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**John C Nardo** (jnardo@oglethorpe.edu), 4484 Peachtree Rd. NE, Atlanta, GA 30319. *Are you  
a Mathematical Maoist? Writing Exercises to Explore the Mathematical Self.*

In Fall 2005, our department decided to revive and revise our "College Geometry" course. We envisioned a course which was not simply a technical review of Euclidean geometry and the axiomatic method. Rather, students should grapple with larger philosophical questions consistent with the goals of any liberal arts institution. This talk will focus on one particular activity and writing assignment from the course. This project asked students to self-identify on the spectrum of "Math Exists for Math's Sake" vs. "Math Exists to be Useful" and to justify that position. Though this debate may be mentioned tangentially in other classes within the mathematics major, we integrated this foundational question into the design and objectives of the course. This assignment directed students to examine personal mathematical goals and to decide an appropriate career path. We were impressed with the students' introspective nature and their willingness to explore a macro-view of mathematics and its interconnectedness with other disciplines. Though offered through our Geometry course, this assignment is easily adaptable to any upper-level mathematics course. (Received September 20, 2006)