PI TAU SIGMA ANNUAL CHAPTER REPORT

2019-2020

GEORGIA SOUTHERN BETA IOTA

A – INITIATION

Student eligibility was based on academic standings required by the national Pi Tau Sigma guidelines. The top eighth of the junior class and top fifth of the senior class based on GPA ranking and credit hours received invitations to join the Beta Iota chapter. Members who decided to join paid a $70 membership fee in fall which included a chapter t-shirt. The fall induction ceremony was held October 9th, 2019, on campus. A fake 15-minute exam was administered to initiates before the ritual as an engineering joke, but in no way impacted their consideration into the organization. The traditional ritual was performed without candles. After swearing in, they were all taught the Pi Tau Sigma handshake. Refreshments were delivered and a cake was also provided to celebrate the new members. The spring induction was a new experiment for the organization, as fees were reduced to $45 to try and make the organization more attractive to prospective members. A t-shirt was available at extra cost. It was held on March 6th, 2020, also on campus. On the week of induction, all tentative initiates were asked to schedule a time within a set block for interviews. These interviews were conducted in blocks of 4 hours each day leading up to Friday, and different officers would take turns asking a set of questions to vet the potentially new members. After all the initiates were inducted, the organization took them to Mellow Mushroom at no extra cost to them, where a cake was also provided. A makeup induction in spring was required for one individual, who was inducted on March 9th. All members from both semesters were introduced to the secret handshake after being read the Rituals of Pi Tau Sigma and registered with the national chapter.

Table 1. 2019-2020 Academic year Initiations

Semester	Undergraduate	Graduate	Honorary
Fall 2019	5	0	0
Spring 2020	9	0	0

Figure 1. 9 October 2019 (Fall) Induction. Left to Right: LaTerrion (welcoming member), Thomas (Vice President), Christina, Elmer, Brandon, Cory (welcoming member), Margaret (welcoming member), Nicholas (President).

Figure 2. 6 March 2020 (Spring) Induction. Makeup Induction 9 March. Left to Right: Thomas (Vice President), Henry, John, Byron, Cameron, Sierra, Kathryn, Jack, James, Bryce (Treasurer), Nicholas (President).

Figure 3. Spring 2020 post-Induction celebration. The Tau Beta Pi chapter of Georgia Southern joined.

B – CHAPTER ACTIVITIES

Volunteering:

Each member was required to complete volunteer hours. Volunteer hours are defined as any service through the university or community in which the member does not get paid. For fall 2019 and spring 2020, members were required to complete 8 volunteer hours, with new members required to complete 4. These requirements are being gradually increased to increase the participation of our members throughout the department and community. The past school year we had approximately 5-10 active members who were involved throughout the year, with 3 to 5 students, same as the year before, who were out due to internships or Co-Ops who were excluded from the community service hour's requirement. This school year, a new set of volunteer opportunities were offered that were geared a little more towards engineering. During the fall semester, the Georgia Southern Beta Iota chapter volunteered for a youth STEM Fest, where the organization would build a STEM related device of its choosing for kids to interact with. The chapter chose to construct a model dam to show kids how clean electricity could be generated by converting mechanical energy to electrical energy. The dam also allowed the kids to "flood" the wall, showing them why constantly monitoring the wall is important. Overall, 7 members helped build the dam over approximately a week, 4 to 5 hours a day, to build, seal, and program the dam components. Habitat for Humanity was also offered as a volunteer opportunity periodically throughout fall semester, where two members helped construct a house and four members assisted at a Re-Store to help restock, clean up, and prepare the store for the city's fair. During the beginning of spring semester, members had the opportunity to volunteer their time selling coffee over the span of three weeks in cold weather for a dollar per cup, which is further discussed in fundraisers. On the larger side of things, the Georgia Southern Beta Iota chapter steered its engineering experience toward the society itself, creating and aiming to achieve the mission of creating a new statue mold for all chapters of Pi Tau Sigma to use for their campus decoration. This task for members was treated as a volunteering opportunity throughout the semester. As of now, the model is finished and

awaiting the reopening of the campus to fabricate the model for sealing and casting. Unfortunately, not many other volunteer opportunities were available with the emergence of the COVID-19 pandemic.

