

## Two educational FM stations possible

3186 By MARY GRANT

THE YEAR 1959 MAY FIND TWO NEW educational FM stations on the air for Midpeninsula listeners—one practically a certainty and the other hinging on a great many ifs.

The first of these stations, one run by Foothill College, should be on the air by the end of April or early May at the latest, according to Foothill officials.

Last week the college sent in its application to the Federal Communications Commission requesting a frequency for a non-commercial educational station. Action on these applications takes an average of two or three months.

BUT Foothill has already started on preliminaries for the station. The board of trustees approved the estimated cost of \$4,250 for the proposed 10-watt station (which would have a radius of about 15 miles), interested students have worked up a tentative schedule with programming from 8 p.m. to 10:15 p.m. weekdays and from 3 p.m. to 10:15 p.m. Saturdays and Sundays, and a course in radio production has been added for the spring semester.

Officials expect that the first equipment for the new station will be purchased soon after the first of the year.

STILL TOYING WITH THE IDEA OF educational FM is Stanford University whose carrier current AM station KZSU was taken off the air this fall by the administration after a letter from the FCC said the station was exceeding its power limits.

A group of students dedicated to "getting KZ back on the air" has been studying the problem and possible proposals for a new station with radio and television department faculty members.

They haven't reached a solution yet and they haven't approached the administration

from the air there was sentiment among station members that "KZ should go FM."

HOWEVER, KZ's GOING F.M. HAS SOME very practical drawbacks in the way of costs the university will probably have to absorb.

The chief student engineer of the station has estimated that a thorough overhaul of KZSU's present equipment for FM broadcasting would cost about \$25,000. An FM transmitter might cost about \$3,000, a frequency modulator \$1,700 and other necessities about \$3,000—for an additional \$8,000.

The university would probably have to bear these costs, plus standard operating costs with no return. Under the old arrangement the station paid approximately \$2,000 a year from advertising revenues.

Other possible, but not probable solutions to KZSU broadcasting would be to establish a commercial FM station (frequencies are not available and transfer of frequencies can cost as high as \$100,000) or commercial AM (impossible because no stations are available).

Some students are known to favor a combination of educational FM and carrier current commercial AM because they believe KZSU would be available to more students under the arrangement and also they feel the station could absorb some of the cost through advertising sales.

ALTHOUGH THE ADMINISTRATION HAS not been officially approached, Dean of the School of Humanities and Sciences Philip Rhinelander has said that if the station were fulfilling "academic purposes" he would recommend the university grant the station an annual budget.

The closer the station is tied to the university and academic functions the easier it will be to get a subsidy, he said.

Even though plans are still unsettled and many rough spots need to be ironed out.