PI TAU SIGMA ANNUAL CHAPTER REPORT

2009-2010

Texas AI Phi Upsilon

A. Initiations

For the Phi Upsilon Chapter, this term lasted only one semester. That was because in the previous years the Pi Tau Sigma society had remained inactive and the last member had long graduated. The only thing left of the society was its label on the door of the office which used to be shared with ASME. The idea to recover the society had come in fall 2009 where the new seniors had shared in an ASME meeting their desire to improve the student resources for the mechanical engineers of TAMUK. It was until the next semester however, that society was finally restored and gained official recognition when 4 students were initiated by Dr. Choi and Dr. Moutsoglou themselves in the 2010 national conference in Lubbock, Texas (and so, the chapter recovered its Texas AI Phi Upsilon title, honoring the old name the University had when the chapter had been originally created back in 1987). The initiation took place the 28th of February before members of other chapters who signed the plaques of the TAMUK students following the old PTS tradition.

For the initiation of the other students, we first obtained a list of all the undergraduate seniors and juniors ordered by GPA (although the GPA number was not something that was revealed in the list). Based on this, we first identified the top 35% of the seniors and the top 25% of the juniors. Because we did not want to reject anyone based on the max percentage allowance of the national constitution, we decided to not invite more than the max percentages allowed (33% and 17% respectively). Then, because of the case of the junior generation being far smaller than the one of the seniors we decided to simply invite the top 17% of the juniors (which equaled 6 students). As for the seniors, we had a generation of 80 seniors, had we sought to have the population of 33% of seniors allowed we would have had a group too large for our liking, especially since we still needed to organize. This led us to think of what would be a good number of students for the group and we decided that 25 were good enough. Thus, subtracting the juniors invited and the student members, we decided to look at 15 students to be invited (which would make the group be formed by 23% of the senior generation).

For us to elect these 15 seniors we considered many things, important factors were how active they were in the student community, their academic reputation and their support in the forming and the renewed recognition by the University of the Pi Tau Sigma chapter. We also gave consideration to the students that were members of Tau Beta Pi, since we thought that, had the Pi Tau Sigma chapter remained active, these students would had also been considered to join the chapter. Once we had the list of all the candidates for joining the chapter, the student members personally delivered envelopes to each one of the students. The envelopes had the PTS crest, the name of the society and the name of the student to whom it was directed, inside was a letter inviting the student to join an informational/social meeting were more information would be explained concerning the chapter and the joining process.

There was one last person that was selected to join the chapter, a professor. This decision was taken afterwards after observing the delicate health condition of our chapter advisor and the rest he sometimes was required to take. We thought that having a secondary advisor that could assist the main advisor and be of support to the students when the main was unavailable would be of great help to our main advisor and the chapter, after discussing the idea with our advisor he agreed and so we invited Dr. Jae-Joong Ryu to join our chapter. Dr. Ryu is a young professor very energetic and fresh in the chapter, since the beginning, he demonstrated enthusiasm in the chapter and was very willing to cooperate with anything that needed to be taken care of. He is very popular among students due to his effectiveness to teach the courses and make the student learn and understand the subjects. His initiation took place in April 14, before the initiation of the other students in order for him to attend the student initiations as a member.

In order for the initiates to be considered candidates for initiation, they had to do several things. They had to participate at least once in a fund-raising activity, attend socials, polish the Pi Tau Sigma insignia, prepare the wooden plaque and collect signatures. Another thing they were asked to do was to submit a test which contained questions about Pi Tau Sigma as a national organization, about the phi upsilon chapter and the officers of the chapter. Lastly, one weekend, some of the initiates were randomly selected/invited to participate in a scavenger hunt in which the students had to look for clues and solve FE problems. This idea came after realizing that due to the stressful schedule and the time constrains of the students it would had been very difficult to group all the initiates and test them on engineering knowledge. In exchange, we made it a more entertaining activity and had a small pizza dinner at the end of the day. All these activities were done with the idea of following tradition, ensuring scholarship and forge a friendship and healthy relationship between the students. Close to the end of the semester, we gathered the students for another pizza social in which we took a group picture and judged the bents/plaques/signatures and rewarded the winner with a t-shirt and $20.00 cash (it is worth mentioning that the member, Cristian Esparza, whose to donate the money back to the society). By then we had already gathered a list of the students who were candidates for initiation.

