How Can Being a Student Help You Be a Better Instructor?

A list of questions for you to contemplate

- Who was your best math instructor? Who was your worst math instructor? What made them bad or good?
- Have you ever had an instructor who was likeable, but a bad instructor?
- Have you ever had an instructor who was unlikeable, but a good instructor?
- Do you prefer interactive math classes, or lecture style math classes? Why?
- Have you ever been bored in a math class? What could the instructor have done to engage you more?
- Is there an instructor who you had a lot of respect for? Why did you respect that person? What attributes did he/she have to earn your respect?
- What was your most negative learning experience in a math class? What happened? How could it have been better?
- Many math classes have different grading structures (all exams, 50% homework, projects instead of finals, etc.). Which of these structures do you prefer as a student? Which of these structures most facilitates student learning?
- What is the first thing you notice about an instructor?
- Do you like taking notes in math classes? Is it sometimes hard to take notes? What can instructors do to make note taking easier?
- Are you the type of person to speak up in class and ask questions? Why or why not? What can instructors do to make you feel comfortable asking and answering questions?
- Do you attend office hours? Why or why not? What could an instructor do to encourage you to attend office hours?
- Think of an example of two good instructors you've had who have drastically different teaching styles.
- Are there certain teaching styles and class structures that are more effective for different levels of students?
- Which of your instructors could you most see yourself emulating?
- Do you read the syllabus when you take math classes? Do you reference it throughout the semester? What type of information do you like to see in a syllabus?
- Have you ever had an instructor who spoke too quietly? Too loudly? Too monotone? What sort of vocal intonations keep you engaged in a math class?
- Did you have friends in your math classes? Were they your friends before the class started, or did you meet them in the class? Did you study together? Did this improve your class experience? How could an instructor facilitate friendships in the classroom?
● Have you ever thought that some aspect of a class was unfair? Why did you feel that way? How could the instructor have fixed it?
● Have you ever cheated in a math class? Have you ever thought about cheating? Do you know someone else who cheated in a math class? What measures could your instructor have taken to prevent the cheating?