

Meeting: 1003, Atlanta, Georgia, SS 19A, AMS Special Session on Mathematicians' Work on Mathematics Education

1003-97-180 **Tim Hsu*** (hsu@math.sjsu.edu), Department of Mathematics, San Jose State University, San Jose, CA 95192-0103. *The effect of mathematics for general education on student attitudes towards math.* Preliminary report.

Mathematics for general education, as set up at our institution and many others, is aimed at students who are primarily seeking to fulfill our general education requirement in mathematics. In other words, for most students in the course, math for general education is the last math class they will ever take, and in many cases, it is the *only* math class they will ever take in college. Several questions therefore naturally arise, such as: What should we hope to achieve in this course? What subject matter should be taught? What methods or approaches will be most effective?

One reasonable goal for this course might be to improve students' attitudes towards mathematics, or at least to give them a "better" idea of the point of mathematics. Since Fall 2003, we have been conducting an ongoing study of how different approaches (subject matter, classroom methods) to teaching math for general education affect students' attitudes towards mathematics. In this talk, we will describe the methods of our study, present quantitative and qualitative results, and discuss some conclusions we have drawn. (Received August 18, 2004)