TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY–KINGSVILLE MECHANICAL ENGINEERING HONOR SOCIETY

PI TAU SIGMA

Pi Tau Sigma Annual Chapter Report

2011-2012

Texas A&I Phi Upsilon

Initiation:

As in every year, the Texas A&M-Kingsville Phi Upsilon Chapter of Pi Tau Sigma has grown significantly inviting 14 new members this year. Our chapter inducted 9 members in the fall 2011 semester and 5 members in the spring 2012 semester. Each semester our chapter's advisor must provide us with a list of eligible candidates for membership. This is done after the 12th class day to ensure that the semester enrolment has been finalized. The officers then get together to sort out the potential members by class and rank. Using the guidelines set by our constitution we also calculate the number of members we are allowed to invite and once we have a final list for each eligible class, we reorganize the names by alphabetical order. The reason for this is because our entire chapter has a vote on the members that get invited, so no one outside of the officers are aware of the inductees' ranks. Then the people voted in receive an invitation packet which includes a small form in order to ensure that they are fully eligible and a letter inviting them to an initiate meeting so that the officers can get to know the potential members of our chapter.

Once the list of initiates has been finalized, they must perform several tasks in order to earn full membership into our chapter. These tasks include a minimum of 3 community service hours, a quiz on the history of Pi Tau Sigma as well as our chapter, a technical quiz, and attendance to the initiation ritual. The three hours of community service is usually done individually although several opportunities are school sanctioned and performed as a team. One example of this is The Bigger Event which is a school wide event that includes several different community service projects throughout the city of Kingsville.

PTS Members assembling a picnic table during the Bigger Event

The first quiz is to allow the initiates an opportunity to know more about the organization, the chapter, and the current officers. We include a few fun facts about the officers with this quiz to help the initiates feel more comfortable about joining the organization. The second quiz is a technical quiz which is written throughout the campus to make it more fun. Since our chapter also does this as a group activity, it also challenges them to work as a team. In other words, they decide how to split up the problems and who goes where.

PTS initiates taking the technical quiz

The final task is to attend the initiation ritual. This ritual is based on the guidelines set by our bylaws. After the ritual, we celebrate our new members at a local restaurant.

Activities:

At the Phi Upsilon chapter of Pi Tau Sigma, we try to promote the mechanical engineering profession while maintaining a certain level of secrecy. For this reason, we take part in several activities throughout the school and around the local community. In addition to the Bigger Event, our chapter is also involved in our local school sanctioned festivals which include the fall carnival in the fall, and the spring fling in the spring. In the past, we have set up a food booth for both of these events, but this year we decided to provide a game booth to attract a larger audience and to demonstrate how mechanical engineering can be fun. Our booth was based off of the tablet game "Angry Birds" in which a plush duck is shot using a giant sling shot with the goal of knocking pigs off of a platform. The platform itself is equipped with levers that make certain areas collapse. We called our booth "Disgruntled Ducks" and it made quite the impression on the crowd.

The Pi Tau Sigma Booth at Spring Fling 2012

Another tradition that we just started was a social event before initiation so that the current members can get to know the potential member. This year we held ours at the local bowling alley.

This past year we were also working on starting a mentoring program for transfer students within the engineering department. Although we were not able to start this year we were able to do start planning alongside the administrators for next year.

Future Plans:

Along with starting a mentoring program we are still looking to make changes and start new traditions in our chapter. Some of these plans include adding a formal interview to the initiation process to give the new initiates experience when it comes to their interviewing skills. This will also provide us with the opportunity to get to know the new initiates better. Another tradition we would like to start at our chapter is a beach cleanup with our ASME chapter. We came close to doing this last year, but was cancelled at the last minute due to red tide. If possible, our chapter would like to offer a small scholarship to one of its members. However, the biggest problem we have faced with this is finding the funds to do so. Like last year, the Texas A&M-Kingsville Phi Upsilon chapter has grown significantly. We have slowly began to incorporate new traditions with our chapter in the hopes that the chapter keeps growing. Our chapter strives to be recognized by among our peers and we work hard to give Pi Tau Sigma a good name.