# M1: Unlearning Special Education

## Course

Special Education

## Location

Module 1

## Alignments

### Course Outcomes

 CLO I: Describe the professional practices of special education teachers.

### Module Outcomes

MLO 1.1: Identify the legal and ethical rights and responsibilities of various partners in special education services.

MLO 1.2: Apply ethical and legal principles to special education service scenarios.

MLO 1.3: Evaluate personal understanding and professional development needs related to special education.

### Specific InTASC Standards

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| **InTASC**  | **Type** | **Specific Standard** |
| 9i | Knowledge | The teacher understands how personal identity, worldview, and prior experience affect perceptions and expectations, and recognizes how they may bias behaviors and interactions with others.  |
| 9j  | Knowledge | The teacher understands laws related to learners’ rights and teacher responsibilities (e.g., for educational equity, appropriate education for learners with disabilities, confidentiality, privacy, appropriate treatment of learners, reporting in situations related to possible child abuse).  |
| 9n | Disposition | The teacher sees him/herself as a learner, continuously seeking opportunities to draw upon current education policy and research as sources of analysis and reflection to improve practice.  |
| 9o | Disposition | The teacher understands the expectations of the profession including codes of ethics, professional standards of practice, and relevant law and policy. |
| 10p | Disposition | The teacher actively shares responsibility for shaping and supporting the mission of his/her school as one of advocacy for learners and accountability for their success.  |

## Activity Instructions

### Purpose

Before working with students with disabilities, it is important for educators to reflect on and assess their own personal identities so they can take stock of their biases and perceptions before bringing those biases and perceptions into their classrooms. Oftentimes, these biases and perceptions are formed through experiences, laws, and history.

This activity invites you to reflect on how your identity and lived experiences have impacted your perceptions and expectations regarding special education. Through a written reflection, you will identify areas of interest including procedures, skills, or other information that you should proactively seek to enhance your professional development based on the gaps you notice through the reflection.

### Task

#### Instructor Preparation for Activity

* Identify which aspects of identity on which you would like your students to reflect. Some things you might have students consider include gender, race, ethnicity, religion, ability, family education, socioeconomic status, etc. When having students reflect on their identities, have them first identify tenets of their identities and then have them think about those identities in relation to special education/disabilities.
* Have them consider the following questions:
	+ How were people with disabilities supported in the communities I occupy?
	+ How were people with disabilities represented in the communities I occupy?
	+ Which laws was I aware of prior to completing Module 1?
	+ Which laws are new to me?
	+ Which laws do I need to learn more about?
* This activity can either be a personal reflection or a discussion board.

#### Student Directions

For this activity, you will answer the following questions and will write your responses as a reflection paper:

1. Identity 3-5 tenets of your identity (gender, race, ethnicity, religion, ability, family education, socioeconomic status, etc.)
2. Consider how those tenets of your identity have informed your educational experience.
3. Reflect on how people with disabilities have been supported and represented in the communities you occupy.
4. Based on what you read in Module 1, consider the laws that you already knew, the laws that were new to you, and the laws that you need to learn more about.
5. Upload or post your reflection to the appropriate assignment folder/discussion board.