Promising Practices is a program focused on local campus course redesigns that have not yet been proven to increase student success and/or that address local campus bottlenecks. Faculty accepted into the Promising Practices program are given resources and support to strengthen their course design through the Course Redesign Professional Learning Community and build additional evidence as to the redesign effectiveness. Promising Practices are considered incubators toward future proven redesigns.

Proposals due January 22, 2016
Awards announced February 14, 2016

Proven Course Redesign is focused on CSU “Lead” faculty sharing their designs of their course where they have accrued evidence of the strategies’ success for improving student learning. “Adopting” faculty across the CSU then choose to adopt and adapt that proven strategy in their own courses. All the faculty work within a professional learning community to discuss and evaluate course redesign successes and lessons learned. These proven courses that have documented improved student retention, engagement, and success have included such strategies as flipped classrooms, online homework, virtual labs, blended course designs, Supplemental Instruction, and other technology-enhanced delivery methods.

Proposals due February 1, 2016
Awards announced February 29, 2016

Award money can be used for (and is not limited to the following examples): course releases, funds for equipment and supplies, funds for supplemental instruction, or some combination thereof.

Virtual Labs: Introductory and general education STEM courses can be challenging for non-science majors, who often view science as a static body of facts. Laboratory experiences are intended to involve students in science, but frequently, due to a variety of resource, safety, and support constraints, the wet lab can become a “cook-book” activity. Lack of engagement and opportunity for creativity may be reasons why some students perform poorly in these courses. One of the advantages of virtual labs is that they provide a risk-free environment for students to explore scientific concepts in an inquiry-based fashion. Using virtual labs, students can formulate hypotheses and carry out experiments where “mistakes” can be made, and the knowledge gained from their attempts can be used to modify experiments toward the desired outcome. This mode of learning by doing is one of the main reasons virtual labs have been designed for use in science courses. Virtual labs can also provide active learning opportunities for general education students to “achieve an understanding and appreciation of scientific principles and the scientific method,” as specified in CSU Executive Order No. 10652011—General Education Breadth Requirements.

Virtual Labs can be integrated with in-class lectures and, when used with a hybrid-flipped lab model, with two tracks of online and in-person labs alternating every week, have the potential to increase student learning and positive attitudes towards science while simultaneously reducing bottlenecks. Once labs are online, faculty and students are freed from the equipment and scheduling constraints of the brick-and-mortar laboratory. Across the CSU, the use of virtual labs has shown great promise.

Proposals due February 19, 2016
Awards announced March 14, 2016

Sustaining Success provides opportunities for campuses to continue/expand work on a prior Course Redesign with Technology (CRT) grant for Proven Course Redesign, Promising Practices, or Virtual Labs Project. Faculty are provided with resources and opportunities to engage in professional development activities, Scholarship of Teaching and Learning, data analytics/data analysis, and “discipline based cohort” activities relevant to their project. Previous CRT projects must have been completed and results shown in an ePortfolio. The Sustaining Success proposal must have specific goals to advance that project to another level.

Proposals due April 8, 2016
Awards announced April 22, 2016