2018-2019: Chapter Report

South Dakota Phi Alpha

June 2019

Academic Year: 2018-2019
Chapter: South Dakota Phi Alpha

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1 Initiations

After a decade of dormancy, the South Dakota Phi Alpha chapter was reactivated at the South Dakota School of Mines and Technology Campus with the initiation of ten students and one faculty member on March 18, 2019. One additional member was initiated on March 26, 2019 in a make-up ceremony for a total of twelve initiates.

The effort to reform SD Phi Alpha was instigated by ME Department Head Dr. Pierre Larochelle who invited Dr. Nickolaus Bruno to lead the initiative and serve as faculty advisor for the chapter. In mid-January, Dr. Bruno obtained a list of qualified students in accordance with Article III of the Pi Tau Sigma Constitution. Each student on this list was invited to attend an information session on February 7 in which Dr. Bruno outlined the history, values, and purpose of Pi Tau Sigma and expressed the department's interest in re-establishing the dormant SDSM&T chapter. Based upon the attendance of this meeting, it was determined that there was adequate interest among students to continue forward with the process. At this point, it was asked of all potential initiates to write a brief bio that outlined their academic interests, professional goals, and extracurricular activities while reflecting upon the PTS core values. This action was to be considered the local, chapter initiation requirement.

The first initiation was held on March 18, 2019. Mechanical engineering faculty and PTS members Dr. Pierre Larochelle and Dr. Dan Dolan acted as chapter president and vice president for this initial ceremony. In addition to nine undergraduate students and two graduate students, Dr. Nickolaus Bruno was initiated as an honorary member so he could serve as the faculty advisor for the chapter going forward.

2 Chapter Activities

Because of the logistics associated with reforming the chapter as an university recognized organization and the relatively late initiation, no chapter activities were held. However, two chapter

meetings were conducted for the purpose of electing officers and identifying key tasks that would need to be accomplished before the semester was finished. In addition to the chapter meetings, the officers met twice in order to enact a plan for realizing the required steps to become an official student organization and to begin laying the framework for the chapter's activities, functions, and goals for the fall 2019 semester. Also, in an effort to promote chapter visibility and foster strong organization/departmental relations, the officers met with ME Department Head, Dr. Pierre Larochelle to begin preliminary discussion on potential chapter sponsored departmental activities and workshops.

3 Other

The members of SD Phi Alpha recognize the unique opportunity afforded to them - taking a once thriving chapter that has been dormant for over a decade and restoring its presence on the SDSM&T campus. Although the officers have decided to re-establish the chapter based upon a new set of goals, member requirements, and initiation procedures, they also seek to embrace the history of Pi Tau Sigma at SDSM&T by identifying any traditions and rituals specific to SD Phi Alpha and incorporating these into the new chapter bylaws. This will be accomplished by studying historical chapter documents and interviewing former chapter members.