

Major study center designed to help define and plan energy requirements of the future for S. D. County established at UCSD

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A major study center designed to help define and plan the energy requirements of the future for San Diego County is being established at the University of California, San Diego.

The program is still small but the growing importance of energy planning to the future of Southern California and the adjacent states is bringing to it the attention and support of both local and national scientific groups.

The Regional Energy Study Program began at UCSD last fall with University funds for initial support of two graduate students to work on energy-related studies. Since then, two private grants have been received and graduate level course work dealing with energy problems has been developed and is underway.

According to Dr. Stanford Penner, Professor of Engineering Physics in the Department of Applied Mechanics and Engineering Sciences (AMES) at UCSD, the next step is to develop the formal program for the center.

"We are proposing to make the University an important regional Energy Policy Study Center for San Diego County," Penner said. "In other places, such a Center might be a private or governmental organization. We feel that a University with the major research capabilities of UCSD has the competence, independence, and resources to operate such a Center."

An immediate aim of the Center is a two-year evaluation of the technical, economic, sociological, and political factors affecting long-term energy planning for the San Diego region.

"The University group will not, of course, make the decision on the direction this area will take in the future but it will hopefully have an important input to the people who do make the decisions," Penner said. "We will have under study the whole question of what is the best way for the San Diego region to go, considering the many alternative possibilities that are available."

"San Diego County is an almost ideal location for such a study for several important reasons," Penner said. "The presence of marine, mountain, and desert climates, a rapidly growing population, and close proximity to Los Angeles which gives us ready access to a region where inadequate planning has produced a local pollution crisis are important factors."

"In addition, there is already an existing long-range planning group in the county government, the Integrated Regional Environmental Management Project (IREM), charged with developing policy for physical aspects affecting the 'quality of life' in the San Diego region," Penner said.

"We can also draw on a number of major universities, including the marine science expertise of the staff of the Scripps Institution of Oceanography, and major industrial companies concerned with developing or using new energy sources, such as Gulf General Atomic and the San Diego Gas and Electric Company, which is required to meet regional energy needs in conformity with existing pollution standards."

One of the graduate students, supported since last fall by University funds, was assigned to work with Dr. Kent R. Wilson, Associate Professor of Chemistry, who is currently developing a graduate-study program in collaboration with the IRE14 group on air-pollution monitoring, photochemical production, pollution sources, and pollutant distribution in San Diego County.

The second student is working on a collection of statistical data for the San Diego-region under the-direction of Dr. Manuel Rotenberg, Professor of Applied Physics.

A \$15,000 grant has been received from High-Temperature Reactor Development Associates, a utility consortium, for studies related to nuclear-energy production. The funds have been used to establish two fellowships for students working with environmental and technical problems associated with nuclear power stations. In particular, a graduate student is working with Dr. D. B. Olfe, Professor of Engineering Physics, on possible meteorological effects associated with air cooling of large nuclear Power stations.

A second grant has been received from the Gulf Oil Foundation and earmarked for the development of the Energy Study Center.

The graduate-level courses dealing with energy problems developed by the Center have involved 18 members of the UCSD faculty and have also brought some of the top community regional planners to the campus as discussion leaders.

"During the spring quarter we are concentrating the course discussions in the area of energy policy with the participation of representatives from local governmental agencies," Penner said.

Richard J. Huff, Executive Director of the Comprehensive Planning Organization for San Diego County, has already spoken on the political considerations and decision making in regional energy policy. Edwin Coate, Director of IREM, is scheduled this month to discuss regional planning involving IREM, and Joseph Dietz from the San Diego Gas and Electric Company is also scheduled for May to discuss utility planning for customer needs in the San Diego region.

Other discussions during the quarter have included such topics as "Global and U.S. Energy Resources and Management," led by Dr. Penner, "Economic Considerations in the Making of Energy Policy," led by Dr. Richard Emmerson, Assistant Professor of Economics at UCSD, "Statistical Data for the San Diego Region and Local Energy Policy," led by Dr. Rotenberg, and "Air Pollution and Energy Policy," led by Dr. Wilson.

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