

Study by UCSC faculty critical of R&D park plan

By GUY LASNIER

A faculty committee's report on the proposed research and development center at UC-Santa Cruz challenges the two basic reasons put forth by the Chancellor in support of the project.

The committee said no educational or academic justifications in the current proposal have been demonstrated. It said only "vague answers" were received when the committee asked for specific academic reasons for the project.

The R&D center, as proposed, would consist of six to ten buildings covering 76 acres of a 108-acre parcel north of Crown College. Up to 700,000 square feet would be constructed over a 10-year period for manufacturing and research by private firms in high-tech industries.

Some 60 percent of the project would have to be devoted to manufacturing to make the center cost-effective, according to a consultant's study.

Chancellor Robert Sinsheimer argues that the university needs the center to add to the academic resources on the campus and to turn a profit from the campus' main resource — land. The chancellor's study contends that leases from private companies would bring in some \$16 to \$19 million by the year 2000 to the financially strapped university.

But the economic justification was questioned by the seven-member sub-committee of the UCSC academic senate. The academic senate is an advisory faculty body of tenured professors.

The administration's claims for financial benefits are "misleading" and are based on studies that contain errors in method, the report states. The

"errors result in an overestimation of revenues" and "significant costs associated with the project are omitted," according to the committee.

The committee delivered its report to the UCSC academic senate Wednesday afternoon. Committee chairman Richard Gordon, a politics professor and chairman of the politics board, said the study was the first independent review of the project by the faculty.

Faculty, student and community interest in the issue was high. An overflow crowd listened to the discussion via loudspeakers placed outside the performing arts concert hall where the senate met.

Sinsheimer has said he would go ahead with the R&D project only if the faculty approves. The

project generally has support among the science faculty which would tend to benefit from high-tech industries nearby. Professors in the humanities are much more skeptical of the project's academic and economic worth. A traditional split between the two disciplines may well broaden as the project moves ahead.

Wednesday the senate agreed to accept the committee's report and asked the senate chairman to establish a committee to monitor the planning process and conduct its own studies, particularly on the academic aspects.

But the senate, by default, took no official stance on either the project or an issue on the Santa Cruz city ballot.

Measure A on the Nov. 8 ballot asks the university to follow the normal city and county planning procedures in developing the center. The UCSC administration, led by Chancellor Robert Sinsheimer, speaking on behalf of the university, has come out strongly against the measure.

During a forum Monday, Sinsheimer called Measure A a "bid for power" by the city council in an effort to "control the university."

Some professors asked to be disassociated from the university's public position and that newspaper ads should be worded so they did not imply unified university support for the project.

A mathematics professor, citing deference to the biology faculty which supports the R&D park, suggested that the senate officially take no stand. His motion at the close of the afternoon's discussion failed to receive enough votes to be considered.