

Requests for Proposals to Initiate Development of Campus Capability in *Transforming Course Design*

Date: December 7, 2007

To: Provosts at Bakersfield, Channel Islands, Dominguez Hills, Fresno, Humboldt, Los Angeles, Maritime, Monterey Bay, Sacramento, San Jose, Stanislaus

From: Gary W. Reichard, Executive Vice-Chancellor and Chief Academic Officer

RE: Requests for Proposals to Initiate Development of Campus Capability in *Transforming Course Design*

Background: On March 1 2007, we announced the launch of the *CSU Transforming Course Design* program. Among the program components was a Spring 2007 Request for Proposals to provide training, funding and consulting time from our Chancellor's Office program team. Provosts submitted proposed projects, and in May 2007 we announced the distribution of twenty awards¹ to help campuses to initiate or accelerate their course redesign processes and to foster collaborations across campuses. The efforts of these campus-centered projects will continue through 2008.

In July 2007, the Executive Council recognized the need and opportunity to focus on course redesign projects where targeted collaboration across campuses can benefit similar or identical courses on many, most or all campuses through the shared use, development, and assessment of course resources. Further consultation followed with the system-wide Academic Technology Advisory Committee (ATAC), the Provosts' Technology Steering Committee (PTSC), and the CSU presidents' Technology Steering Committee (TSC). As a consequence, for Fall 2007 the *Transforming Course Design* focus is on multi-campus collaborations. Provosts have been invited to submit course candidates for collaborations: courses that have ***high enrollment, unsatisfactory student rates of success, and faculty commitment*** to the redesign process and openness to implementation of the results.

Fall 2007 Request for Proposals: In parallel to this main focus, Provosts at the campuses not yet supported for a campus-based project are invited to submit a proposal for support in launching a local initiative to develop their campus capability in *Transforming Course Design*. The goal is that by the end of the current academic year, every CSU campus will have initiated a campus-centered effort to redesign one or more courses in order to achieve improved student learning while producing student and/or institutional cost savings. While funding of these initial projects will necessarily be limited in 2007- 08, we wish to position every campus to participate in further initiatives expected in 2008-09 and beyond.

¹ http://www.calstate.edu/ats/transforming_course_design/documents/RFP-Awards_May07.pdf

Guidelines for Proposals

1. Provosts may submit at most one proposal to initiate the development of capability in *Transforming Course Design* for their campuses.
2. Campus teams are encouraged to contact the Chancellor's Office support team for *Transforming Course Design*, through Dr. Tom Carey at tcarey@calstate.edu. More information is also available in the following resources:
 - the *Transforming Course Design* [information pages](#)² within the Academic Technology Services website. The Program Updates pages on this site include discussion of *Enhancing Learning Outcomes*, *Reducing Instructional Costs*, and a *Step-by-Step Guide to Opportunities for Transforming Course Design*.
 - the [community website](#)³ for ongoing *Transforming Course Design* projects within the CSU. This site provides updates from current campus and collaborative projects, as well as information on CSU workshops and on events outside the CSU.
3. All proposed work to be funded under this RFP will be expected to conclude by September 2008, in order to position participating campuses to engage in more comprehensive *Transforming Course Design* initiatives in 2008-09 and beyond. However, institutions may propose a multi-phase project with an initial phase to be completed with the requested support by September 2008. (In exceptional cases with a well-documented rationale, funding and other support from this RFP may be used in Fall 2008.)
4. We anticipate funding proposals in two categories, although other projects will also be considered if they provide an appropriate means for a campus to initiate capability development in *Transforming Course Design*:
 - **Planning Grants** to map out an appropriate campus project to demonstrate the benefits and processes of *Transforming Course Design*. Planning Grants will provide consulting and training time from our support team to work with the campus team, and time for the campus team leader equivalent to one course teaching assignment.
 - **Development Grants** to implement existing/emerging campus plans for a *Transforming Course Design* project. Development Grants will provide consulting and training time from our support team to work with the campus team, and financial support of \$8,000-\$10,000 for the project. As described in the previous point, a proposal for a Development Grant could specify a multi-phase project in which the initial phase would be supported within this Fall 2007 RFP.
5. All proposals will be submitted electronically to tcarey@calstate.edu, using the format specified below.

