Written Assignment: Mathematics Autobiography

Bring to class AND submit online. The assignment will be 2-3 pages, double-spaced and typed in essay-style. Write a mathematics autobiography that describes your experiences with mathematics throughout your life both in and out of school. You might include mention of your earliest recollection of “doing math,” people who influenced your thinking about mathematics and your abilities in mathematics, and experiences that significantly impacted your feelings and/or beliefs about mathematics. Please use pseudonyms rather than actual names when referring to a specific teacher.

Journal Prompt #1 (Prior to course or at start of first day.)

1. Please list the mathematics courses you have taken in college.
2. List three words that come to mind when you think about doing/learning mathematics.
3. What are you looking forward to in taking this course?
4. What concerns do you have as you begin this course?

Journal Prompt #2

Thinking about the prior mathematics courses you have taken (both in high school and college),
   1. What were the goals of the course in terms of student learning?
   2. How do these compare with what you have experienced so far in this course?

Journal Prompt #5

It is common for a person’s thinking about a subject to change as s/he goes through a course that approaches it from a perspective that is new. Thinking about the work we have done in this class so far...
   1. Have you had any experiences that have changed the way in which you view mathematics?
   2. If so, what has happened? If not, provide an assessment of your learning in the course to date.
Online Discussion #1

When you think about the mathematics classes you have taken/observed/taught,

1. What sort of reasoning and communication have gone on during the class?

2. Who was involved in the reasoning and communication and in what ways?

3. How did the reasoning and communication contribute to students' mathematical understanding?

4. What message(s) about mathematics did this sort of reasoning and communication send to students about mathematical learning and knowledge?

Online Discussion #2

Consider your own experiences as a learner as well as what you've seen in classrooms recently as you respond to the prompt below.

There has been much debate about the "best" way for children to learn basic arithmetic operations with numbers (extending to rational number work). Some argue students should do some thinking of their own to develop strategies and make sense of the operations before formally learning "standard" algorithms. Others argue the standard algorithms are the most efficient way to get an arithmetic answer and that time is wasted having students develop their own strategies for these procedures. *Share your thoughts on this from the perspective of one who has both learned standard arithmetic algorithms and one who is now working as (or becoming) a teacher of mathematics.*

Final Self-Assessment

Thinking about your experiences in this course, how have your thinking about and understanding of mathematics changed? Specifically, what concepts do you understand more deeply? And what areas do you feel you still need to work on? Finally, how might this impact the ways in which you approach organizing the learning environment for students of mathematics in your classroom?
# Learning Log Cover Sheet

Name ________________________________  Problem Set # __________  Total Time Spent ________________________

Worked with ____________________________________________________________________________________________________

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Instructor’s comments: