PI TAU SIGMA ANNUAL CHAPTER REPORT

2009-2010

Texas Kappa

A. Initiations

To be eligible to join the Texas Kappa chapter, the pledges were required to be in top 25% of the junior class or in the top 35% of the senior class as outlined in the Pi Tau Sigma constitution. In addition to excelling high academically, the pledges were also required to complete ten pledge points in addition to attending all general meetings. A minimum of five of the pledge points were to be from service events and a maximum of five of the points were to be from social events. Therefore the students were able to complete more points by doing service activities if they so wished. The students who completed all the pledge requirements were initiated during the last week of classes. Prior to conducting the initiation ceremony, all the pledges were given a tour of the mechanical engineering building. Our long standing tradition has been to conduct the ceremony on the roof of our mechanical engineering building. However, due to construction we were unable to gain access to the roof during either fall or spring semester. Instead we held the ceremony in the senior design course lecture room. The initiation ceremony followed the guidelines as set forth in the rituals of Pi Tau Sigma. Additionally, we had the original chapter charter present. Once the initiation was completed each pledge and officer signed their name in a book that contains names from each pledge class and officer team from many decades past. In addition to the pledges, the Texas Kappa chapter also initiated our chapter advisor Dr. Eric Taleff for his outstanding service to our chapter. To celebrate all the new initiates, a banquet was held at a nearby Brazilian restaurant. The fall initiation took place on December 1st, 2009, while the spring initiation took place on May 6th, 2010. The pledges for each semester are listed below.

Fall 2009 Pledges:
Derek Bass
Adam Browning
Jason Browning
David Chen
Sarah Horne
Brian Kiet
Matthew Kijowski
Brandon Landry
Timothy Leung
Kristen McConnell
Ashley Powell
Neil Woodson
David Zummo

Spring 2010 Pledges:
Austin Anderson
Vineet Chauhan
Mary Clayton
John Fyffe
Steven Kilbride
Darlene King
Sally McMenamin
Darrell Morehouse
Brad Parro
Barret Pickett
Maria Veronica Pulido
Brian Robinson
Matthew Wright
Dr. Eric Taleff (Honorary)

B. Chapter Activities

During the last academic year, our chapter increased its activities. The activities are broken down by semester below.

Fall 2009 activities:

The fall semester started off with information sessions for eligible pledges. The information sessions aimed to describe the advantages of joining Pi Tau Sigma for those unfamiliar with the organization and also describing the pledge requirements. The Texas Kappa chapter held five general meetings during the fall semester. In each meeting, we had a variety of presentations. The Wood Group and Schlumberger and each held a general meeting with our chapter. Additionally, we had the Business Foundations Program from the McCombs School of Business present on a business certificate program aimed at engineering students. As an academic balance we also had a graduate school presentation by our chapter advisor who is also the assistant graduate advisor for our department. The graduate school presentation gave chance for actives and pledges to ask specific questions about what they need to do to get into graduate school and why it can be beneficiary to get a higher degree.

Other activities our chapter engaged in included teaching short science experiments after school at a local elementary school. The program aims to increase the students' interest in science and engineering. Additionally our chapter held regular social gatherings where pledges, actives, and officers got to know each other better in an informal atmosphere. During mid semester following our chapter traditions the pledges and officers held a dinner at a famous local barbecue establishment. To highlight our chapter's presence within our department, our chapter held an advisory table during the registration period for classes to give underclassmen a perspective on what classes might be beneficiary. In addition to all of the activities by the pledges and actives, the Texas Kappa chapter also had a designated officer attend the Student Engineering Council meetings to represent our organization and department.

Spring 2010 activities:

Similar to the fall semester, the spring semester started off with information sessions for eligible pledges. During the semester our chapter held six general meetings. The first general meeting gave the pledges a chance to meet actives and the whole officer team. The other five general meetings had presentations by the following companies: Celaneses, SpaceX, El Paso, Optimation, and ExxonMobil.

The Texas Kappa chapter also participated in the 2010 Pi Tau Sigma national convention held in Lubbock, TX. The convention attendees from our chapter where President Mikko Ponkala and Student Engineering Council Representative Matthew Kijowski.

Our chapter also competed during the National Engineers Week. At the University of Texas at Austin, the engineers week involves one week of competitions organized by various engineering students organizations. Many of the competition require variety of skills and quick thinking skills. The Texas Kappa chapter proudly placed third in the small organization category.

Our chapter was also involved in various service activities. In the beginning of the chapter few of our actives and officers assisted corporate representatives during the Engineering Career Expo. The students helped the representatives set up and feel welcome to our university. Also, our pledges and actives volunteered for Introduce a Girl to Engineering Day. The program aims to spark interest in elementary age and younger girls in engineering. Even though our chapter did not have our own activity, our volunteers helped out multitude of organizations giving us a wide representation. During the Explore UT, a university wide open house, the Texas Kappa chapter held a solar car workshop for children. The workshop involved our actives and pledges assisting young children to construct a solar car out of a solar panel, chassis, motor, axles, and wheels. After completing the car, the children received the opportunity to test their cars outside. The workshop aimed to educate the children about the mechanics of their everyday commuting while also describing alternatives to the limited resources of our current fossil fuel based energy.

To raise funds, our chapter helped the Student Engineering Council organize a cheap lunch open to all engineering students. For just a few dollars, each student could purchase two slices of pizza, chips, and a drink.

To promote friendship among various departments and organizations, our chapter organized a barbecue at a nearby park open to all engineering honor societies. Due to the positive feedback and turn out, our chapter is looking to organize the barbecue again next spring.

Similarly to the fall semester, our chapter held an undergraduate advisory table during registration, a mid-semester barbecue dinner, and regular social gatherings open to the whole membership to promote friendship among our members.

C. Other

The officers for the Texas Kappa chapter along with their positions are listed below:

Fall 2009 officers:

President	Matthias Lang
Vice President	Alex Oddo
Secretary	Joanna Tsenn
Treasurer	Prasad Joshi
Corporate Representative	Mikko Ponkala
Service Chair	Kramer Schlaudt
Activities Chair	Enrique Villareal
Historian	David Kistenmacher
SEC Representative	Domagoj Jursic
Webmaster	Chris Lam

Spring 2010 officers:

President	Mikko Ponkala
Vice President	Joanna Tsenn
Secretary	Chris Lam
Treasurer	Prasad Joshi
Corporate Representative	David Zummo
Service Chair	Kramer Schlaudt
Activities Chair	Derek Bass
SEC Representative	Alex Oddo
	Matthew Kijowski

Report compiled by:
Mikko Ponkala May 17th, 2010