After personally notifying the students of their initiation status, we gathered on April 23rd in the main entrance of the engineering complex by the statue of the javelina, our mascot. That whole week, the students had been reminded to carry with them the Pi Tau Sigma insignia because any student member had the right to request to see it. The students who had also been asked to wear business attire (since this was a formal reunion), were then led by two of the officers to one of the biggest rooms of the engineering buildings, which was in Alfred L. Kleberg Hall and, just before entering, they were blindfolded (most of the engineering classes used to be taught in that building back when TAMUK was still A&I and we believe the first initiation of our chapter was done here as well).

The whole room had been arranged with fake candle lights and lamps which illuminated objects that had been found in the office and had belonged to the previous generations of student members. Some of the objects displayed were: the crest, the insignia, the original certificate of official recognition of the chapter from 1987, the original banner and our new banner. Gregorian music also played on the background to remind the students of the old times of societies and gatherings and get them in a relaxed and motivated mood. The members that assisted to the initiation wore black robes and those who were graduating, also wore the society stole. Following a brief welcome, we continued with the general initiation procedure described by the

“rituals of Pi Tau Sigma,” a small booklet we found in our office which described the initiation procedure in typed text with handwritten notes of previous presidents which we decided to consider in our initiation. Following the initiation, the students signed their name on a list which we sought to keep as a record and were invited to continue with the group in a small celebration which took place somewhere else.

The celebration was done by the pool of one of the student apartment complexes across the university and although at first it was dedicated to the new student members and the regular members, eventually the invitation was made open for any other student to join. Due to the high concentration of Mechanical Engineering students that joined, the celebration became one of the last mechanical engineering student social events done before commencement. Graduate students had a change to interact with freshmen, remember their experiences at the university and say goodbye to their friends. Fajitas and sodas were served, courtesy of Pi Tau Sigma.

B. Chapter Activities

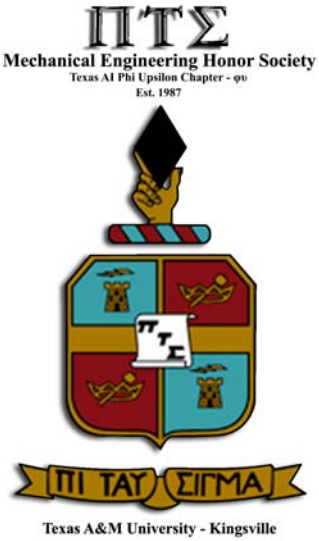
Although we sought our best to recover the old traditions of the Chapter there was almost no record concerning the details of the activities. Based on reports and other documents we found in the society office in our chapter we were able to tell that the Chapter used to run some activities like the bowl-a-ton and the pinewood derby (which now is covered by the Tau Beta Pi chapter). We sought to gain more ideas and after some suggestions that came from talking to students from other chapters and the board of directors, we decided to come up with new activities of our own. We had plenty of meetings to organize ourselves which were structured in an organized power point presentation to try to keep the meetings serious and efficient. Besides going through the pledging activities, we had plenty of other ideas we were considering. (Below you can see the layouts of the powerpoint presentations)

Our first activity as a matter of fact took place before there was even any member in the chapter and that is because while some of the students were headed to initiate at the national conference some others had decided to start gathering funds to support the about to be renewed society. For these funds, the students used money of their own to buy what was required in order to sell tea and in cooperation with the ASME society, BBQ sandwiches (eventually, when the chapter became stable, the students were repaid of their expenses in recognition for their support) Winnings went mostly to ASME because they spent most of the money to obtain the BBQ sandwiches.

In our meetings, we also talked about planning for the distant future and discussed ways to keep the chapter active, one interesting thing is that we agreed on retaking the plans of our ancestors and begin to fundraise for a Pi Tau Sigma monument in our school. Due to our bad economy and the need of other basic things first, however, we had to keep the monument as a distant achievement.

