

Comments on UMich Proposed Terminology Changes for Forums

1. Post New Thread --> Start a conversation

The “c” in “conversation” should be upper case. Also, we think adding the word “new” would help to clarify (e.g., “Start a New Conversation”)

This change has received mixed reviews at IU. While the term “conversation” might be more intuitive for new users, our users are concerned that the change might be confusing for existing users. At the same time, the big email providers (Microsoft and Google) seem to have adopted “conversation” as their preferred term for describing a message and subsequent replies.

I wonder whether we really need to use thread or conversation in this context. Why not simply say “Post New Message”. It’s not really a conversation until someone replies. Just food for thought.

2. Display Entire Message --> Display Message Content

Definitely an improvement. However, I am still bothered by the jarring changes between the Display Subject Only view and the Display Message Content view. This is essentially a toggle, but each time it is clicked, other menu items jump between the horizontal menu along top (in Display Entire Message view) and options to the right of the Topic name (in Display Subject Only view). Keeping all of these options along the top and with the corresponding menu items in the same relative location would go a long way toward helping users understand that these are essentially two different views of the same content.

Home | Announcements | Site Info | Forums | Help | + Add Tool

Discussion 6 SMPL101: Forums

[Post New Thread](#) | [Mark All as Read](#) | [Display Subject Only](#) | [Topic Settings](#) |

Forums / Discussion 6 SMPL101 Forum / General Discussion < Previous Topic | Next Topic >

[Go to first new message](#)

Welcome to SMPL 101
 Lynn Ward (leward) (Sep 20, 2011 9:21 AM) - Read by: 2 [Reply](#)
[Email](#) | [Edit](#) | [Delete](#)
 hello and welcome

New! Re: Welcome to SMPL 101
 Lynn Student (leward-student) (Sep 20, 2011 9:22 AM) - Read by: 1 [Reply](#)
[Email](#) | [Edit](#) | [Delete](#)
 this is a reply to the initial message.

Discussion 6 SMPL101: Forums

[Display Entire Message](#) |

Forums / Discussion 6 SMPL101 Forum / General Discussion < Previous Topic | Next Topic >

General Discussion (unread) [Post New Thread](#) | [Topic Settings](#) | [Delete](#)

Why are these options down here? And why isn't Delete available in the Display Subject Only view? I think it would help to keep everything above the green line consistent between the two views.

| | Thread | Unread | Author | Time |
|--|--|--------|-------------------------------|----------------------|
| | Welcome to SMPL 101 | | Lynn Ward (leward) | Sep 20, 2011 9:21 AM |
| | New! Re: Welcome to SMPL 101 | | Lynn Student (leward-student) | Sep 20, 2011 9:22 AM |

The Sakai Project

3. Reply to Thread --> Reply to initial message

Change to title case (i.e., Reply to Initial Message). Important to keep capitalization of labels consistent.

4. Compose Forum Message --> Starting a conversation

With rare exception in Sakai, the base form of the verb is used both in action links and on the page in which the action is carried out. The only example I could find that uses a present participle on the action page is Melete, which is not a core tool. So, for consistency's sake, I suggest using the same working used for item 1 above (i.e., Start A Conversation. Compose a New Message, or whatever is finally selected)

5. Post Message --> Post

Agreed.

6. Reply to Message --> Reply to this {this is on the button bar of the message view}

Can we consider "Reply to This Message"? This would emphasize the difference between this option and "Reply to Initial Message"

7. Reply to Thread --> Reply to initial message

Agreed, but make it title case (Reply to Initial Message)

8. Next Thread > --> Next Conversation >

Agreed.

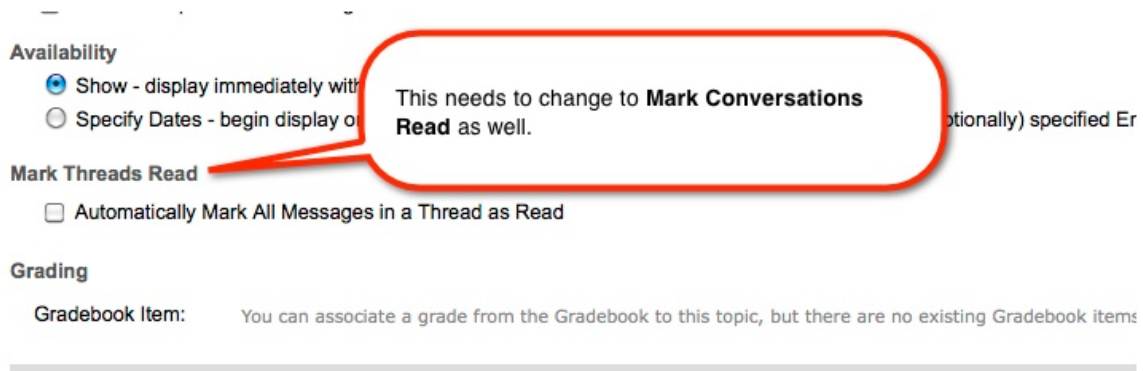
9. < Previous Thread --> < Previous Conversation

Agreed.

**10. Automatically Mark All Messages in a Thread as Read -->
Automatically Mark All Messages in a Conversation as Read**

Agreed, but section label needs to change as well to reflect new

terminology. Also, in this case, I would suggest changing to sentence case (**Automatically mark all messages in a conversation as read**)



The screenshot shows a settings interface with three sections: Availability, Mark Threads Read, and Grading. A red callout box points to the 'Mark Threads Read' section, containing the text: 'This needs to change to **Mark Conversations Read** as well.'

