

1086-H1-2357 **Eve Torrence***, etorrenc@rmc.edu. *An Online Discussion Forum for Calculus Students.*

Last spring I set up an experimental online homework discussion for my Calculus 1 students. I used the Forum option in the open source course management system Moodle. It was a wonderful success. I've made adjustments to improve the quality of the student participation and it is even more effective this semester. Students are extremely good at explaining solutions to each other. They are willing to write out detailed questions and answers. Now I spend far less time going over homework in class. And I am able to see which problems are truly difficult for my students as opposed to those they got wrong because they made simple mistakes. I use online homework and this discussion is a natural extension of the online system.

The preparedness of our Calculus 1 students varies greatly. While this can be a real challenge, having students who bring different skills to the course can be a big advantage in an online discussion. Students benefit from the discipline of typing out both questions and answers. Having a permanent record of questions and answers that can be referenced later in the semester is also useful.

I will discuss my experiences and improvements to the Forum and show examples of my students' discussions. (Received September 25, 2012)