Considerations to Guide Course Design Leading up to A Major Assignment
from Peggy Maki

Develop your major assignment within the context of expected exit level achievement as specified by the relevant VALUE rubric or DQP assignment specifications:

- How are you chronologically preparing students to demonstrate the expected level of achievement of either the relevant VALUE rubric or the specifications of DQP?
- What are the chronological building blocks you develop that increasingly advance students' ability to demonstrate those expected achievement levels?
- How have you addressed the various obstacles or challenges students typically face in demonstrating exit level expectations, such as analysis, synthesis, examination of assumptions?
- What opportunities have you built into your course for students to receive feedback on how well they demonstrate the various sub-skills of the relevant scoring rubric and to self-reflect on their performance against the rubric?

Consider how you might redesign a major assignment in your course:

- Do the word choices in your assignment—such as " thoroughly examine," "analyze," "synthesize"—have meaning to students? Do they know what "analysis," for example, entails? Or, do you assume they will know that they need to demonstrate those skills?

- How much chronological practice and feedback have you built into your course to prepare students for a major assignment that demonstrates GE or program-level outcomes?

- Consider how your assignment asks students to use theories, approaches, assumptions, lenses, or perspectives characteristic of your discipline or field or profession. That way you can also assess their knowledge. (Recall the relevant exit level expectations for the associate's or bachelor's degree according to DQP.)

- Consider the possibility that students might choose among assignment foci, thus increasing the likelihood that they may be more engaged in one of those foci and thus have a deeper commitment to the assignment.