PI TAU SIGMA ANNUAL CHAPTER REPORT
2011-2012
Clarkson Tau Gamma

A. Initiations

Initiation process

Each year during the first or second week of the semester our chapter submits a request to our Student Administrative Services office for the names and email addresses of students who meet the requirements to join Pi Tau Sigma. Previously, once we had the names of eligible students, an email would be sent with an attachment asking them to consider joining. This practice has changed over the last two years and now instead of emails, personal invitations are delivered directly to the students. Following the invitation, there are a set of meetings that each initiate would be required to attend:

1. Information session: This meeting is intended to explain what it is that Clarkson Tau Gamma Chapter of Pi Tau Sigma actually does and to answer any questions people may have. Information sheets, background packets and a list of important dates are distributed.
2. Initiate examination: Initiates that decide to join the Clarkson Tau Gamma Chapter are required to take a test on both the formation of Pi Tau Sigma and the chapter history. Bents/keys as well as signature sheets are also handed out at this meeting. Signature sheets require the initiates to get at least 10 current member and 10 professor signatures (Since there were only 9 members going into this year we only required 5 member signatures last fall). The initiates are encouraged to talk with at least ten professors regarding the research they do so as to give each initiate an idea of the research opportunities in the department.
3. Service Activities: A number of service and related activities are held throughout the semester and initiates are encouraged to participate. Each initiate is required to complete at least 2 hours of service for initiation. Although it is not required that each initiate complete the service with PTS, it is encouraged.
4. Hand in signature sheets: One week before initiation, initiates are required to hand in their completed signature sheets. Initiates are allowed to drop by during the evening at their convenience. When they arrive I talk to them about the professor's signatures they collected and ask them how things are going to make sure that they are doing alright and prepared for the initiation. This acts as a way for the President to interact one on one with each person.
5. Dress-up week: This is done on the week of initiation. Initiates are required to be in business formal attire while on campus from 9AM-5PM. They must also wear their keys with Pi Tau Sigma colored ribbons. This increases the visibility of Pi Tau Sigma on campus and gives the initiates a chance to be recognized by their classmates.

6. Initiation: At the end of the week the initiation ceremonies are held, to which all current members are invited. At the end of the spring semester we held our annual banquet at the Lobster house. For the spring semester officer elections took place as well. A further description can be found in the activities section.

Since the last academic year, few changes were made to the initiation process as the participation of the junior and senior classes have increased dramatically with the change of invitation process and continued to be successful.

The Fall 2011 semester brought in 11 new members, as shown in Figure 1, and the Spring 2011 semester brought in 20 new members (Figure 2), which is more students than have been initiated in many years.

Figure 1: Fall 2011 Initiation

Figure 2: Spring 2012 Initiation

B. Chapter Activities

This past academic year our chapter participated in a number of community service activities with the help of our new initiates and members. These activities ranged from participating in community service events, fundraising, as well as teambuilding activities. These activities increased both the visibility and comradeship of our Pi Tau Sigma chapter on campus.

Engineering Festival

During the fall semester, most of our activities focused on providing opportunities for our incoming initiate class in order to fulfill their service requirement. Many of our initiates participated in the second annual engineering festival. This festival was comprised of various activities, run by Clarkson's many engineering societies, in order to promote engineering to local middle and high school students. Our activity involved the use of a catapult to launch a ping pong ball into a bucket of candy. If the students could adjust the catapult so that the ball landed in the bucket, they got to pick out a piece of candy. We first showed the students how a catapult works and then let them attempt to adjust it such that the ball will land in the bucket. The festival was a big success and the initiates were very involved and excited to teach students how to launch the catapult.

Freshmen Scheduling Advising

This year, one of our members suggested holding informal drop in student advising to help incoming freshmen with changing schedules for the following semester and learning how to use the scheduling program in PeopleSoft. We sent out an email to all freshmen engineering students to gauge the interest and about 20 students had emailed stating that they were interested. We decided that this was likely fewer people than would show up so we held two night sessions during the week to accommodate different schedules. Unfortunately, many students did not show

up, and only about 7 students showed up between the two days. The students that did show up found the session helpful, but we later found out that many of the schedules were automatically generated for the students, which probably resulted in the low numbers. This would be a more helpful activity if completed in the spring semester for freshmen making their sophomore year schedules.

Pi Day

Every year on Pi day, March 14th (3/14), the Math Department holds a carnival day for area elementary, middle and high school students. A number of on campus organizations participate by making games that involve the constant pi. Our booth involved teaching the children about the relation of pi to the circumferences, surface area and volume of a sphere. The sphere of interest in this case was a soccer ball that once the kids had measured successfully they got a chance to toss into one of two buckets. Depending on the bucket they got the ball in decided how many points they got to add to their overall score. Once the carnival is over, points are tallied and the winners from each grade get a prize. Many members and initiates participated throughout the 3 hour duration of the carnival.

Graduate engineering information session

Each fall semester Dr. David Morrison, the Graduate Committee chair for the MAE Department, holds a graduate information session sponsored by our chapter and the local chapter of ASME. This session is intended to provide engineering students of all disciplines with information about the graduate school process. He outlines the recommended steps for applying to graduate school and financial aid as well as answers any questions juniors and seniors may have. This session is always well attended and provides a useful mechanism for exposing students to graduate school as well as promoting Pi Tau Sigma.

Intramural Volleyball team

During the spring semester as a way of generating teamwork and unity within the organization, we formed an intramural volleyball team. Our team ended up having a rather successful season, tying for first in our league and division. It was a great bonding activity and allowed students to work together as a team and communicate, which is very important in volleyball. This activity also provided a healthy way to release some pent up energy from our studies.

Convention

This year, we were able to send three students to the convention at San Jose State. We determined that it would be most helpful if we took at least one junior that would be involved in a leadership role next year to the conference so that the class next year would have a good idea of what convention is all about. Since the convention was so far away, we were very fortunate to take the three students. We received funding from our MAE department and in return, wrote an article on the trip for our school newspaper as well as hosted a booth at the career fair for Clarkson's graduate school. Overall it was an excellent experience enjoyed by all and I think that the junior we brought learned a lot about what goes on at the national level.

Outstanding professor award
Previously, an award for the best educator in the MAE Department has been given to a professor that exemplifies what it means to be a professor. The past two years, we have brought back this tradition and have honored the professor as our annual banquet. Near the end of the semester our chapter voted to give Dr. Suresh Dhaniyala this award. He was invited to our yearly banquet as an honored guest and given a certificate of appreciation as well as having his name engraved on the Pi Tau Sigma honor roll plaque.

Banquet
As mentioned our chapter typically holds a yearly banquet at the end of the school year to celebrate the new initiates, honor our most outstanding professor, and rejoice about an excellent school year. Over the past few years, this tradition has also, most unfortunately, been forgotten. This year we hosted our banquet at the Lobster House. Along with Dr. Dhaniyala, the Vice President for University Outreach and Student Affairs, Kathryn Johnson was invited to speak to the students on behalf of the university. She spoke on the exciting changes going on at the school as well as gave us some advice and recognized the diversity and various activities of the group during her talk. The dinner was an excellent success with everyone immensely enjoying themselves. Figures 3-5 show the attendees of the banquet.

Figure 3: Attendees of the banquet

Figure 4: Attendees of the Banquet

Figure 5: Kathryn Johnson and 2011-2012 president at the banquet