² http://www.calstate.edu/ats/transforming_course_design

³ <http://transform.csuprojects.org/>

Timeline

Fall 2007 Requests for Proposals distributed to qualifying campuses		Nov 27
Optional Letter of Intent for Proposals of Campus Projects	on or before	Jan 15
Feedback on Letters of Intent	on or before	Jan 22
Last date for submission of proposals		Feb 22
-----	Review by Evaluation Panel	
Announcement of Fall 2007 RFP awards	on or before	Mar 7

Letters of Intent for feedback may be submitted prior to Jan. 15, and the support team will respond within one week to these submissions. Proposals may be submitted any time before Feb. 22, and we will make every effort to respond promptly (subject to the availability of Evaluation Panel members). Inquiries and requests for consultation may be made at any time. We encourage early submission of proposals, particularly those arising from Seed Grants in the May 2007 awards or those seeking course release time Winter or Spring term in 2008.

Proposal Format

1. Project title, category, project leader(s) and team members. Provide full contact information for the project leader(s).
2. One page Project Summary, including a Project Abstract (100 words or less) outlining the goals for enhancing student learning and reducing costs. The Project Summary will describe the current situation before the project commences and the planned future situation as a result of the project.
3. Description of the need or issue addressed by the proposal. Where applicable, include the specific course numbers being addressed, and current and projected enrolments.
4. An outline of the methods and activities for the project, including assessing outcomes.
5. Expected results and how these results will be used by the campus.
6. A time-line for planned activities, with a description of project objectives/milestones.
7. Current campus or discipline projects and plans related to *Transforming Course Design* in general and to this project in particular.
8. Resources requested, and a list of other campus or resources committed to the project.
9. Letters of commitment from Provost, Dean and Department Chair (or equivalent).

Evaluation Criteria

The Evaluation Criteria in Appendix 1 are those used by the Evaluation Panel for the awards in May 2007.

Additional Grant Conditions (excerpted from the awards letters, May 2007)

1. Campuses will submit a project report by September 2008. We have attached a draft Project Report Template which illustrates the full set of characteristics we expect in mature *Transforming Course Design* projects – while your work will target only some of these aspects, we do ask that you give consideration to all of them in your plans.
2. There are additional ways in which your work can contribute to *Transforming Course Design* across the CSU. We will support you in these collaborations by providing opportunities for you to contribute in an appropriate selection of the following:
 - Communicating to your institutional colleagues the rationale, processes and outcomes of *Transforming Course Design* as demonstrated in your project;
 - Communicating and collaborating with related initiatives across the CSU through the *Transforming Course Design* [community website](#). If you have a website for your project, we will link it to this “Teaching Commons” workspace. If you do not have other plans for a project website, we will set up one for you. One of our team will assist you in using this workspace to update other teams on your progress and on the issues and needs which emerge during your project;
3. The Chancellor’s Office team will also provide guidance for your team on opportunities to apply our system wide services and resources. System-wide academic technology initiatives (www.calstate.edu/ats) can help projects in ways such as the following:
 - assessing student skills for using technology in learning (e.g. [the iSkills tool](#));
 - customized instruction and assessment in introductory [Mathematics/Statistics](#);
 - discovering and reusing peer-reviewed online teaching and learning resources (e.g. www.merlot.org; the CSU Electronic Core Collection of library resources);
4. Any resources created within project with support from the Chancellor’s Office will be subject to your institutional policy on ownership of the intellectual property, with the additional condition that the resources will be available for non-exclusive use and adaptation in teaching within the California State University for no less than 8 years.

Appendix 1: Evaluation Criteria

1. Quality of the Project Plan:

- a) Did the proposal provide clear and sufficient information on the following factors:
- the current status of campus projects and plans related to *Transforming Course Design*?
 - the need or issue addressed by the proposal?
 - project objectives and milestones?
 - the methods and activities for the project?
 - expected results and how the results will be used on the campus?
 - the approach for assessment of these results?
 - resources requested, and a description of campus resources committed to the project?
- b) Is the plan realistic? Are the plan elements likely to achieve the targeted objectives & milestones?
- c) Are the results described likely to advance campus capability for *Transforming Course Design*?
- d) Are there better methods and activities we could recommend to achieve the desired results?
- e) Is the assessment appropriate and cost-effective?
- f) Are the expectations for collaborations, present or future, realistic and likely to be fulfilled?

