



Understanding & Supporting Learners Who Face Challenges

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Licensure Renewal Credit: 1 credit

This course is approved for licensure renewal credit only upon successful completion of all the micro-credential components. The course is not approved as credit toward an endorsement or new teaching authority.

This course is presented in a self-paced format. Participants, whether individually or as learning team, are expected to make reasonable progress through the components. In order to accommodate the participant's work schedule and professional setting, no due dates are attached to the individual components with the exception of the final due date.

Dates: Online July 1, 2023-July 1, 2024

Course Description (Overview of Course)

The variety of challenges our students face impact their learning, behavior, socialization with peers and adults, and motivation to learn. It is critical to understand more about how the classroom environment can counteract these challenges and positively impact learners, leading to successful experiences for everyone. An expanded perspective allows educators to consider how learner challenges impact behavior and school outcomes. Educators who gain understanding and skills related to impacting academic performance, impacting motivation to learn, and impacting interactions (adult & peer) for learners who face challenges will undoubtedly be creating an opportunity for all students to succeed academically.

The first micro-credential focuses on a) identifying within our classroom, program, or building the learners who face challenges and b) more effectively planning for their success. The second micro credential moves forward from understanding and skillfully planning for the needs of learner challenges to implementing lessons and monitoring progress of changes made in the classroom environment and/or learning experiences.

For the purposes of this micro-credential learner challenges being considered are:

- Poverty
- Trauma/Mental Illness
- Cultural Diversity
- English Language Learners
- Gifted & Talented

School Improvement Rationale

Each day learners enter our classroom bringing their own set of challenges. Sometimes those challenges are easy to spot based on conversations, observed behaviors, or on academic performance. Yet, all too often educators either don't notice, don't understand, or don't have the time to dig into what may be behind those challenges and the corresponding barriers to learning that students bring into our classrooms.

The first line of instruction falls to the general education teacher, and the need for understanding and responding to learner challenges is critical. The general education teacher must be able to modify lessons, implement lessons addressing learner challenges, and monitor student progress, all as key elements of an effective instructional delivery system.

Expected Outcomes: The learner will be able to...

Those who complete all components of the course will be able to:

- ☐ Use research to identify and understand learner challenges (Poverty, Trauma/Mental Illness, Cultural Diversity, English Language Learners, or Gifted & Talented) facing students in one's classroom, program, or building.
- ☐ Analyze how learner challenges impact learning in the classroom, program, or building.
- ☐ Focus on one challenged learner group and learn how to create a classroom community that encourages positive social interaction, active engagement, and self-regulation for this group.
- ☐ Apply research, knowledge, and skills to adjust instruction and implement strategies that support the needs of challenged learners.
- ☐ Monitor lesson outcomes and adjust lessons to improve the outcomes for the identified challenged learners.

Note: Success criteria for each component are identified for each component below.

Micro-Credential Component*	Micro-Credential Description	Hours
Who are the learners who face challenges in my classroom?	In this micro-credential, you will examine your own classroom, program, or building to determine the challenges that learners face each day. You will dig deeper by selecting a learner challenge (Poverty, Trauma/Mental Illness, Cultural Diversity, English Language, or Gifted & Talented) to study. From the study you will determine the most impactful learning and professional strategies to benefit the learner challenge you select.	7

Success Criteria for this micro-credential:**The learner will submit:**

- ☐ Task 1: A complete and thorough analysis of an identified classroom, program, or building population of learners with challenges, the challenges they bring to the classroom, and the impact on student learning.
- ☐ Task 2: A summary of current research that identifies and provides strategies to address how the learners' challenges impact level of preparedness, ability to interact with peers and adults, and ability or motivation to learn.

Micro-Credential Component*	Micro-Credential Description	Hours
How can I support the learners who face challenges in my classroom?	This micro-credential continues the focus on the learner population studied in Who Are the Learners Who Face Challenges in My Classroom? Participants will use the resources provided for their selected learner population to modify lessons, implement lessons, and monitor student progress as a result of the lessons.	8

Success Criteria for this micro-credential:**The learner will submit:**

- ☐ Task 1: The identification and analysis of what the targeted challenged learner needs to be successful, including specific strategies. Five research-based strategies will be indicated in modifications across three classroom lessons.
- ☐ Task 2: Video recording of one of the lessons with an assessment and monitoring plan, including any need revisions to achieve student success.

Iowa Teaching Standards

Check which number(s) of the Iowa Teaching Standards that connect to the work defined in this course:

- ✓ Standard 1: Demonstrates ability to enhance academic performance and support for implementation of the school district's student achievement goals.
- Standard 2: Demonstrates competence in content knowledge appropriate to the teaching position
- ✓ Standard 3: Demonstrates competence in planning and preparing for instruction.
- ✓ Standard 4: Uses strategies to deliver instruction that meets the multiple learning needs of students.
- Standard 5: Uses a variety of methods to monitor student learning.
- Standard 6: Demonstrates competence in classroom management.
- ✓ Standard 7: Engages in professional growth
- Standard 8: Fulfills professional responsibilities established by the school district.

Iowa Leadership Standards

Check which number(s) of the Iowa Leadership Standards that connect to the work defined in this course:

- STANDARD 1. MISSION, VISION, AND CORE VALUES. Educational leaders develop, advocate, and enact a shared mission, vision, and core values of high-quality education and academic success and well-being of each student.
- STANDARD 2. ETHICS AND PROFESSIONAL NORMS. Educational leaders act ethically and according to professional norms to promote each student's academic success and well-being.
- ✓ STANDARD 3. EQUITY AND CULTURAL RESPONSIVENESS. Educational leaders strive for equity of educational opportunity and culturally responsive practices to promote each student's academic success and well-being.
- ✓ STANDARD 4. CURRICULUM, INSTRUCTION, AND ASSESSMENT. Educational leaders develop and support intellectually rigorous and coherent systems of curriculum, instruction, and assessment to promote each student's academic success and well-being.
- ✓ STANDARD 5. COMMUNITY OF CARE AND SUPPORT FOR STUDENTS. Educational leaders cultivate an inclusive, caring, and supportive school community that promotes the academic success and well-being of each student.
- ✓ STANDARD 6. PROFESSIONAL CAPACITY OF SCHOOL PERSONNEL. Educational leaders develop the professional capacity and practice of school personnel to promote each student's academic success and well-being.
- STANDARD 7. PROFESSIONAL COMMUNITY FOR TEACHERS AND STAFF. Educational leaders foster a professional community of teachers and other professional staff to promote each student's academic success and well-being.
- STANDARD 8. MEANINGFUL ENGAGEMENT OF FAMILIES AND COMMUNITY. Educational leaders engage families and the community in meaningful, reciprocal, and mutually beneficial ways to promote each student's academic success and well-being.
- STANDARD 9. OPERATIONS AND MANAGEMENT. Educational leaders manage school operations and resources to promote each student's academic success and well-being.
- ✓ STANDARD 10. SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT. Educational leaders act as agents of continuous improvement to promote each student's academic success and well-being.

*A component can be completed as a stand-alone learning experience without the expectation of recertification credit. If the learner successfully completes all components in this course, they will be eligible to be awarded recertification credit.