

Christensen quits under pressure

By JOAN KLINGENBERG

UCSC Chancellor Mark Christensen resigned today from his post.

The UC Board of Regents, meeting this morning in executive session in San Francisco, accepted Christensen's resignation request.

In a letter sent to UC President David Saxon Wednesday, Christensen, 45, said he was resigning because, "I no longer believe that it is in the best interests of the campus for me to continue to serve.

"The Santa Cruz campus has been in turmoil over my leadership since late in the fall. . . matters have become less manageable. There are now too many fine people being ground up in conflict that centers on my person."

Christensen has been heavily criticized by top administrators and faculty members at UCSC. In a letter to Saxon last month, Christensen's vice-chancellor Eugene Cota-Robles, as well as campus provosts and the

chairman of the campus academic senate all joined in asking for his resignation.

Following the announcement of his resignation, however, some of the signers of the letter said, in effect, that they were glad Christensen had resigned, but also wished him well.

"Chancellor Christensen is to be commended for placing the welfare of the University above personal interests, and I wish him well," said the chairman of the Santa Cruz division of the academic senate, Siegfried Puknat.

The provost of Merrill College, John Marcum, praised Christensen for his "good grace and courage."

Marcum, as well as others who criticized Christensen's leadership abilities, have said that they would like Christensen to return to work as a geology teacher, possibly on the UCSC campus.

Vice-chancellor Cota-Robles said this

morning that he was relieved that the administrative hassle had been resolved.

Regents appointed a 63-year-old mathematician who is currently chief academic officer of the UC system to serve as chancellor until a permanent one is appointed. Christensen's resignation is effective Jan. 31.

Angus E. Taylor will become acting chancellor on Feb. 1. In a press conference today, Saxon said steps are being taken to form a committee that will ultimately decide who will become the new chancellor of UCSC.

Christensen took over as Chancellor in 1974, following the resignation of founding chancellor Dean E. McHenry.

Meanwhile, many of the students on campus seemed oblivious to the fact that their chancellor was under pressure to resign.

When asked what he felt about the

chancellor possibly resigning, one worker in the campus restaurant here inquired: "Was he?"

"Well, we'll just get another Chancellor, that's all," the worker added.

Other students were busy reading, studying, discussing weekend plans and whether or not they were going to skip class this afternoon.

One woman student said she was too busy with her studies to pay attention to campus politics.

She complained that faculty members were too wrapped up in their own problems to spend time with their students.

Vice-chancellor Cota-Robles said he was "absolutely in favor of Christensen teaching at UCSC. (Christensen's wife, Helen, is principal of Amesti school).

"I feel sad about the whole matter, because Mark is a fine human being," he added.

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