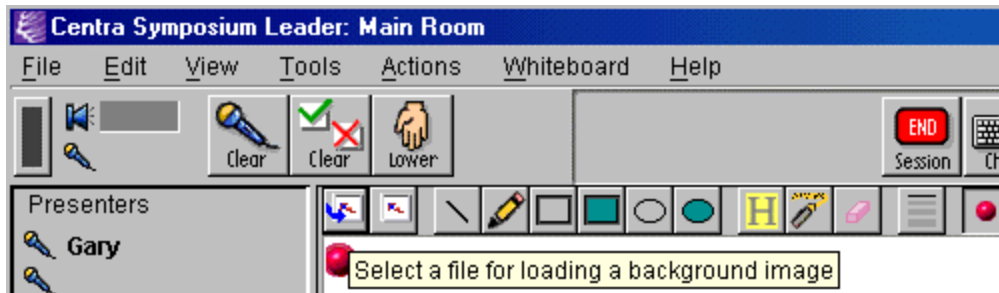
Chatting

Notice in the picture above that you may select "Chat" from the menu. "Chat" allows you to send and receive text messages to individual students or all students. This functionality can be very useful: "Jesse, see me on Tuesday at 9:00 am to go over your paper" or perhaps "Your audio is not working. Have you run the audio wizard?" Text messages may also be sent in the Whiteboard environment but are seen by everyone.

Modifying Your Agenda Once the Session Has Begun

There are two ways to bring in materials during a session. You can pull in PowerPoint files by clicking the "Import" button at the bottom left of the screen. When prompted, just browse to the location of the PowerPoint file and Symposium will upload them to the server and place them in the agenda. They are ready for immediate use.

Also, Symposium allows you to upload gifs and jpeg files to your whiteboard as backgrounds



during session. To do this choose the leftmost

whiteboard tool (just above the red dot in the picture). Again you will need to browse to the location of your file. The picture will appear on the whiteboard and can be drawn on by you and students. If you choose you may "snapshot" your new picture to the agenda. This is done by left clicking the second button from the left in the whiteboard icons (it appears just to the left of the straight line tool). You'll be asked to name the snapshot and it will be placed permanently in the agenda. Any whiteboard may be sent to the agenda in similar fashion and used for later reference.

You are ready

While this is not an exhaustive Symposium tutorial, it should help you begin successfully. We recommend you practice in this new learning environment until you feel comfortable leading the class. Should you desire our assistance please do not hesitate to contact the IDDL support staff.