

The Balancing Act

Being a chancellor at a major public university certainly isn't a thankless job, but it also appears to come stocked with a few challenges.

by Joel Moreno

Outside his office, militant students chant venomous slogans against the Establishment which he has come to symbolically represent. In the hallways, faculty ruse over the freeze on pay increases and the lack of funding to their respective departments. Encircling the campus, the locals remember the "good old days" before the university distorted local politics and drove housing prices through the roof. And somewhere just over his shoulder, the Regents look on and scrutinize his every flinch.

Perhaps there is a modicum of exaggeration in the description, but as the designated figurehead of the University of California at Santa Cruz, many people do indeed hold Chancellor Karl Pister accountable for all the various issues that come before the university. Pister doesn't try to dodge a thing.

"The chancellor is the chief executive of the campus, and the chief executive has the responsibility for all aspects of campus life," Pister said. "I have fiscal responsibility for the management of the budget. I have the ultimate responsibility for personnel actions. A lot of this is delegated to be sure, but ultimately I am held accountable."

Pister sees his responsibilities extending well beyond the boundaries of the UCSC campus. He paints his role as an administrator and as a visionary pioneer in broad brush strokes, noting that what he truly represents is a coalition of interests. In that

sense, he said, he must stand as an advocate not so much for groups' individual interests but for higher education in general.

"One of the real challenges of being a leader of an organization is to be seen as even-handed in the way you treat the constituencies of the organization," Pister said. "I have to be very careful that I am not seen as advocate for one constituency over another. I have to be an advocate for students when students have problems, but I have to be an advocate for faculty and staff as well."

Maintaining neutrality can be a nearly impossible exercise in such a high-profile position, and with so many people urging him to see an issue exactly as they do. But Pister said he finds it inappropriate for a chancellor to take political positions on certain matters.

For example, the debate surrounding Proposition 187, an initiative passed this year which will deny public education and non-emergency health care services to illegal immigrants, is one which university students had hoped Pister would make a public statement prior to the recent elections. But Pister doesn't see that as his role.

"As a private person I have been very much opposed to 187 and I continue to be opposed to it. It was a very unfortunate way to get at a problem," the chancellor said. "But whether or not I should take a public position on a matter like that is open to debate. I chose not to, and I know there are some students who probably wanted me to, but there are also students who would feel that's a very inappropriate thing for me to do."

Education Costs Skyrocket

Student fee hikes present another problematic area for the chancellor, who understands the fiscal exigencies of the issue but also sees the devastating effects the adopted solution is kindling.

The UC system has been hit hard by the state's prolonged recession, which has forced the layoffs of 5,000 employees systemwide. For students, UC's fees have more than doubled since 1990, and currently hover at



UCSC Chancellor Karl Pister

about \$4,000 annually.

Of course it isn't all bad. Students can consider themselves fortunate that a proposed 18 percent fee hike didn't go into effect this year as a result of protracted budget battles in Sacramento. The UC Regents adopted a 1995-96 budget proposal which stabilized finances and did not require any further cuts or fee increases this year. But students are still taking a previously approved 10 percent increase on the chin.

University of California Student Association representative Jeanne Tuomey, a sophomore majoring in community studies, said she finds the ongoing reliance on student fee hikes to solve budgetary problems a short term solution that should be addressed by other means.

"To me [the fee hikes] are troublesome because I feel there are alternatives," Tuomey said.

However, it appears the Regents have done what they could to minimize the burden on students. According to a statement issued from the office of UC President Jack Peltason, the systemwide loss in state funds "has been made up about half by budget cuts, about one-quarter through holding down salaries and the remaining quarter through student fee increases."

Pister recognizes that unless the state can rearrange its priorities, the quality of higher education will be eroded or access to it will be limited. And if the state can't pass the test, he said, university officials might need to more vigorously court private contributors.

Development Gone Amuck

Aside from fee hikes, planning for the development of the university campus first initiated more than three decades ago, has been a constant dilemma for university administrators. The most current issue is the proposed music facility slated for construction on the Great Meadow, an enormous, open swath of rolling hilltop visible from many corners of the county. Students and numerous environmental groups want the meadow left intact, but the push for expansion remains constant.

Some students feel that the planning of the complex has not been thought-out as well as it should have been, and suggest an alternative site atop an existing parking lot.

Students had hoped to find a friend in Pister, who in the very first few months of his chancellorship cancelled an access loop project which had already

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Anteing Up For Area Classrooms

UCSC Chancellor Karl Pister is pledging resources through educational partnerships to help foster a new level of quality in local public education.

by Joel Moreno

Some have wealth, power and prestige. Others survive poverty, struggle and broken promises.

