**Key Question: What core understandings guide the learning?**

**Why is this important?** Understanding happens when learners actively make sense of what they are learning through inquiry, application and reflection. Big ideas help learners build connections between concepts and ideas. Understanding leads to transfer - which refers to the ability to determine when and how to apply what has been learned in different contexts (the ultimate aim of meaningful learning).

**Guiding Questions for Key Question**

# **Big ideas/Enduring Understandings:** What are the linchpin ideas in your course (ie. they hold together the related content knowledge) ? For example, in a photography course, a big idea may be: “the essence of photography is capturing light”. This, then, would serve as an organizing idea for learners to refer to and relate to as they learn and experiment with new ideas.

# In your course, what big ideas provide a way for learners to structure new learning and build connections? **Big ideas:** examples and criteria :<http://bit.ly/1lku7Ba>

# **Key Question: How will I determine priorities?**

**Why is this important?** The creative process of course design often unleashes many more ideas about why, how and what students might learn than can reasonably be addressed in a 13 week course. For this reason, it is helpful to determine priorities around the big ideas in the course. The framework below can help you keep the core ideas at the forefront of your design and (from there) consider what learners will need to know, do and be familiar with as they work toward understanding. It can help focus the design process.

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| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Learners will understand that...** | **In order to understand, learners will need to know, do and apply...** | **It will be important for learners to be familiar with...** | **In the process of understanding, learners (develop, express, appreciate)...** |

**Example**

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| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Learners will understand that…***Big idea: the essence of photography is capturing light.**Light can be adjusted to reflect mood.* | **In order to understand “big idea” X, learners will need to know and do…***Know about color of light, golden light, color cast.**How to avoid shadows.**When to use a flash.**Take their own photographs and apply lighting techniques.* | **It will be important for learners to be familiar with…***the art and artists of photography: Gerhardt Richter; Anselm Keiffer, Ansel Adams, Yousef Karsh, etc and their perspectives.* | **In the process of understanding, learners (develop, express, appreciate)...***their own perspective about the emotional impact of photography.* |

**Guiding Questions for Key Question**

How do I translate big ideas into priorities for learning? Given the context of my course (including constraints of time, the level of the course, the format etc), what do I want my learners to be able to know, do, value by the end of the course (given what I claimed were the “enduring understandings” I have identified)?