6-26-2020

University of Michigan – Dearborn, Alpha Pi Chapter
2019-2020 Annual Report
By Lilia Bykerk – Treasurer, & Michael Ustes – President

A. Initiations

Two initiations were held for this chapter during the 2019-2020 school year. Candidates were selected based on sound engineering ability, leadership, integrity, and academic success, from the top 25% of their class. The first event of the semester was the letter building event, where members of the chapter met to assemble invitation letters to the eligible candidates. Our chapter typically has 120 eligible students each semester, to which a formal letter is sent to congratulate them on their academic achievement in addition to inviting them to join Pi Tau Sigma. Emails were also sent to the initiates to ensure that their invitations were received. Those who responded then had to attend a preliminary meeting, hosted by one of the members of the executive board, introducing the chapter and expectations and requirements for membership.

In addition, the candidates were expected to complete a project over a period of three to four weeks that helped benefit the society or the mechanical engineer department at the University of Michigan- Dearborn. There was a secondary meeting where the candidates met with the vice president and/or other members of the executive board to select suitable projects. Those who successfully completed their projects within the given time were then invited to attend a roast where they were given the tasks of completing a scavenger hunt. The clues were primarily questions based on fundamental mechanical engineering principles. The goal was to have them work as a group to successfully solve each clue. This allowed the chapter to test the candidates' knowledge and skills relating to the mechanical engineering field as well as the soft skills, such as communication and teamwork. When all the clues have been successfully completed, the candidates and officers eat together to get to know each other and go over the details of initiation. The candidates who met all requirements and completed their projects and roast were then invited to an initiation ceremony.

The initiation usually takes place a week or two after the roast (with the exception of the Winter 2020 semester due to COVID-19). The ceremony, a business formal event where all current members are invited, follows the rituals found in the national PTS website, https://pitausigma.org/contents/initiation_ceremony. Once the rituals are completed the newly inducted members and current members have lunch together. After lunch, an election is held to vote in the new officers for the next semester.

The Fall 2019 initiation took place on Saturday, December 7, 2019, where seven students were initiated into this chapter. The Winter 2020 initiation took place on Saturday, June 20, 2020, where four students were initiated. They are shown in the figures on the following page.

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Figure 1: Fall 2019 new members and officers for the University of Michigan- Dearborn Alpha Pi Chapter

Figure 2: Winter 2020 new members and officers for the University of Michigan- Dearborn Alpha Pi Chapter

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B. Chapter Activities

Chapter Meetings

1. **Letter Building:** This event was held for both the Fall and Winter semesters a few weeks after the start of each semester where all current members are invited to attend. The purpose of this event is to envelope and send letters to all the potential initiates who meet the requirements of the society. The letter congratulates the student on their academic success and introduces him/her to Pi Tau Sigma. It also invites them to a preliminary meeting to receive more information about the society and our chapter. Each letter is hand signed by the president. Over a hundred letters are sent out each semester. It is also an opportunity for members to get to know each other better.
2. **Introductory Meeting:** Candidates were encouraged to attend this 30-minute meeting held by the chapter officers to learn more about the history of Pi Tau Sigma, the Alpha Pi Chapter, why they were invited to join, and the requirements to become a member. Pizza was also provided free of charge as a courtesy from Dr. Ratts, our chapter's advisor.
3. **Roast:** The roast is the event our chapter uses to determine if our candidates possess favorable qualities that will uphold the ideals of Pi Tau Sigma. The candidates were asked to meet with the chapter officers and were presented with a series of challenges and riddles in the form of a scavenger hunt. Each challenge is related to fundamental mechanical engineering principles, and is easily solved as a group. This allows the chapter to test the candidates' academic prowess in addition to interpersonal skills such as teamwork. The seven candidates were able to successfully complete the scavenger hunt and were rewarded with lunch with the officers at the end.
4. **Officer Transition:** This meeting occurs once between the end of each semester and the start of the next. After initiation, when the new officers have been elected, the new and old executive board has a joint meeting where the prior officers hand off their responsibilities to their successors, as well as providing guidance, direction, and advice.

Professional Development/Service Events

1. **Meet the Dean:** Our chapter worked with the College of Engineering and Computer Science to create a meeting open to all students with the college's dean, Tony England, and the Associate Dean of Undergraduate Education, Ghassan Kridli. This allowed students to express issues, interests, and questions about student life to the deans directly.
2. **Engineering 9-5: Daily Work Life of Professional Engineers:** This was a professional development event open to all engineering students. The purpose was to allow students to gain insight into the responsibilities and daily routines of professional engineers. There was a speaker panel containing engineers from the automotive and lighting industries. The speakers described their work life and answered students' questions.
3. **Resume Workshop:** At the beginning of March, our chapter hosted a resume workshop open to all students. Our executive board offered their opinions and experiences to all

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attendees in an effort to improve aesthetics and richness of content in their documents. This event was a great experience for the chapter to be involved with the greater campus community, not just the engineering students.

4. **Tutoring:** Our chapter worked in collaboration with Tau Beta Pi, the general engineering honor society, to create tutoring opportunities for core engineering classes. This was open to all engineering students. The purpose was to help students who were struggling in their core engineering classes. The tutors are all upperclassmen from either Pi Tau Sigma or Tau Beta Pi. Sessions were held twice a week for the duration of the school year. When classes moved online due to the COVID-19 pandemic, tutoring was still available virtually. In this format students had to request it through the engineering advising office, which then worked to pair them with one of the student volunteer tutors.

National Convention

Towards the end of January, our Treasurer attended the 2020 Pi Tau Sigma National Convention in Rochester. This is the first time a member of the Michigan Alpha Pi chapter has attended convention in several years. This was a great opportunity for our chapter to be involved with the society at large, as well as gain an understanding of how other chapters operate. Attending successive conventions in the future will be a key aspect of our chapter's growth since we will have the opportunity to learn from and recreate the successes of other smaller chapters like ourselves.

C. Other

N/A

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