2018-2019
University of Alabama at Birmingham Phi Tau

A. Initiations

Selection Process and Requirements from Initiates

The selection process was set to match the standard set by nationals in the constitution. They are as follows:

Undergraduate and graduate members were chosen based on "engineering ability, scholarship service, leadership, and integrity".

Undergraduate members were in the last two years of UAB's mechanical engineering program, with a scholastic ranking in the upper twenty-fifth (25) percentile of the student's respective classification, and a grade point average greater than or equal to 3.25.

For any last term seniors who qualified for initiation were given permission by the chapter president and chapter advisor. We did submit one approval for a last term senior who expressed a strong desire to join PTS, but the process UAB Phi Tau has done initiations did not allow this student to join the fall semester. Therefore, he joined with initiates in the spring before his graduation.

Graduate members were selected from students having already completed an accredited undergraduate degree program in mechanical engineering and are currently enrolled in a master's or doctoral degree in mechanical engineering. Master's degree candidates had completed one academic term of residency, ranked in the top 25% standing of all graduate student candidates in the mechanical engineering program, and had a minimum GPA of 3.5/4.0.

All of our initiates were given the same simple requirements of:

- Attend all meetings. If unable to attend, send a clear reason.
- Be present at any event held or sponsored by our chapter.
- Maintain academic standing.
- Seek out opportunities to serve.
- Communicate with PTS officers

In addition to the past requirements that our chapter has followed, UAB chapter Phi Tau had enacted a by-laws addendum that specifically laid out requirements of all chapter Phi Tau members in accordance to Pi Tau Sigma's by-laws. Our initiation included a detailed overview of what is expected to maintain good standing.

UAB Chapter Phi Tau has also changed initiation to our second meeting that occurs before the midpoint of the semester, as do many other chapters. For several past presidents, the meeting was held at the end of the semester which generally resulted in some form of problem for students and the officers.

Initiation Ceremony and Rituals

UAB chapter Phi Tau had poor results in recruitment for our Fall 2018 Initiation. There was only one student that expressed interest in joining and was unable to attend our intended initiation date that was set at the beginning of the semester. This student was added to the spring initiation due to the poor structure of our initiation date being the week before final exams and the students restrictive scheduling. This problem has been rectified as stated before.

Spring Initiation Ceremony was held on March 7th for 8 new member lead by the president Jordan Whitson, vice-president Ya-Ya Sangare, and secretary Lizzie Ryan with an attendance of 17 members to witness the ceremony. An alternate initiation day was held on March 21st for three members who could not attend the initiation ceremony but had a strong desire and good reason for not attending the initial ceremony.

The ritual of the spring ceremony was held to the standard set by national. They were held with a formality, professionalism, and distinction. The ritual goes as follows:

- One of the officers lead the initiates into a dimly lighted room done through candlelight.
- The President and Vice President were stationed behind a desk or table to read the initiation.
- The Crest and Insignia of Pi Tau Sigma were displayed by picture on table in front as well as via a projector, so that initiates can clearly view them.
- The initiates were assembled before the officers. The President called the initiation ceremony to order. The ritual speech is given and the emblems are explained.
- Following the ceremony, the Pi Tau Sigma handshake is shared individually with each initiate. This is followed by the handshake being shared between all present and active members as well as introduction and congratulations.

Celebration

The celebration of initiation usually follows the ceremony with food and drink where fellowship between new initiates and active members can be done. While the initiates and members congregate and eat together, the president goes over in detail through PowerPoint the past accomplishments, past visions, future visions and goals that will help sustain and promote UAB chapter Phi Tau.

B. Chapter Activities

Fundraisers

UAB chapter Phi Tau has addressed a constant need to improve fundraising efforts. This year we did not have a successful fundraiser due to other projects. We incorporated a quality t-shirt design into our initiation fees that helps with some money gathering and helps promote our chapter for recruiting efforts. Plans for the fall of 2019 include a early morning donut and coffee sales.

Community Services

Our biggest community service event was the **30th Annual ASME Egg Drop Contest held** April 5th. While this was an ASME event, PTS volunteers were there and active in representing our chapter. UAB Chapter Phi Tau also maintained a constant network with other societies that

hold community service projects. We had someone reach out for a project in Birmingham call "**Go Baby Go**" that was a service project on December 8th to help adapt 12v cars to kids with special needs. We had 4 members attend. Two graduate students helped as science project judges for the UAB-CORD sponsored Central Alabama Science and Engineering Fair (CARSEF) held on **March 2nd, 2019** for an outreach science fair. We plan on helping our Birmingham's esteemed McWane Science center next year at some of their kids' science days in conjunction with UAB's NSBE society.

Pi Tau sigma has also started weekly tutoring services for the school of engineering. This started in fall 2018. We reserve a space weekly to assist freshmen to senior level courses. For freshman and sophomore, we can help every discipline in mathematics, thermal sciences, engineering mechanics classes and mechanics of materials. Our seniors and graduate students have helped with upper level mechanical engineering classes. We also form study sessions at these tutoring session for the mechanical Fundamental Engineering license exam.

Meetings

Meetings for our chapter were held monthly to update the members about opportunities in the school of engineering, events held by our chapter and fellowship among the chapter members. Usually, this entailed food and drink to help facilitate this. It also served as an opportunity for members to share projects they are working on.

At each meeting, the new **UAB Pi Tau Sigma Chapter Phi Tau By-Laws Addendum** was discussed at length because of its adaptation to our chapter. The focus of each meeting was getting students involved with events on campus. The target was engineering societies. Chapter Phi Tau is a small chapter. Therefore, we have focused the energy of the elite mechanical engineering students to running professional societies within our engineering school. For example, the SAE Baja competition team captain and two other competitors are members in Pi Tau Sigma. The presidents and officers of SWE and ASME are Pi Tau Sigma members. The newly formed AIAA student professional society's Chair is a Pi Tau Sigma member. We utilized these positions to maintain excellent communication throughout the societies of the school of engineering to staff events and projects. This also helps with Pi Tau Sigma's notoriety amongst our school to illicit more memberships in the future.

Our Addendum is points based to maintain good standing. Students can earn points easily by attending any school of engineering event, any science conference, present technical papers, any community service, be a member in a professional society, extra points for being an officer in a professional society and anything the officer council deems as point worthy through email approval. We have seen a rise in professional society memberships and recruitment through this effort thus far. This new addendum has also helped our members seek out more opportunities to better themselves and increase our meetings attendance that disseminates important information about other societies projects that Pi Tau Sigma helps with.