Apart, they represent some of the best and some of the most mediocre of adventures into publicly sponsored, universally accessible educational strategies. Together, they exemplify a group of unique and daring partners, aiming their skills and resources at educational reform in Santa Cruz County.

However, this alliance of local school district instructors and university administrators and teachers didn't happen by chance. Local educators credit UCSC's Karl Pister for taking the time to open up a treasure chest of university resources to area school staff, adding that his efforts are showing up daily in county classrooms.

"Chancellor Pister was obviously not content to sit back and just watch us contend with declining resources and mounting demands," said Santa Cruz County Superintendent of Schools Diane Siri. "He knows that if his university was going to thrive in the future, he will have to help us make certain that kids in local classrooms will be prepared for graduate study. ... He recognizes the dichotomy that exists in the state's financing of public schools, and has a wonderfully simple idea about how to build bridges and share the wealth of one of the finest universities in the world with our local children."

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received approval and, more importantly, funding. The loop would have helped improve the traffic flow on campus, but it would have also cut through a major portion of the Great Meadow.

"My opposition was born of several different sources," Pister recalled. "I quickly learned in the first few months that the planning process on this campus was not going well. People had a sense that decisions were made in ad-hoc ways without careful consultation along the way."

Pister decided it was time to bring some sense to the construction projects occurring all across the 2,000-acre campus.

Pister began with a review of the Campus Master Plan, but quickly realized the development strategies hadn't been changed since 1963 and was woefully outdated.

"No one had every really gone back and revisited the master plan and found that it didn't apply any more," he said.

So the chancellor authorized a new master plan be drawn up, and it was done so carefully and so well, Pister said, that it was unanimously approved by the faculty.

A project the chancellor would like to see move forward is Terrace Point, a proposed research facility near the existing Long Marine Lab. Terrace Point would bring the Pacific Marine Division of the U.S. Geological Survey and the National Marine Fisheries Service to the Santa

Cruz region. The university has already attracted a California Department of Fish and Game Wildlife Recovery Facility to the site.

The hold-up in this case is Wells Fargo Bank, which owns a big piece of property at the site. Pister felt that project would pick up speed now that the bank has provided a more amicable negotiator.

Then there are the projects which seem absolutely necessary and yet are absolutely opposed.

"There is a latent issue, and right now I think it's pretty much in cold storage, and that's the eastern access route," Pister said.

Currently UCSC has two points of entry into the campus—one on High Street and the other along Empire Grade. But the rush hour traffic at these points is as bad as any, and campus planners have long talked about an eastern access route being laid through the adjoining Pogonip property. Environmentalists and people dedicated to preservation have also adamantly denounced this plan.

"If we grow 50 percent as we're allowed to, and we'll have to grow in the next century, I think we'll have to have another entrance," Pister said.

A Piece of the Pie

UCSC students have also been rallying for an Ethnic Studies Board, and want the university to improve the recruitment and retention of African American students and students of color.

University recruiters are trying very hard to step up programs to

induct and retain more faculty and students of different ethnic backgrounds. Pister even hired a new vice chancellor of student affairs, Francisco Hernandez, who's work at UC Berkeley in attracting more minority students was hailed for its success.

Currently, UCSC offers a range of classes on ethnic studies, but there are no boards devoted entirely to the subject.

"I think this campus has ethnic studies diffused through a whole lot of Boards right now," Pister said. "This is a faculty issue, let me make that clear, but I feel the creation of an ethnic studies board is probably unnecessary because the ethnic studies are found in a number of the Boards of Studies."

The chancellor noted that a special division in Latin American Studies is being created with a primary focus on Central America, but emphasized that ethnic studies are available through a number of disciplines already.

Student leaders like Amy Dudovitz, who chairs the Student Union Association and double-majors in politics and philosophy, disagree that a special board of study is unnecessary. Ultimately, she said, the issue of ethnic diversity will have to be addressed through academics.

"If there are academic programs that attract particular groups of people to other universities, then that's where they'll go," Dudovitz said.

Yet the numbers Pister presented to support his case seemed to reflect an appropriate level of ethnic representation. According to Pister, 34 percent of UCSC undergraduates are students of color; 29 percent of graduate students are persons of color; and 22 percent of faculty are individuals from non-white ethnic groups.

Where Pister wants to put the emphasis to bring ethnic diversity to the campus is by having an active outreach program at high schools and middle schools.

