

Key Concepts from Course Design (Using the Backward Design Model) & How they Fit Together

1. Identify the **big ideas** (disciplinary) that relate to your course.
2. Derive **essential questions** related to the big ideas. Consider how best to use essential questions:
 - As themes in the course
 - Associated with learning outcomes where inquiry is essential.
3. Develop a **manageable number of learning outcomes**. Outcomes for understanding should be top level and outcomes associated with apply, know, do, value and be familiar roll up to the outcomes for understanding .
4. Determine the **evidence necessary to assess** student progress toward meeting the outcomes. Where complex, authentic tasks are chosen, rubrics may be helpful.
5. **Identify barriers or challenges to learning** (related to misconceptions, lack of preparedness, mindsets about learning, etc) and incorporate strategies for addressing these into learning activities.
6. Select **learning activities and instructional strategies** to give students the opportunity to learn and practice skills and develop competencies needed for the performance task (evidence).
7. **Sequence the learning activities** in a way that allows students to build skills, practice, receive and integrate feedback and handle increasing complexity with confidence.

Note:

- * big ideas and essential questions act as “organizers” to support student understanding, learning and inquiry.
- * course design is influenced by context – yours, your students’ and curricular and institutional priorities – these are (in a sense) design constraints and/or enablers.
- * these components are in dialogue with each other and need to be revisited as you learn from your students about what works to support their learning.
- * the process is iterative and will require adjustments over time and with new information.

Course Design Components

