Shari Saunders. Ph.D.
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Shari Saunders has a Master's degree in Learning Disabilities from Northwestern University and a Ph.D. in Education from the University of Virginia. As a Clinical Associate Professor, she works with prospective teachers in the university classroom as well as at school sites. Her primary responsibility is facilitating the development of future K-12 teachers to become empowered educators who are committed to addressing educational issues that limit opportunities for all students to experience a quality education. Some of her areas of interest include: teacher education for social justice, preparing prospective teachers for advocacy and activism, whole child education, place-based education, school climate, school lunch reform and restorative justice. She also has work experience in student affairs and multicultural faculty development.

Her desire to address inequities led her to work with underserved youth in urban communities first as an elementary special education teacher, and later as a resource room teacher for incarcerated adolescent males. After completing her doctoral program, Dr. Saunders began working as a teacher educator in the School of Education at the University of Michigan - Ann Arbor. In the first course, which she co-taught, it became clear that many of her students had a limited understanding of diversity-related issues. In order to address this gap, she reframed the course to have a multicultural orientation. When with the Center for Research on Learning and Teaching (CRLT) at the University of Michigan – Ann Arbor, Dr. Saunders worked in the area of faculty development with a focus on multicultural teaching and learning. In her work with student affairs, Dr. Saunders collaborated with several student affairs units to address social identity development and social justice education and their role in transforming student and university communities. Now in her current position with the School of Education, she weaves social justice issues into many of her teacher education courses. As a member of the National Advisory Committee of the National Conference on Race and Ethnicity in American Higher Education for two years, Dr. Saunders helped provide information and learning opportunities that facilitate the creation of more inclusive environments in higher education institutions.