Pi Tau Sigma Annual Report

Drexel Xi Chapter

2015-2016 Academic Year

A. Initiations

Selection Process

The selection process for the Drexel Xi chapter of Pi Tau Sigma is dependent upon both the prospective member's academic record as well as their willingness to be involved in university activities. A list of prospective students in the Mechanical Engineering and Mechanics department at Drexel University who have met the academic requirements for the Pre-Junior, Junior and Senior class standing is provided by the Academic Advisor of the department to the President of the Drexel Xi chapter one month prior to the induction ceremony. Next, the President of Pi Tau Sigma Drexel Xi contacts each prospective member to invite them to be a part of the honor society. The stipulations set out in the invitation to be inducted into the honor society are: (1) Attend an informational meeting explaining Pi Tau Sigma and (2) Attend the induction ceremony. We also host a dinner for the inductees following the induction ceremony to celebrate their accomplishment.

Requirements

Each prospective member must meet the requirements set forth by National Pi Tau Sigma via the Constitution, and reinforced by the Drexel Xi Pi Tau Sigma Constitution. These academic requirements for Pi Tau Sigma Drexel Xi chapter are reflected as follows:

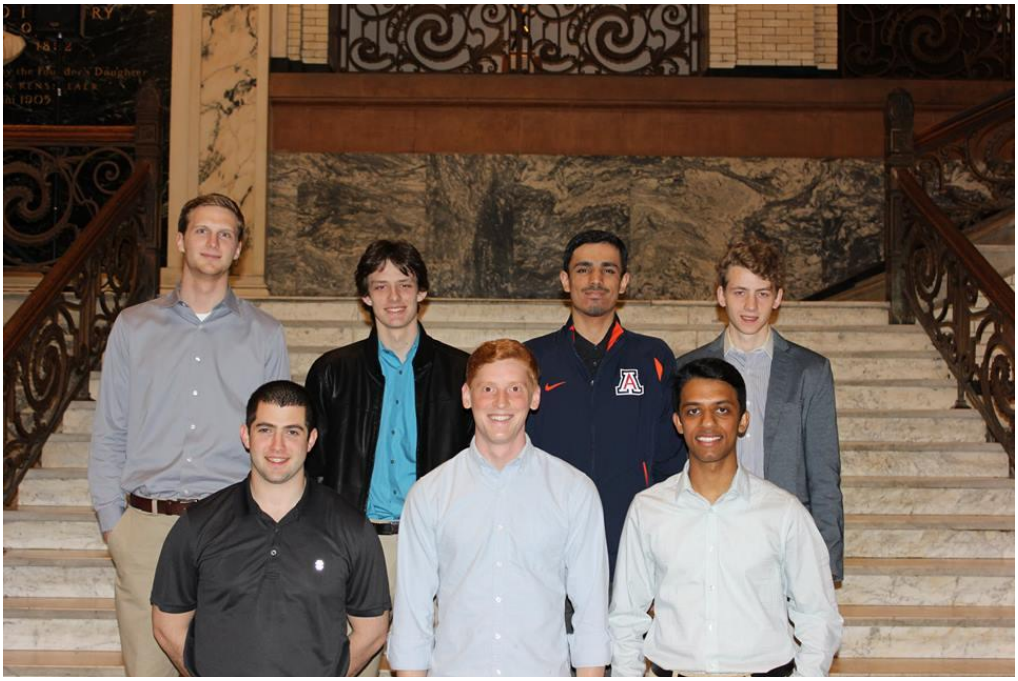
- First term Juniors upper 25% 17%, Last term Juniors upper 33% 25%
- First term Seniors upper 35% 33%, Last term Seniors upper 35% 33%

Within these ranges, Drexel Xi Chapter also requires a 3.5 GPA minimum. If there is not a reasonable number of students who meet the GPA requirement, as determined by the officers and advisor of the chapter, the range is opened to edge of the range but not past the 3.2 GPA Nationally required floor.

Ceremony, Rituals, and Celebration

Induction ceremonies were held twice during the 2015-2016 academic year. The first induction ceremony was held during the Fall quarter, Friday, October 23rd in the Mechanical Engineering and Mechanics Seminar Room with the members of the Pi Tau Sigma Drexel Xi executive board in attendance. There were 24 students inducted. The second induction ceremony was held during the Spring quarter, Friday, April 8th as well in the Mechanical Engineering and Mechanics Seminar Room with all members of the executive board in attendance. There were 9 people inducted. Our rituals uphold the script found in the Pi Tau Sigma National Constitution. Following the rituals of Pi Tau Sigma, a photo of the initiates with the present executive board was taken in the Main Building of Drexel University. After each induction ceremony, initiates were invited to celebrate their achievements with the executive board with a dinner paid for by Pi Tau Sigma Drexel Xi chapter. The majority of initiates attended the celebratory dinner and found it a great time to network and meet new members of the organization. Most of inductees of the induction classes are pictured below.

