PI TAU SIGMA ANNUAL CHAPTER REPORT

2016-2017

AUBURN CHI

A. Initiations

Selection

This year we held our fall initiation on November 7th, 2016, and inducted 17 students into the Auburn Chi chapter of Pi Tau Sigma. Our spring initiation was held on April 25, 2017, and 16 students were inducted into the chapter. Each prospective member received an email at the beginning of the semester with an invitation to an informational meeting detailing the requirements and benefits of joining Pi Tau Sigma. Prospective members have proven excellence in their academic endeavors at Auburn University and were selected based on their GPA and class rank. Juniors were in the top 1/4th of their class and seniors in the top 1/3rd of their class. All prospective members held a GPA above a 3.25, attended Auburn for at least 1 semester prior to initiation, and were not graduating the semester of initiation.

Initiation Requirements

Once selected, each prospective member of Pi Tau Sigma completed several tasks before initiation. Firstly, each prospective member obtained signatures from three professors in the Mechanical Engineering Department who attested to the character of the student. This encouraged students to build lasting relationships with their professors and gave our chapter an opportunity to judge the integrity of the individual. One of the signatures was from the current faculty advisor, Dr. Richard Williams. This allowed our advisor to connect with each new member.

Secondly, each prospective member completed two hours of community service. Our chapter provides STEM related service events through involvement with E-Day and other volunteer events with the Mechanical Engineering Department. We also pass along any other service opportunities that are emailed to our chapter. This past year new and current members volunteered with the regional and state Science Olympiads, BEST Robotics, Jr. Mad Scientist, STEM Discovery Day, and Nanodays. For the second year, our chapter sent a team comprised of prospective members and current members to Auburn's Big Event.

Thirdly, prospective members polished and painted a bent. This requirement gave the students an opportunity to utilize several different labs on campus as well as have a physical representation of their involvement and membership in Pi Tau Sigma. The prospective member with the best-polished bent, as judged by our academic advisor, was waived their initiation fee. This offered light competition between prospective members and encouraged students to take this task seriously and complete it to the best of their ability.

Fourthly, prospective members attended a social event hosted by our chapter. This past year's events included bent polishing parties in the fall, a student panel in the fall, a movie night both semesters, and a game night in the spring. These social events allowed prospective members an opportunity to get to know each other and any current members in attendance as well. Further description of each event is detailed below.

Initiation Ceremony

Completing all the above requirements allowed prospective members to attend the initiation ceremony and become official members of our chapter. The initiation ceremony included a thorough explanation of the values and ideals of Pi Tau Sigma. The president and vice president also presented the fraternity coat of arms and colors to explain the symbolic significance of these items. Our advisor gave a short speech about his expectations and offered encouragement for new members to stay actively involved as well as lead the chapter in new endeavors. Directly after the ceremony, we hosted a catered buffet in the McCartney Suite of the Shelby Center where the new members congregated with the current officers and faculty advisor while celebrating their achievements.

Fall 2016 Initiates & Board of Officers

Spring 2017 Initiates & Board of Officers

B. Chapter Activities

Points System

This past year the officer board decided to enact a points system in an effort to gain more participation from active members beyond the minimum requirement for maintaining "good standing" within the chapter. The current system requires members to attend one social event, the general meeting, or the election meeting each semester to remain in good standing. Members who fail to meet this requirement are placed on probation and probationary members are not allowed to purchase cords and stoles for graduation. With the new points system, members who attend more than one event throughout the semester are awarded points, and the member with the highest point total at the end of the semester receives an Amazon gift card. This system helped increase participation at all events and will be carried forward through the next year.

Chapter Meetings

Each semester there were two meetings held for members to attend. The first was the general member meeting which is near the start of the semester and sets up all of the activities and important information for the semester. The election meeting was held after initiation and the board of officers for the next semester were voted on and established. These meetings were also used to discuss and vote on the items sent down from the National Board. The general meetings were held on October 4th, 2016 and January 31st, 2017 for the fall and spring semesters respectively. Pizza was served at both meetings. The election meetings were held on November 14th, 2016 and April 26th, 2017. As seen in past semesters, the highest number of member attendance throughout the semester was at both of these meetings with between 25-30 students in attendance.

Departmental Events & Involvement

As part of our commitment to serve the Mechanical Engineering department at Auburn University, our chapter assisted in an undergraduate research informational poster session hosted by the MECH-E department. This event was part of an initiative to increase student participation in research by awarding 5 research stipends to undergraduate students. Our chapter was responsible for contacting professors to present a poster at the session, advertising for the event, collecting and displaying the posters, and manning an informational booth at the event itself. The event was a success and our chapter looks forward to assisting the MECH department with similar events in the future. A flyer for the event is attached at the end of the report.

