PI TAU SIGMA ANNUAL CHAPTER REPORT

2015-2016

MIT Pi Kappa Chapter

A. Initiations

Two initiations were held:
The fall initiation on November 23, 2015 and the spring initiation on April 4, 2016. 15 students were initiated in the fall, and 14 students in the spring. Three members who could not physically attend either initiation were initiated separately on April 29, 2016.

Selection process:
In the fall, the GPA requirement was set at 4.7/5.0 for seniors and 4.8/5.0 for juniors, such that the percentage of the specific undergraduate class was as or more exclusive than the top 35% for seniors, and top 25% for juniors. In the spring, any junior who met the 4.7/5.0 GPA requirement (more exclusive than the top 33%) were invited to apply for initiation. Seniors who were eligible for fall initiation and fulfilled the initiation requirements in the fall but were unable to attend the fall initiation were invited to the spring initiation. Permission to initiate these seniors was requested from and granted by the Pi Tau Sigma Executive Board, and the chapter advisor.

Requirements from initiates:
Initiates were given one week to submit the following: a CV highlighting their community service activities, leadership activities, and research; a short autobiographical sketch highlighting their experience with mechanical engineering; a paragraph on a moral or ethical dilemma the initiate encountered, the initiate's response, and the relevance of ethical/moral concerns to practicing mechanical engineers; a paragraph about the societal impact and relevance of mechanical engineering; and a paragraph of suggestions on improving the undergraduate mechanical engineering experience at MIT. Initiates were also encouraged to attend an information session given prior to each initiation, regarding the honor society's origin and history, and the potential benefits of membership.

Initiation ceremony:
Initiates were seated in rows in a classroom facing the president and vice president. The initiation fee was collected from each initiate prior to the initiation ceremony. The lights were turned off, and the projector was used to project side by side images of the Pi Tau Sigma crest and bent. The most updated version of the rituals of Pi Tau Sigma document was read by the president and vice president, and the initiates affirmed their desires to join the honor society. Afterward, the president and vice president shook hands with each initiate, and cookies, fruits, and drinks were provided as refreshments.

Celebration:
In April following the spring initiation, all members, new and old, were invited to a members-only dinner at a local restaurant. The dinner was funded by the MIT Pi Kappa chapter, and the president and vice president attended. 11 members attended in total.

B. Chapter Activities

On October 29, 2015, the MIT Pi Kappa chapter hosted a 1 hour graduate school admissions session for MIT mechanical engineering undergraduates interested in MechE graduate programs at MIT. The MIT MechE graduate admissions officer and graduate admissions staff gave a powerpoint presentation, and conducted a Q and A session afterward. The chapter president introduced the speakers, and moderated the Q and A session. Dinner was provided by the chapter. About 40 students attended.

The Recording Secretary (Rebecca Kurfess) of our chapter attended the annual Pi Tau Sigma conference at USC this year. All travel and conference expenses were funded by our chapter.

On March 7, 2016, the MIT Pi Kappa chapter co-hosted in conjunction with the MIT ASME chapter a recruiting and portfolio review session by the Dutch product design firm MMID. The founder of the company, Marcel Magermans, was the guest speaker. The PTS chapter led efforts on logistics, catering, publicity, and company relations. The PTS chapter president also introduced the speaker, and moderated the first half of the 2 hour session. About 10 MIT mechanical engineering students attended, and submitted design portfolios for review. Two students later received internships, and one student received a full-time position at MMID.

On April 21-22, 2016, the MIT Pi Kappa chapter and MIT ASME chapter co-hosted a design-a-thon with the CAD company Autodesk. Autodesk offered $250 to any student who created an assembly with 15 unique components using their CAD software. Each day, Autodesk held 4 hour office hours sessions so that students could get help using Autodesk software to CAD their assemblies. The MIT Pi Kappa chapter organized logistics and publicity. About 20 students attended each session.

The MIT Pi Kappa chapter also conducted the votes for the PTS chapter award and the constitutional amendment regarding graduate student members, and distributed subsidized graduation items (stoles, cords, plaques) to members.