"So its working very early getting students interested in Santa Cruz and then once they get here, ensuring they feel comfortable. They are after all still minorities among a largely white campus," Pister said.

The Fan Club & The Eventual Farewell

Despite their differences and disagreements, faculty and students seem to genuinely like Pister, and they say they appreciate a lot of the changes he has made to the campus. But rumors



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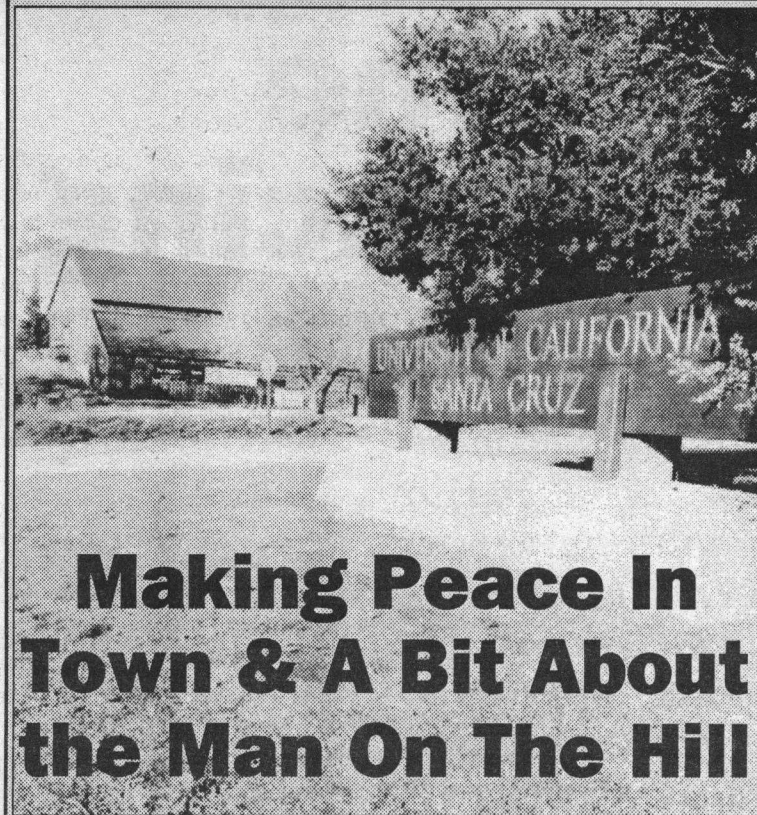
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Making Peace In Town & A Bit About the Man On The Hill

Chancellor Says That His Work Was Cut Out When He Came to Santa Cruz

by Joel Moreno

When local residents talk about UCSC, less acerbic prose is used today to describe the city on a hill than in years past. And, while some long-time residents may lament that students com-

pete for the already short supply of jobs and housing, they may also forget that the university is one of the largest non-seasonal employers in the area, providing jobs for approximately 3,800 people.

Other Santa Cruz residents complain of the student voting block distorting elections results. However, University of California at Santa Cruz Chancellor Karl Pister said the disgruntled shouldn't blame the university, but rather the U.S. Supreme Court for setting the voting age at 18.

"For a few people in the

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community, there is a continuing antagonism [with the university]. There is still a residual of people here that just say I wish the university wasn't here, and those people are never going to go away," Pister said.

Pister is a native of California, being born in Stockton in 1925.

Pister, 69, received his masters in civil engineering from Berkeley in 1948, then went on to earn his Ph.D. in theoretical and applied mechanics from the University of Illinois in 1952. That year, he returned to the Berkeley campus and worked there for the next four decades. Before being appointed as chancellor, Pister had spent the previous 11 years as Dean of the College of Engineering at UC Berkeley.

The image of university leadership was one of Pister's major concerns when he first took the reins, and he immediately set about to establish a sense of the order of things.

"From the very beginning, I made it a point to get out and to meet the leadership of the city and the adjoining cities. I met all the supervisors in the beginning and I've kept in touch with many of them," Pister said.

In general, his performance has been warmly reviewed by both area leaders and university staff. UCSC appears once again to be up and running under Pister's guidance, many add. □

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have been circulating that this could be the chancellor's final year before retirement, and Pister did little to challenge that speculation, preferring to sidestep the question instead.

"I'm past retirement," he said. "I'll be seventy-years-old before too long. I'm not going to stay a long time here but I'm not prepared to say when I'm going to leave."

Dudovitz, who is completing her senior year at the university, agreed that Pister would be sorely missed.