During the fall semester several leaders within the chapter were invited to sit down and talk with an ABET representative about student organizations within the Mechanical Engineering Department. This was a great opportunity to discuss the roles of Pi Tau Sigma on Auburn's campus. Items that were discussed at the meeting included funding for student organizations, departmental support, and faculty/advisor support.

This past fall we hosted our second student panel. The panel was started to allow younger classmen to ask senior students about courses, research, co-op and internships, and how to navigate being an engineer at Auburn University. This event was held on October 10, 2016. The student panel consisted of 6 senior members. We partnered with the "Intro to Engineering" course and students were allowed to use our event as one of the required events for their course. There were about 30 freshman and sophomore students in attendance. The entire session lasted about 90 minutes and was beneficial to the both the panelists and attendees. A flyer is attached at the end of the report.

Social Events

Bent polishing parties were hosted this fall to benefit the prospective new members with their initiation requirements. Two parties were hosted. Students were able to use the senior design lab and dremels provided by our chapter to polish their bent. The two events were held on October 25th and October 31st, 2016. In the spring semester, the lab implemented new rules and a fairly intensive training process for lab use. Our chapter worked closely with the Lab TA to facilitate extra times for prospective members to attend training sessions. Participation was low however. Our chapter has discussed and will continue to look for a new approach to help prospective new members with this initiation requirement.

Both semesters we hosted a movie night. The movies shown were *Back to the Future* in the fall and *Ghostbusters* in the spring. The theme for this year was throwback science fiction. The movie nights were held on October 18, 2016 and March 6th, 2017. Standard movie snacks were provided.

In the spring semester we hosted a Mario Cart party. This event was held on April 18th, 2017. The party was hosted at one of the officer's house and had over 15 members, prospective and current, in attendance. This event was a great way to distract from the stress of tests and end of the semester projects. Light refreshments were served.

Service Events

Every year members of the Auburn Chi chapter volunteer with Auburn's E-day. The tradition was continued this past spring on February 24th, 2017. E-day was established to provide high school students with an opportunity to tour Auburn's campus, engineering facilities, and connect with engineering students and faculty. Current and prospective members volunteered at this by assisting with the MECH-E department booth in the main center, giving tours of the MECH-E building, manning help stations throughout campus to direct visitors, and manning an informational table for Pi Tau Sigma Auburn Chi. This was the first year that our chapter had a student organization table at E-Day. We had a reverse pendulum on display, our organizational banner, and organizational brochures. Students were available from 8 AM – 1 PM to answer questions about the organization and Mechanical Engineering in general. A copy of the brochure used is attached at the end of the report.

Spring 2017 E-Day Student Organization Booth

For the second year, our chapter took a team to the Big Event. Big Event was held on March 4th, 2017. We spent the day helping with yard work at a local church. The team consisted of both current and new members. There were a total of 10 students who attended the Big Event.

Spring 2017 Big Event Team

Spring 2017 Big Event Team

Convention

This past spring, we sent two members, Victoria Luther and Stone Bynum, to the National Convention in Philadelphia. They had the opportunity to meet with members from other chapters and gain insight into the inner workings of chapters from across the nation. Both returned with enthusiasm and ideas for pushing our chapter further in involvement and excellence.

A. Attachments

Copy of Research Event Flyer

Attention Undergraduate Mechanical Engineers!

The Mechanical Engineering Department plans to award $1,000 research stipends to five

The Mechanical Engineering faculty and members of Pi Tau Sigma are hosting an information and poster session highlighting research being conducted within the department. Professors or their representatives will be available to answer questions. Please join us to learn more about the application process and

