

## Teaching and Learning Philosophy

Jason R. Finley

November 5<sup>th</sup>, 02008

I have always been driven to learn by a sense of wonder, exploration, and discovery. As I have journeyed through my own education, my love of learning has grown to encompass a love of teaching, and of learning how to teach. My studies as a cognitive psychologist have provided valuable insights into the strengths and weaknesses of human learning and memory, and have helped to refine my approach to teaching.

### PERSPECTIVE

My first priority is to emulate the perspective of learners. Once we know, we easily forget what it was like to not know. Thus, I strive to accurately imagine the cognitive states of students, assisted by feedback from the students themselves. Only in this way can I identify the knowledge that students do and do not have, and appropriately help them to construct new knowledge.

### MOTIVATION

Motivation is a requisite for learning. But it cannot be taught; rather, it must be instilled. Thus, I seek to inspire students with my own enthusiasm for the subject matter and for learning itself, and to impart to them the belief that intelligence is not an inborn trait but a skill that can be improved.

### SKILLS

Curiosity must be enabled by skills. Thus, I endeavor to equip students with effective study strategies and sophisticated metacognition (i.e., awareness and understanding of their own learning). Helping students learn how to learn empowers them not only in the present course, but in their education and lives beyond.

### EFFORT

Finally, learning requires hard work. Thus, I make a point to engage students with opportunities to apply their developing skills, and to challenge them to take responsibility for active pursuit of their own learning.

This overall philosophy applies equally to my teaching practices and to my own voyage of learning, which I am passionate about sharing with fellow learners.