"On the scale of chancellors one could get, he's certainly tops in the UC system as far as his responsiveness to student needs," Dudovitz said. "I doubt we'd get someone as good as him." □

Anteing Up*continued from page 5***The Dichotomy and Pister's New Deal**

In California, even after fee hikes, state taxpayers spend more on universities per capita than most residents in most other states, while fewer dollars on national average go toward primary and secondary school classrooms. And, after more than a decade of these trends, the results of unbalanced spending are showing up on campus.

Universities throughout the state are some of the best in the world, while the public schools that feed the colleges are not keeping up with the standards set in graduate study and are existing eternally on the edge of crisis. Or, this was the case before UCSC's newest Chancellor Pister came to town.

Now, university faculty and researchers work with local public school teachers to improve teaching techniques, design more engaging lessons, and meet the evolving needs of a diverse student body, and span the gaps that exist in annual state allowances among educational institutions.

Partnerships A Priority

Pister came to the University of California at Santa Cruz in 1991 as a replacement for retiring Chancellor Robert Stevens, who had long suffered an image problem among faculty, university students and Santa Cruz city leaders. Stevens had been regarded as "out of touch" by many who worked with him.

Pister, on the contrary, has been embraced for his down-to-business work ethic and open door policy. He is well-known and highly respected in academia. And, while it would be inaccurate to suggest the chancellor is more involved in the Santa Cruz community than his predecessors, his interest in creating educational partnerships with local school districts has mellowed the stance of some of the university's most vociferous critics and earned him his own throng of enthusiasts.

One of the most important changes Pister has made in his administrative term has been to encourage partnerships between the university and the surrounding community with seed money and other resources in the fields of education and social service.

"I have publicly encouraged the campus community, the faculty, staff and students, to be involved in the community," Pister said. "But, specifically I have encouraged the faculty to see their relationship with K

through 12 education as an opportunity for service."

To goad them on, Pister said he frames his request as if community service was a moral imperative.

"I made it clear that I considered this as part of a faculty member's proper activity and that if it is done well it will be rewarded in the personnel process," the chancellor said. "But more generally, it's just setting a tone that service is something that's important and we ought to do it."

At the County Office of Education, assistant superintendent for curriculum and instruction Dr. Nancy Giberson said there are a host of recent and ongoing partnerships between the university and her department that are locally improving education. Giberson said that many of the programs are successful because they "are motivated by independent passions that educators have and community members are supporting."

"Since Chancellor Pister arrived at UCSC, children in our local schools have benefited directly from the presence of UCSC in our community, which wasn't the case before Chancellor Pister took the job," said County Superintendent Siri, echoing the comments by other local school district superintendents.

Monterey Bay Educational Consortium

UCSC and the K-12 public school districts in Santa Cruz and Monterey Counties have enjoyed a history of cooperation and collaboration. With Pister at the helm, a host of community-oriented educational partnerships are underway and several are showing early success. One of the newest and most adventurous efforts is the attempt to establish the Monterey Bay Educational Consortium.

The Consortium will permeate all aspects of education locally. It attempts to bring all the different educational groups together to forge a new standard of excellence in the K-12 system.

Among the other founding member organizations are the Pajaro Valley Unified School District, Santa Cruz City School District, the Monterey Peninsula Unified School District and the Santa Cruz County Office of Education.

"I have agreed to underwrite the executive director position of the Consortium for a three year period," Pister said. "What I'm trying to do there along with my colleagues is to create a visible organization that will help us get public support."

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Monterey Bay Regional Education Futures Consortium

In another major project in the infancy of its development, UCSC scientists are collaborating with the Monterey Bay Aquarium Research Institute, the Naval Postgraduate School and the up-and-coming California State University Monterey Bay to set up high speed networks to route information among each other, and to K through 12 public schools. The collaborative effort is being called the Monterey Bay Regional Education Futures Consortium (MBREF).

Using a \$1.8 million grant for communications services from Pacific Bell, MBREF technicians have begun laying down the groundwires to get the network infrastructure in place. The network will connect classes at UCSC with the UCSC Extension in Santa Clara. Eventually it will allow all the participating K through 12 classrooms to tap into and share university and research facility resources electronically. The connections will create a kind of "electronic blackboard" on either end, with audio and video features to create a kind of video-conferencing.

The project will also enable scientists to send video from the Monterey Bay Aquarium Research Institute's undersea explorer to schoolchildren at the Tech Museum of Innovation in San Jose.

Rowland Baker, the adminis-

trator of media and technology at the County Office of Education, said local school districts can tie into the network by accessing a main server computer located at the Office of Education in Capitola.