Fall 2015 Pi Tau Sigma Drexel Xi Induction Class



Spring 2016 Pi Tau Sigma Drexel Xi Induction Class

B. Chapter Activities

Leadership and Service

Pi Tau Sigma Drexel Xi works to keep a line of communication between faculty and students to better improve the effectiveness of course evaluations and general

departmental improvements. The first step in the development of this line of communication was a survey submitted to sophomores, pre-juniors, juniors and seniors within the mechanical engineering department at Drexel to learn the strengths and weaknesses of our department from the student's perspectives. The responses were recorded, analyzed and prepared into a presentation that was given to the department head of the mechanical engineering department.

Additionally, we set up a Teaching Excellence Award to let students vote for the best graduate and undergraduate mechanical engineering professor. This encourages great professors to continue inspiring students. We award the professors with customized mugs and send out the results to the whole department. The two winners from this year can be seen below.

The members of Drexel Xi also serve as representatives at MEM department Open Houses and Accepted Student Days, fielding questions from prospective students and their families about the department and student life. Many of the officers also serve on panels within the department, acting as the student voice on matters such as tenure for professors, student life, department activities, and ways to make the department better.

Professional Events

Every year Drexel Xi's chapter of Pi Tau Sigma works to host a professional event. This event can range from speakers to seminars and informational events. This year Pi Tau Sigma chose to have a speaker Panel event. This event featured five professionals from different backgrounds who spoke and gave advice about career path and job expectations. The panel consisted of:

1. Ryan Siskey, Principal and Office Director, Exponent

2. Stephen Luckowski, Program Manager, Revolutionary Fibers and Textile Manufacturing Innovation Institute
3. Ryan Meers, Director of Mechanical Engineering, Boston Device Development
4. Evan Malone, Ph.D., President, NextFab Studio
5. Helen Silvis, Account and Business Development Manager, Veolia Energy Philadelphia

Pi Tau Sigma organized the Graduate Speaker Panel in conjunction with Philadelphia's ASME chapter. The event was on Thursday May 12th and included Pi Tau Sigma members, graduate students, ASME Philadelphia members, and students from other schools. The speakers each presented on their background, work history, and how they came to their current position. They also shared a few pointers on what they had learned and wished to share with those just entering the working world. The event began with an informal meeting as people came. Opening remarks were given by Drexel Professor and ASME Philadelphia Section Chair Antonios Kontsos. After opening remarks, the speakers presented one by one. Then the event was opened up to questions from the audience. These questions were very insightful, with the panelists offering advice

This two hour presentation was so well received that students were lined up for an hour past the event waiting for the opportunity to ask questions to the speaker. Many students and guests approached the officers of PTS asking for similar future events.

Overall, this entire event, funded in part by the College of Engineering, Mechanical Engineering Department, PTS, and ASME, was a resounding success. The talk served to inspire students with the exciting real-world applications of their coursework, as well as adding to the community and inclusiveness across the college. Below, there is a photo from the event.

Social Events

To promote camaraderie and amiability amongst its members, Pi Tau Sigma Drexel Xi held a number of social events during the 2015-2016 academic year. The first

was a rock climbing event, where students were able to relax and get some free climbing in at the Drexel rock wall. At the end of each term, we hosted finals week study breaks with pizza. We also hosted several other pizza parties and board games with professors to promote connections between students and professors. Additionally, we hosted several socials at local restaurants for Bingo games and organized brewery tours at local Philadelphia breweries.

Finally, we also organized a trip to the Philadelphia Car Show, photographed below.

Fundraisers

The Drexel Xi chapter currently has three means of funding for the organization. The first is from dues; at the time of initiation, students are asked to pay $60, $30 of which is for national dues and $30 of which is designated for the Drexel chapter. The next portion of funding for convention and events is subsidized by the Student Activity Fee Allocation Committee (SAFAC), which Pi Tau Sigma applies for each year. Finally, we host several fundraising events. This year, we hosted a volleyball tournament where students paid to enter and could win a prize at the end. We also hosted several fundraisers at local restaurants, where part of the students' bill would go to Pi Tau Sigma. Lastly, we also ordered and sold Drexel Dragon key chains for fundraising.

