Neil Armstrong resigns; plans unknown

By Kathleen Haddad

Neil Armstrong, the first man to walk on the moon, has resigned his position at UC as university professor of aerospace engineering, according to UC director of information services, Ken Service.

The resignation became effective Jan. 1, 1980, Service said.

UC President Henry Winkler said Armstrong had discussed resigning for three weeks to a month, but the first "official news" he received of the Armstrong resignation came yesterday.

Frank Tepe, assistant university dean for graduate education, said Armstrong verbally informed his office of his resignation in early December and that his resignation form was put into processing "a couple weeks prior to" the Jan. 1 resignation date.

Ron Huston, the director of the Institute of Applied Interdisciplinary Research where Armstrong is associate director, said he spoke with him between Christmas and New Year's Day.

"He (Armstrong) didn't even say why he was leaving," Huston said. But Armstrong did say it was not because he was unhappy with Huston.

Exact reasons for Armstrong's resignation are not clear, but Winkler hinted at economics. "The resignation was necessary in light of his own personal plans and "personal reasons," Winkler said. "I assume 'personal reasons' might include "the economic status of his (Armstrong's) family."

Winkler said he has asked Armstrong to continue at UC as an adjunct professor. He said he had no indication of how Armstrong would respond to the request, but that Armstrong would be meeting "soon."

"He's been a very valuable member of the academic family here, not just because he's so distinguished," but because he is also "a good influence on the students" and "a good professor," Winkler said.

Service took a guess at what "personal reasons" might mean. "When you're the first man on the moon and everyone's hanging on you, I guess you just get tired of it after a while," he said.

While it is not known what his future plans are, Armstrong has done advertising for the Chrysler Corporation.

Frank Wylie, public relations officer for Chrysler, told the News Record, "He (Armstrong) is not coming with us on a full-time basis."

"We will not be putting any heavier burden on him," Wylie said. Armstrong will continue to work for Chrysler, however.

The former astronaut serves on the boards of directors of several corporations, including Cincinnati Gas and Electric, Taft Broadcasting and United Airlines.