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Email dialogue journals in a college calculus classroom: a look at the implementation and benefits.

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Teaching mathematics for understanding rather than rote learning has increased the number of college mathematics professors utilizing writing into their classrooms. These writing activities focus on student kept journals, writing papers, and answering essay questions. This paper discusses a particular writing activity, that is, dialogue journal writing, and its incorporation into a collegiate level Calculus I course. Dialogue journals involve students and instructors in timely bidirectional communications. The goal is to provide a forum for private interaction, devoid of censorship, retribution, or evaluation, where the concern is on content and not on prose. In particular, this essay identifies how (a) email dialogue journals provided a viable means of individualized, continual contact with students in a large class, (b) students benefited from asking questions and receiving timely explanations, and (c) the instructor received frequent feedback for course improvement.

Classification: D44