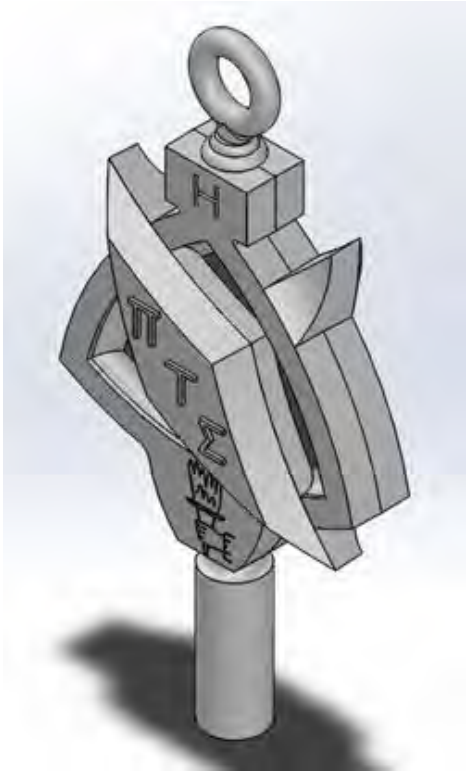

Figure 4. Pi Tau Sigma Statue, 4 feet tall.

Guest Speakers and Plant Tours:

This school year, one guest speaker made an appearance. This guest speaker was Dr. Ilie, a professor for Georgia Southern University. He talked at one of our meetings about what to expect in the field and why sometimes not liking a job is okay. He went into depth about his career experiences, why he became a professor, and how he came to learn to expect the unexpected. Plant tours were planned for fall semester with Graphic Packaging International. Unfortunately, the company had to cancel the tour due to a surge of orders, and another one was planned for later in spring. Again, though, the emergence of COVID-19 prevented the chapter from further developing these plans, and regrettably no plant tours became available.

Fundraisers:

Multiple fundraising venues were conducted to maintain the relatively low induction fee combined with the food provided at meetings. A percentage night was held at a local pizzeria, Nonna Piccis, where students were encouraged to attend and bring friends and family. A percentage of their meal fee would go towards our Pi Tau Sigma chapter. In addition to this restaurant fundraiser, a time window was secured with Zaxby's, where 10% of their profits went toward the chapter over four hours' time, which equated to around $210. In the spring, we hosted a coffee table immediately after Christmas break, in a location that sees a lot of traffic. The cold weather fronts quickly brought a crowd, and the chapter made approximately

$180 after selling coffee, tea, and hot chocolate. Over the fall and spring semesters, some remaining sweatshirts from the sweatshirt fundraiser we had last year were sold, providing the chapter with about $60.

Figure 5. One of Four Colors for the ENGR Sweatshirts

C – OTHER

Chapter Meetings:

Each member was required to complete volunteer hours, attend a minimum number of meetings, and attend one wings point event. Meetings were defined as the bi-weekly held meetings or special events designated as a meeting such as a career fair, guest speaker event, or fundraiser event. Wings points are required by the university to ensure that clubs are involved in the university and community and offered seminars on topics such as leadership skills to interview tips. Regular meetings were held bi-weekly to present students with information on upcoming events, meetings, and fundraisers, with some meetings including small activities such as clever interview questions or impromptu study sessions during finals.

ENGR BBQ:

The annual barbeque hosted by the Pi Tau Sigma Georgia Southern Beta Iota chapter and its sister society, Tau Beta Pi, did not debut this year for reasons beyond our control. Though plans were in place for the biggest barbeque yet, COVID-19 foiled them by evacuating all students and faculty. For reasons of consistency, this section was still mentioned in the report because it would have occurred under normal circumstances.