2. Alignment with key success factors for Transforming Course Design:

To what extent does the project address the key success factors for *Transforming Course Design*:

- a) engage teams of faculty and department leaders to insure sustainable course enhancements, along with team members from academic support units? Are there important campus units whose commitment has not been secured?
- b) simultaneously address student success, quality of learning outcomes, and costs of instruction?
- c) apply exemplary resources from other sources, and knowledge from scholarly work in teaching and learning?
- d) emphasize appropriate assessment of student learning outcomes and sharing of exemplary practices?
- e) take full advantage of technology-enabled active learning and opportunities to rethink how students and faculty use their time for learning and teaching?

These are the characteristics of an ideal project...we do not expect many of our campuses will have mastered all of these. At the other extreme...:

- without broad departmental and campus support, the work of a lone project champion is unlikely to be reused by other instructors assigned to the course;
- without a clear plan to enhance specific learning outcomes, there is unlikely to be compelling evidence of successful improvement in learning;
- without an awareness of the impacts of course redesign on costs, especially the time of faculty and students, the time constraints of faculty and students will restrict the sustainability of any success achieved;
- without due regard for exemplary practices and resources already available for re-use and adaptation, we will not be optimizing the investment of our faculty and staff time;
- a project using technology to automate existing practice is unlikely to enhance student engagement with course content.

This issue list can be adapted if the proposal is not for a specific course transformation, e.g., if the focus is faculty and staff development, how well does the proposed curriculum address the issues?

3. Appropriateness of resource request

Does the requested support have the following characteristics of a high quality project:

- a) a realistic appraisal of costs and benefits? Are the suggested costs for personnel reasonable? If equipment is requested, is this a necessary expense that would not normally be covered from departmental and campus budgets? Why not?
- b) an appropriate mix of campus and Chancellor's Office resources, in line with the mix of campus and CSU-wide benefits?
- c) exchange, re-use and adaptation of resources, expertise and effort with other campuses?
- d) optimal use of CSU resources. E.g., could CSU support have more impact as a different mix of support, e.g., replacing a request for funds to be allocated to campus personnel with a plan to allocate time from central staff or to share personnel across campuses?
- e) appropriate management of uncertainties. E.g., would the project have a higher likelihood of success if decomposed into iterative stages with successive milestones to revise plans in line with lessons learned?
- f) Should they be asking for more support in some areas?
- g) Are there other resources they will need?

Appendix 2: Suggested Format for Transforming Course Design Project Reports

Project:

Institution:

Project Leader contact Information:

Courses directly targeted by the project:

Other courses affected by the project:

Improving Access:

- How many students are in these courses currently?
- How many more students are expected to be served over the next 2 years?
- How have you insured the resources in the project will align with the CSU's *Accessible Technology Initiative*?

Enhancing Outcomes:

- What were the measures and results regarding improved student success?

Cost Savings

- What were the measures and results regarding cost savings – time, funds, facilities use, etc.

Developing campus teams:

- What campus collaborations were enhanced in the project?
- What further collaborations will support sustainability for project outcomes?

Re-using exemplary resources and scholarship:

- What resources for learning and teaching were re-used or adapted? E.g., the CSU ICT literacy assessment, online discipline resources from MERLOT.
- What new resources from the project are available for re-use & adaptation?
- What scholarly knowledge was applied in the project? How?
- What scholarly results have emerged from the project?

Developing Capability:

- What other project successes resulted?
- What areas of the project plan were problematic?
- What other issues arose in the course of the project?
- What other 'lessons learned' resulted from the project?
- How has the project augmented campus capability?
- What additional areas of needed capability were highlighted in the project?

Sharing Expertise:

- How are the project results being disseminated on campus? What follow-on activities have resulted or are in progress?
- How are the project results being disseminated to other CSU campuses? What follow-on activities have resulted or are in progress?
- What results or lessons from other CSU projects were you able to apply?
- How are the project results being disseminated outside the CSU? What follow-on activities have resulted or are in progress?