Availability

- ☒ Show - display immediately with
- ☐ Specify Dates - begin display o

Mark Threads Read

- ☐ Automatically Mark All Messages in a Thread as Read

Grading

Gradebook Item: You can associate a grade from the Gradebook to this topic, but there are no existing Gradebook items

11. Moderate Postings --> Moderate Messages

Agreed.

12. Organize Thread --> Organize by Conversation

Agreed. Suggest also adding “by” in front of the date options in the dropdown (“by Date Ascending”, “by Date Descending”) for consistency.

13. Notify me by email when a thread that I have contributed to receives a new message --> Notify me by email when a conversation that I have contributed to receives a new message

Both the original and revised versions seem a little awkward and unwieldy. Is this any better?

Notify me by email (or simply, “Send me an email..”) when new messages are posted to conversations I’ve contributed to.

Other Suggestions

A. To make the Permissions options consistent with the changes proposed above, I would suggest the following modifications:


The screenshot shows a 'Permissions' settings window. At the top, there's a 'Permissions' header with a dropdown arrow. Below it, a table lists roles and their permission levels. The 'Instructor' role is selected, showing a 'Permission Level' of 'Owner'. To the right of the 'Owner' dropdown is a 'Customize' button, which is highlighted with a red circle and the number 3. Below the 'Owner' dropdown, there are two columns of checkboxes. The first column contains: 'New Forum' (checked), 'New Topic' (checked), 'New Response' (checked, with a red circle and the number 1), 'Response to Response' (checked, with a red circle and the number 2), and 'Post to Gradebook' (checked). The second column contains: 'Change Settings' (checked), 'Read' (checked), 'Mark as Read' (checked), and 'Moderate Postings' (checked). To the right of these checkboxes are two panels: 'Edit Postings' and 'Delete Postings'. The 'Edit Postings' panel has three radio buttons: 'None', 'Own', and 'All' (selected, with a red circle and the number 4). The 'Delete Postings' panel also has three radio buttons: 'None', 'Own', and 'All' (selected). Below the 'Instructor' role, there are two more roles: 'Student' and 'Teaching Assistant', both with a 'Contributor' permission level and a 'Customize' button. At the bottom of the window, there are five buttons: 'Save', 'Save Draft', 'Save Settings & Add Topic', 'Delete', and 'Cancel'.


| Role | Permission Level |
|--------------------|------------------|
| Instructor | Owner |
| Student | Contributor |
| Teaching Assistant | Contributor |

Buttons: Save, Save Draft, Save Settings & Add Topic, Delete, Cancel

1. Change "New Response" to whatever is decided for #1 above (e.g., Start a Conversation)
 2. Change "Response to Response" to "Reply" (or "Reply to Message/Conversation")
 3. Change "Editing Postings" to "Edit Messages"
 4. Change "Delete Postings" to "Delete Messages"
- B. In Topic view, change "Delete" to "Delete Topic". This would help clarify what's being deleted.

Discussion 6 SMPL101: Forums ?

[Display Entire Message](#) 

Forums / Discussion 6 SMPL101 Forum / General Discussion  [< Previous Topic](#) | [Next Topic >](#)

General Discussion (4 messages - 0 unread) [Post New Thread](#) | [Topic Settings](#) | [Delete](#)

| Thread | Authored By | Date |
|---|-------------------------------|-----------------------|
| ▶ Welcome to SMPL 101 (4 messages - 0 unread) | Lynn Ward (leward) | Sep 20, 2011 9:21 AM |
| Re: Welcome to SMPL 101 | Lynn Student (leward-student) | Sep 20, 2011 9:22 AM |
| Re: Welcome to SMPL 101 | Lynn Ward (leward) | Sep 20, 2011 11:05 AM |
| Re: Welcome to SMPL 101 | Lynn Ward (leward) | Sep 20, 2011 11:06 AM |

- C. In screens where attachments can be added, change text from “No attachments have been made” to “No attachments yet”, which is the phrase used in most other tools.
- D. Capitalization and language is inconsistent in forum and topic settings;
The following changes are suggested:

Forum Posting

☐ Lock Forum (Disable forum postings) 1



2 ☐ Moderate Topics in Forum

☐ Users must post before reading 3

Availability

☐ Show - display immediately with no time restriction 4

5 ☒ Specify Dates - begin display on (optionally) specified Beginning Date/Time; hide display after (optionally) specified Ending Date/Time

Open Date:  Close Date: 

1. Change from “Lock Forum...” to “Lock forum (disable posting messages). For Topic Settings, change to “Lock topic (disable posting messages)”
2. Change from “Moderate Topics” to “Moderate topics”; For Topic Settings, change to “Moderate topic”
3. Change from “Users must post before reading” to “Require users to post before reading”
4. Change from “Show - display immediately with no time restriction” to “Show immediately”
5. Change from “Specify Dates - begin display on (optionally) specified Beginning Date/Time; hide display after (optionally) specified Ending Date/Time” to “Specify dates to open (show) and close (hide) the forum”. Alternatively, this could be handled as follows:

Show this forum:

☐ Immediately

☐ from  until 

In Topic Settings, the label would read “Show this topic:”