Other activities that we did include participating in the Spring Fling Carnival in which we, like in other events, teamed up with ASME in an attempt to promote engineering as a whole while fundraising and having healthy fun selling and cooking fajitas in our main boulevard (this time we obtained most of the winnings since we had more man power, and provided most of the sources). In this event we were sponsored by the Michoacana meat market who granted us 35lbs of food, all of it was sold. We also formed part of the greeting committee of our new Dean of Engineering in which we tried to help him settle and discussed the student body needs. Pi Tau Sigma was also used to represent the school during the ABET examination in which, again, members expressed their opinion and answered questions concerning the college of engineering at TAMUK. In our society, we wanted to increase the academic performance of our students and so, the chapter also offered free reviews for all the mechanical engineers that were planning on taking the FE exam. (Below you see photos from the Spring Fling Carnival)

This semester we also decided to renew our banner and in the new design include the crest of the society. We also made polos for the members and advisors which also helped as a secondary income for the chapter along with our ice-tea/fajita sales and increased the visibility of the chapter in the university. (Below you can see the new banner)



It was just before the finals that we had our last event, the Engineering Design Seminars, in which we invited all the engineers to join us in a series of 2-hour classes that took place 3 times on Wednesdays and Fridays and where students were taught advanced techniques of engineering design software like Pro/Engineer, Ansys, NEiNastran and Femap for free. This was done with the main purpose of improving the preparation of the students, making it easier for them to conduct analysis and presentations and improving the level of the college of engineering as whole since these topics are not taught in any of the offered courses. Here is a sample of the advertisements that we placed all around campus:

Finally, we elected a new President, Jorge Ramos who will conduct elections at the beginning of Fall 2010 to cover for the officers that graduated during spring. Such elections were not made at

the moment of Jorge's election because it was agreed by the members to wait for the next semester since some of members had not been able to attend due to academic work. (Below you can see the students with the old banner showing their bents and plaques. Then, you see the officers at the initiation of Dr. Ryu)

Below, ASME and PTS members participating in TAMUK's agriculture Olympics (an event in which the mechanicals won first place and took the award to the engineering department!)

C. Other

Include anything else here that does not fit the above two categories that will strengthen your report.

Goals for 2008-2009

Our main goal for the Spring 2010 semester was to recover national recognition, good standing status and become a fully operational chapter. Once achieving this, we sought to promote Pi Tau Sigma and scholarship, to increase the awareness and respect of the Chapter by the faculty and make them visualize the benefits of our existence. We mostly focused on building base activities for the chapter to ensure that the chapter will persist through the generations and to promote high academic standards.

Graduates

Baez Guada Alejandro – Graduate School in Illinois Institute of Technology
Corripio Luna, Oscar – Graduate School in Northeastern University
De Leon, Gerardo – Research in TAMUK.
Valdez, Rene – Unknown.
Valenzuela, Ernesto – Research in the University of Tennessee.
Awards & Recognition
Cristian Esparza – Bent contest.
Names of New Members

Spring 2010 Pledges

Oscar Corripio, Jorge Ramos, Alejandro Baez, Ernesto Carlos Valenzuela, Charles Ball, John Caballero, Dan Callis, Gerardo de Leon, Cristian Esparza, Jd Evans, Allan Faldet, Lisa Gonzalez, Cody Hall, Mathew Hall, Matthew Kelso, Andrew Kubecka, Javier Perez, Thomas Putnam, Cordero Reyes, Samuel Ruiz, Cody Shiefen, Mason Schoonover, Boris Torres, Rene Valdez, Jae-jong Ryu.

Plans for 2009-2010

The coming semester we plan to continue promoting the chapter's visibility and academic recognition. We expected to have some guest speakers, a website and some funds for the monument. We are still trying to buildup a strong chapter to prevent it from becoming inactive again.

Chapter Officers

President Oscar Corripio
Vice President Jorge Ramos
President-Elect Jorge Ramos
Treasurer Alejandro Baez Guada
Recording Secretary John Caballero
Corresponding Secretary Thomas Putnam
Historian Cristian Esparza
Delegate Ernesto Valenzuela
Chapter Advisors
Main - Dr. Hyder Abdul Razzak
Secondary - Dr. Jae-joong Ryu

Contact Information

Website under construction
jorge_ramos89@hotmail.com

Reporter

Oscar Corripio