Building Learning Opportunities for Greater Success –  
(BLOGS) in an Online Course

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Abstract: Blogs, old news? Not yet! We will present our findings and how we use blogs, discussions and webquests in a Calculus online class to foster deep understanding and reflection. Communication and community building is essential in an online course. Many students are afraid to “speak up”. Providing a place where students feel safe to ask questions, interact and post their ideas is vital. Weekly prompts start the student’s thought process and the discussions build from those. The amazing responses incorporate historical and amusing comments, social observations to political analysis. The students come to realize how mathematics makes an impact on their lives. The discussions are graded by a rubric based on quality not quantity. There is a stark difference between the students’ first few posts and their mathematical explanations versus their posts at the end of the semester. The ideas behind what we do can be applied to any subject.