Date: Thursday September 1st

Time: 3:00 PM-5:00 PM

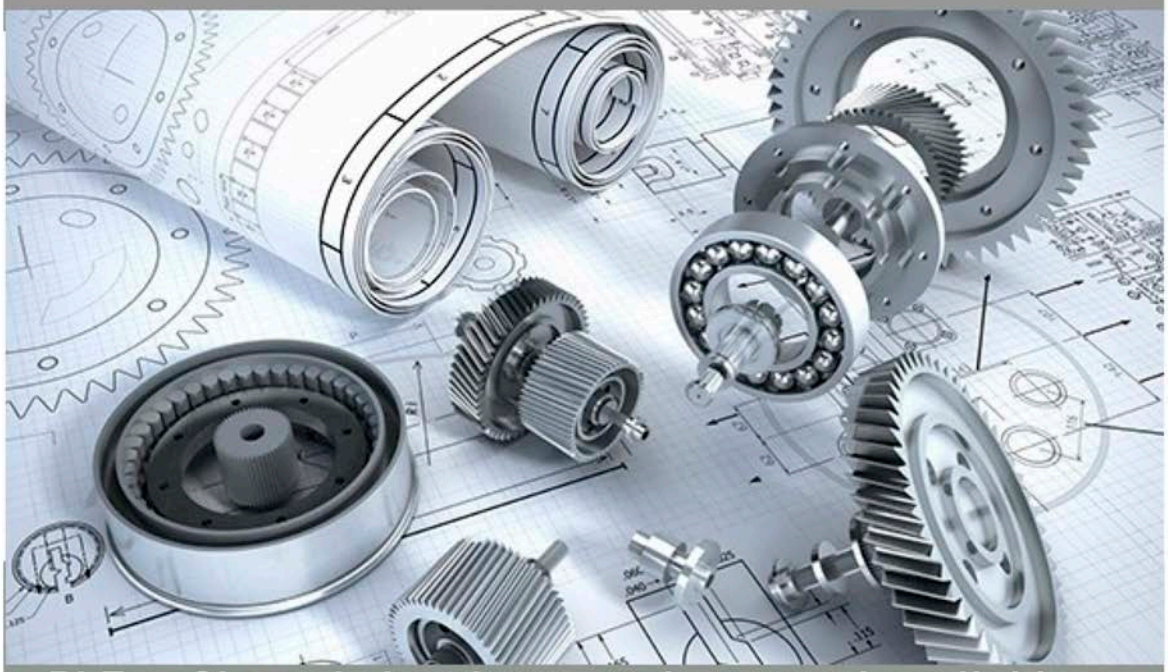
Location: Wiggins Hall Foyer

Based on submitted applications and a comprehensive review process, the stipends will be awarded to five students on September 15, 2016. Completed applications can be turned into Dr. Sushil Bhavnani (bhavnsh@auburn.edu) by Thursday, September 8th. We look forward to seeing you at the information session. Refreshments will be provided.

Copy of Student Panel Flyer

Attention

Mechanical Engineers!