Information Sessions

As an organization based on academic excellence, the Drexel Xi chapter of Pi Tau Sigma held several information sessions throughout the year. These included information

sessions about the FE exam, fellowships, engineering management, job search after graduation, and study abroad. For the FE exam information session, we invited a civil engineering professor to discuss how the exam is run and the benefits of taking it. For the engineering management information session, we invited the department head of the Engineering Management Department to discuss general engineering management tactics and also about the programs available for Drexel students. For the job search information session, we invited a Career Center administrator to present about how students should apply for jobs after graduation. The presentation was very helpful and included resume pointers, interview advice, negotiation tactics, and resources that can be used for the job search. For the study abroad information session, we invited the study abroad advisor to speak about the various options that students have to travel abroad, even as an engineer. This included universities and even co-op opportunities.

Additionally, Drexel Xi has aided its students in communicating and organizing an event with the Drexel University Fellowship Office. The inception of this event began with the networking of executive board members at University wide events, highlighting the importance of reaching out to resources within the university that might not typically be at hand for the chapter within the department alone. The event was geared towards informing students about nationally and internationally prestigious scholarship programs that help them get the education and experience they need to pursue your professional goals, among them were the Goldwater Scholarship, NSF Graduate Research Fellowships Program (GRFP) and the DAAD Research in Science and Engineering Internships (RISE).

University Events

Several events for prospective and accepted students which are scheduled throughout each quarter at Drexel University had several representatives from Pi Tau Sigma sharing experiences and knowledge not only of the Drexel University system and atmosphere but of Engineering and more specifically Mechanical Engineering so as to better inform those considering a similar path of study. Additionally, Pi Tau Sigma Drexel Xi participated in University-wide organization town hall. Finally, members of the organization participated in the annual Senior sendoff events, helping organize and host the reception. The following is a list of University events which Pi Tau Sigma Drexel Xi aided or participated in:

- Drexel Research Day
- Accepted Students Day
- Mechanical Engineering and Mechanics Open House
- College of Engineering Open House
- Student Life / Office of Campus Activities Town Hall
- Senior Send-off

Chapter Meetings

Drexel Xi chapter meetings were held at various levels of operations within the organization. Throughout each quarter (Fall, Winter, & Spring) of the 2015-2016 academic year, weekly meetings were held for the officers of Pi Tau Sigma. Meetings were typically at around 5:00pm or 6:00pm in order to accommodate the schedules of those at Drexel with class as well as those on co-op. These meetings were one hour long

with a detailed agenda, subsequent action items, and minutes dictated by the Recording Secretary. Additionally, planning meetings were held at the beginning of the term to sketch out a schedule of desired events and involvement of the organization. The planning meetings were generally two hours, and had an open discussion forum, with secretaries recording consensuses and responsibilities. General body meetings were also held by the chapter to ensure transparent, consistent communication between the executive board and its members. In addition to the regular meetings, there was also the matter of electing the new members of office. Members were elected democratically within the organization, some of which went unopposed, but nonetheless were announced to the general body.

National Convention

National Convention, held at USC this February, was an instrumental step in the progression and alignment of Pi Tau Sigma chapters both nationally and internationally. Six Drexel Xi officers attended the Convention. The first night, we were given the opportunity to vote in the election for the President and Vice President of the Pi Tau Sigma National, and were able to discuss and vote for changes to the Pi Tau Sigma Constitution about the rules for admitting graduate students into Pi Tau Sigma. Additionally, several of our members were on teams that had won the Autodesk Fusion 360 student design competition, which was very exciting. Finally, Drexel volunteered and was officially selected as the host of the 2017 National Convention. Below is a picture of the Drexel officers that went to the convention, along with Dr. Kontsos, a professor at our university.

C. Other

2015-2016 Academic Year Officers

President: **Veronika Legkobitova**
Vice President: **Caitlin Bubel**
Treasurer: **Dana Bronen**
Event Coordinator: **Rachael Reich**
Corresponding Secretary: **Deborah Kapilow**
Webmaster: **Victor Micucci**
Recording Secretary: **Matthew Schlegel**

2016-2017 Academic Year Officers

President: **Caitlin Bubel**
Vice President: **Noreshvarman Manisagar**
Treasurer: **Matthew Schlegel**
Event Coordinator: **Rachael Reich**
Corresponding Secretary: **Deborah Kapilow**
Webmaster: **Travis Hart**
Recording Secretary: **Lukshay Singh**
Convention Coordinator: **Lindsey Kinser**