"We're designing this so that it's going to be the backbone of all of our schools once we get this cooking," Baker said, adding that it could be as few as six weeks before the Office is online.

Science Connections

UCSC's education and science departments are working with the County Office of Education and area science teachers on the three-year Science Connections project.

Now in its third year, Giberson said Science Connections emphasizes the hands-on learning of science by taking advantage of the proximity of a number of world-class research facilities. UCSC science faculty are working directly with local classroom teachers to help show them new ways to teach science and hopefully to revitalize the interest in science education in public schools, Giberson said.

The program's planners hope Science Connections will help bring the United States up to par with the aptitude levels of other industrialized nations in the sciences. A key goal of the program is to reach out to students with limited English language proficiency. Such students are historically underrepresented in the math and science fields.

With the success of the initial project, Science Connection sponsors recently learned they were finalists for a second phase

of program study with the goal of connecting Long's Marine Lab, UCSC and more elementary schools in the county.

Science and Math Equity

A special emphasis has been placed on girls and young women with the Science and Math Equity project, or SAME. Numerous studies have shown that the educational system favors boys and young men in the fields of science and math. Now a team of UCSC researchers is attempting to reverse this trend through a multi-faceted approach. Set up through UCSC and local schools, the program's coordinators are trying to encourage girls to excel in science and math by making the subjects interesting, creating a more accommodating support structure for girls at school and in the home, and using innovative classroom techniques to spark student enthusiasm. A special attempt is being made to reach girls of underrepresented ethnic groups.

The three schools initially involved in the SAME project are Bay View Elementary School, Mission Hill Junior High School and Santa Cruz High School. The partnership between UCSC and the county schools Office expects to reach 7,500 students and 400 teachers over the course of the three years it is active.

Leadership Opportunity Awards

One program Pister is personally responsible for initiating and overseeing is the Leadership Opportunity Awards scholarship program offered to outstanding community college transfer students. The scholarship program was established by the chancellor last year to help talented students enrolled in the community college system to continue their undergraduate education at a four-year university. Recipients are given \$10,000 scholarships for each of two years.

"That's really working very well," Pister said of scholarship program. "We're just in our second year but the kind of students that we're bringing in, their quality and their commitment, is just extremely satisfying to see. For the first time it brought together the 13 regional community colleges around Santa Cruz together with this campus and said we're all together in this, and we've got to work together."

Homework Helpline

In another attempt to harness technology for education, the Homework Helpline began in October as a way to help middle school students more fully understand their mathematics home-

work. The Helpline is a live cable-television program that airs every Tuesday and Thursday afternoon while school is in session. Currently it is limited to Monterey and San Benito Counties.

Students can watch the program and call in on a special 800 number for help with their homework. Two teachers take calls and offer assistance during the live broadcast, preferring to coach callers through the problem rather than simply providing the answer.

The Homework Helpline reaches more than 100,000 households via cable television, and is part of a four-year "Thematic Mathematics in the Middle School" project, which focuses on encouraging all students to continue their studies in mathematics.

Teacher Assistance

Amidst all of these special programs for students, UCSC hasn't forgotten that teachers need support as much as the students do. To enliven lesson plans and add spice to dull textbooks, the Monterey Bay Area Mathematics Project was started to help K-12 teachers present mathematics lessons in a way that makes students think critically and relate it to their everyday world.

The project is now entering its ninth year, and in that time has enrolled more than 200 teachers in a two-week summer institute based at UCSC.

The math project joins two other successful teacher support programs.

The New Teacher Education Program is another effort to help

K through 8 educators by providing a mentor to help out first year teachers on the job. With additional assistance during a teacher's first year in the classroom, educators believe they can make a significant impact in the overall effectiveness of instructors throughout their careers. The program began in 1988, and last year 42 teachers participated.

The California Writing Project, also housed at UCSC, helps teachers infuse lessons in writing throughout traditional classroom curriculum.

Math Academy

In its second year, another innovative math program is supported by the hands-on participation of university science professors and a big financial boost from Chancellor Pister's special project university funding to the tune of \$30,000 in 1994. Superintendent Siri noted that without the Chancellor's support this fiscal year, local schools would have been hard pressed to continue the ambitious and well-regarded countywide math classes based at Santa Cruz City High School and Watsonville High School.

The Math Academy doubles the amount of time students spend in conventional math classes during the first two years of secondary school curriculum, weaving algebra, geometry and trigonometry into everyday problem solving with the hope that more students will endeavor into the fields of engineering and math related careers. □