PI TAU SIGMA ANNUAL CHAPTER REPORT
2011-2012
University of Connecticut Pi Psi

A. Initiations

Early in the semester, the chapter president receives a list of eligible initiates from the mechanical engineering office. Candidates are selected based on academic merit and must be in the top 25% of the mechanical engineering class as a junior or in the top 33% as a senior. The eligible initiates are then contacted by email and invited to an informational session. At the informational session, the chapter President and Vice President brief the candidates on the national history of Pi Tau Sigma and the goals of the Pi Psi Chapter at the University of Connecticut. Eligible initiates are invited to the bi annual initiation ceremony, but are not told exactly what the ceremony will involve.

For our initiation on April 16, 8 eligible students were invited to join our chapter. Candidates were asked to dress business casual, and come prepared to pay the initiation fee. In addition, candidates must present a mechanical engineering textbook with signatures from three faculty members in the mechanical engineering department. This year, several candidates had to stretch to engineering textbooks that were not specifically mechanical because of the increasing popularity of ebooks. After presenting the book, the candidate enters a dark room that is illuminated only by a single candle. Sitting behind the candle is our faculty advisor, who proceeds to ask the candidate a series of engineering questions. If the candidate fails to answer a question satisfactorily, the candle is extinguished and the questioning ends. After all the initiates have completed the interview process, the president and vice president each speak to the incoming class.

In the past, candidates were sworn in and then served refreshments. This year, we tried to start a new tradition and hosted a pig roast. In addition to inviting all members, the chapter also invited students from the general engineering community in an effort to generate publicity. Members enjoyed good food, good music, and the opportunity to socialize with other engineering students.

B. Chapter Activities

Each semester, our chapter is asked to volunteer at the UConn School of Engineering open house. Members are asked to serve as tour guides for the event, and to direct families arriving on campus. In this capacity, members were responsible for leading groups of prospective students to and from a variety of demonstrations arranged by the school of engineering as well as answering questions about life at the university. Typically, the chapter strives to meet monthly. However, officers generally meet much more frequently than that. Our chapter has a close relationship with several other organizations on campus, including ASME and other engineering honor societies on campus. Last year, the president was so impressed with his experience at the national convention in Chicago that he vowed to return with more members this year.