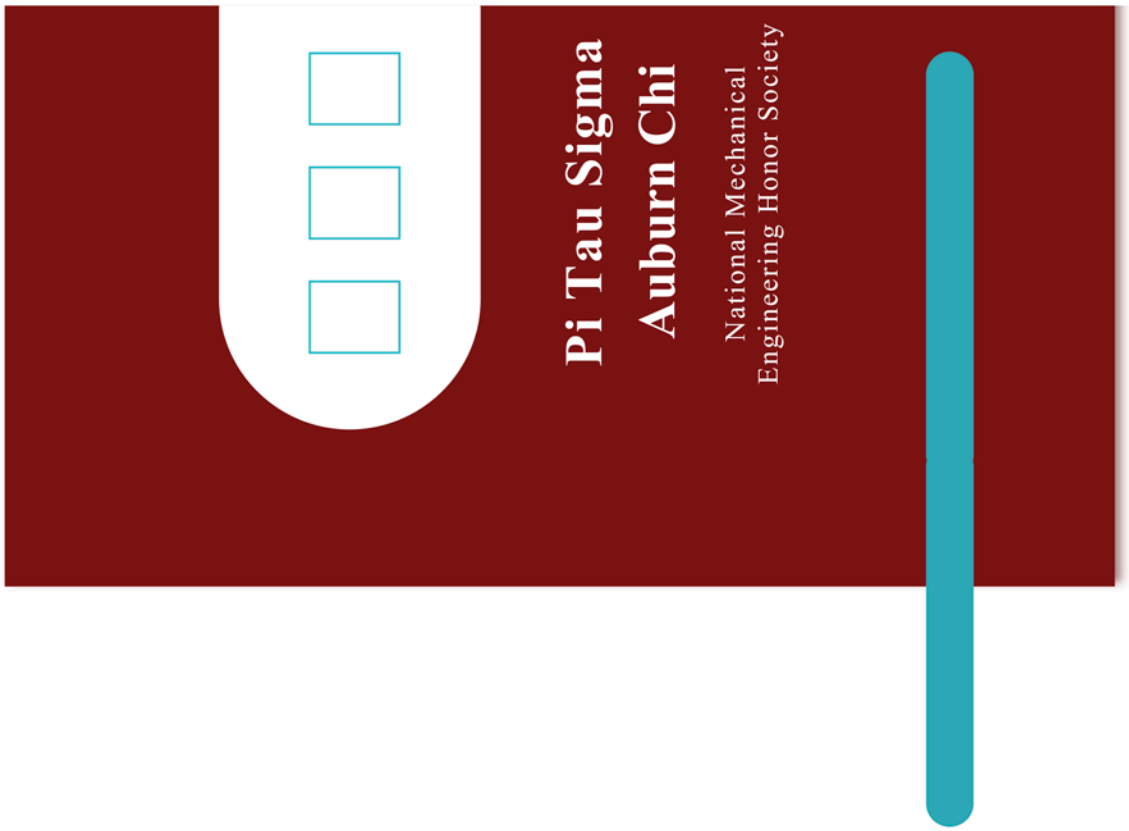


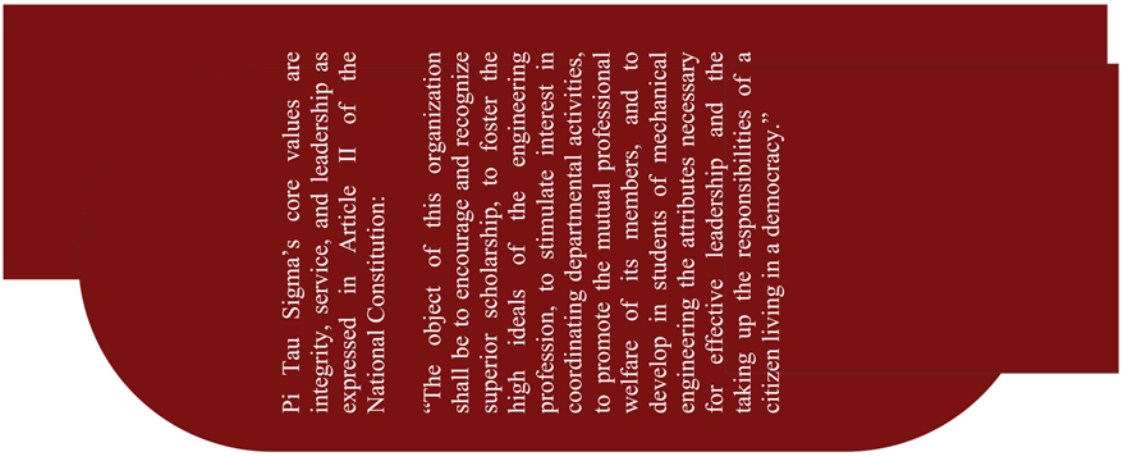
Pi Tau Sigma is hosting a student panel available to all Mechanical Engineering Students!

Date: Monday October 10th
Time: 6:00 PM – 8:00 PM
Location: 235 Broun Hall

Please join us for a student panel lead by juniors and seniors in the Mechanical Engineering department. Speak with students who have successfully navigated their way through the Mechanical Engineering program here at Auburn. Ask them about their experiences with balancing coursework, campus involvement, and social activities, what to expect within the coursework and different technical electives offered, advice on applying for jobs and internships, and how to gain the most from your time here at Auburn University. We look forward to your questions and input!

Copy of PTS Brochure Inside Sheet





Pi Tau Sigma's core values are integrity, service, and leadership as expressed in Article II of the National Constitution:

"The object of this organization shall be to encourage and recognize superior scholarship, to foster the high ideals of the engineering profession, to stimulate interest in coordinating departmental activities, to promote the mutual professional welfare of its members, and to develop in students of mechanical engineering the attributes necessary for effective leadership and the taking up the responsibilities of a citizen living in a democracy."

National History

Pi Tau Sigma was established on March 16, 1915, at the University of Illinois. Within the next few years the organization grew to over 25 chapters thus establishing the organization's position as the National Mechanical Engineering Honor Society.

There are currently over 170 active chapters at universities across the United States.

Chapter History

In the fall of 1940, senior mechanical engineering students from Alabama Polytech Institute contacted the National Council of Pi Tau Sigma, obtained approval of the Executive Committee of the Institute, and petitioned for a chapter to be established on campus. The petition was granted and was voted into action at the twenty-third national convention. Formal installation was held on December 7, 1940. The National Secretary of Pi Tau Sigma, H.E. Degler, conducted the ceremony assisted by the members of Georgia Tech Nu Chapter.

In 1960 Alabama Polytech Institute changed its name to Auburn University. The chapter was then named Auburn Chi.

Pi Tau Sigma Auburn Chi has continued to promote scholarship, professionalism, and a strong educational program in mechanical engineering for over 75 years.

Membership

Members are chosen on the basis of sound engineering ability, scholarship, and probable future success in their chosen field. Active members are selected from the top 1/4th of the junior class or 1/3rd of the senior class from an ABET accredited university. There is a minimum GPA requirement of 3.25.

Auburn Chi currently has over 60 active members.

On Campus Involvement

Auburn Chi members are involved in the Auburn community in a multitude of activities. The chapter:

- hosts an engineering student panel every semester
- assists the department with the fall research info session
- aids in STEM related service events such as BEST Robotics and E-day
- provides a team for the Big Event
- holds several social events to foster community within the department

Benefits of Membership

Membership within Pi Tau Sigma is recognized by employers as a prestigious honor. Members are given opportunities to give back to the Mechanical Engineering Department and to connect with students and faculty. Pi Tau Sigma Auburn Chi provides many great leadership opportunities. The chapter provides members with alumni connections and resume assistance.