PI TAU SIGMA ANNUAL REPORT

2009 - 2010

Maryland Tau Mu

A. Initiations

The fall 2009 and spring 2010 initiates underwent the same selection process, detailed as follows: the president receives the contact information of the 25% (by grade) of the junior ME class and top 35% of the senior ME class. The president invites the potential initiates to attend the first general body meeting of that semester, during which the organization and objectives of, as well as the requirements for joining the Maryland Tau Mu chapter of Pi Tai Sigma are explained by the president and VP.

The requirements are as follows:

- Obtain a total of 26 signatures: 10 from fellow initiates (if there are at least 11 initiates total), 10 from current members of officers, 5 from faculty who are members of PTS, and 1 mandatory signature form Dr. Peter Sandborn, the faculty advisor.
- Obtain a minimum total of 10 points by participating in PTS sponsored or co-sponsored events over the course of the semester. Each PTS event is pre-assigned a point value determined by the approximate number of hours it lasts for, with a maximum of 4 points/event.
- Pass the Maryland Tau Mu Inductee exam by scoring at least 70%. The exam tests the knowledge of basic engineering, PTS history and Maryland Tau Mu current affairs. Extra credit is awarded for witty or clever answers.
- Polish the bronze PTS key by oneself. The initiate who best polishes theirs gets their induction fee waived. Note that this activity was not carried out this year due to the lack of funds required to purchase enough keys.
- Pay the induction fee of $60.
- Attend all general body meetings as well as the induction ceremony.

At the induction, the president and VP sit behind a desk illuminated by two candles with the PTS banner draped behind them. Also on display are framed pictures of the PTS crest and key respectively. The current members and officers sit in the hall, with the front row vacant. The faculty advisor sits on the far left of the hall. The lights are dimmed. The initiates who survived the semester and have fulfilled all the requirements are lined up by the secretary, just outside the hall. Each has their photo taken, enters the darkened room, approaches the president's desk, and says their last name. They then take a seat on the front row, facing the desk.

Once all the initiates are seated and the secretary shuts the door, the ceremony begins. The president and VP follow the verbal proceedings as detailed in the 2004 Pi Tau Sigma Chapter Manual. Once the proceedings are done, each inductee signs their name in the Maryland Tau Mu member registry and receives a handshake from the president and then the vice-president. The

secretary switches the lights back on, the president congratulates the initiates on their induction as members, and the crowd applauds. Food and drinks are served by the food and event chairs, and new and old members alike mingle. During this, Each induction class poses for 3 pictures, one group photo with the banner, another with the faculty advisor joining them and one more in which they are encouraged to make silly faces and gestures.

In the fall, the ceremony would have officially ended at this point and members are free to leave whenever they want. However, in the spring, elections are held for every officer position at this point during the evening's proceedings. This is done quite informally, with the president and events chair conducting the proceedings. Each position is called, the previous holder gives a brief explanation of the duties, perks and challenges of the relevant office, and individuals are nominated by themselves or by anyone else. Nominees then give a short speech about why they are the best candidate for the position and are escorted outside the hall by the vice president, once they have all spoken. The president calls for a vote by a show of hands once any verbal endorsements are delivered by anyone amongst the crowd. The winner is determined and the president exits the hall to congratulate him or her. After they return, the process repeats itself until all positions are filled. The ceremony is then concluded. Listed below are the induction ceremonies and initiates inducted for the 2009-2010 academic year:

Fall 2009 Induction (December 11, 2009)

Mary Claire Tellers
Benjamin Christopher Stachowiak
Anthony Joseph Konoza
Benjamin Michael Trettel
Nathaniel William Wright
Erick Alves de Sa
Maxwell Keeling
Heather Bradshaw
Andrew James Trettel
Sarkis Avedis Aktavoukian
Matthews Castro Pereira
Jonathan F. Bueno
Jessica Rae Lieberman

Spring 2010 Induction (May 1, 2010)

David R. Berman
Dusita Tum Khimsuksri
Jared E. Leonard
Edwin Thomas Lillie
Lauren R. Finkenauer
Michelle Hilary Rosen
James Patrick Wissman

Figure 1. The Maryland Tau Mu chapter spring 2010 induction ceremony

B. Activities

Fall 2009

In the fall, the Maryland Tau Chapter traditionally focuses more on academically-themed events than social ones.

ExxonMobil information session (August 2, 2009)

We began the semester by merging our traditional officer's dinner and ExxonMobil information session. A former chapter president, Charlie Choe (now an employee of ExxonMobil), put us in contact with Tom Leonard, the college recruiter for ExxonMobil. Mr. Leonard gave a 30 minute presentation on internship opportunities at the company. Afterward, he gave out contact information and received resumes in order to set up interviews.

Engineering capture the flag (CTF) game 1 (October 23, 2009)

We participated in a 2-hour long engineering CTF game that pitted mechanical, civil, bio, and fire protection engineering students against computer, electrical, chemical, and aerospace engineering students. Unfortunately, we lost.

Graduate school information session (November 11, 2009)

We co-hosted an open information session (with UMD's Chi Epsilon chapter) for the MBA graduate school and Project Management graduate school programs simultaneously. The respective program directors for the university, Mark Wellman and John Cable, each spoke about the opportunities available within and benefits of their programs.

Georgia Tech graduate school information session (December 1, 2009)

We co-hosted an open information session (with UMD's ASME student chapter) for the George W. Woodruff School of Engineering at Georgia Tech. The associate chair for graduate studies, Dr. Paul Neitzel, gave an hour-long presentation detailing the opportunities available at the university for those interested continuing their engineering studies.

2nd annual PTS videogame tournament (December 4, 2009)

We co-hosted a fundraising videogame tournament with EA sports, through their UMD campus representative, Cyrus. Together, we planned, advertised, set-up and executed the event that was first undertaken the previous year, in a simultaneous attempt to raise money for PTS, and advertise new game releases and products of EA sports, a subsidiary of videogame publisher, EA games.

Figure 2: PTS videogame tournament

PTS team-building event (December 5, 2009)

We planned and participated in a Maryland Tau Mu exclusive team-building event under the instruction of the staff of the CRSORC (Campus Recreation Services Outdoor Recreation Center). Our members participated in various trust building exercises, culminating in a tight rope walk 35 feet off the ground.

Fundamentals of Engineering information session (December 7, 2009)

Our members assisted the mechanical engineering (ME) department in distributing fliers for an FE exam information session.

Spring 2010

In the spring, the Maryland Tau Chapter traditionally focuses on social events. This year, we aimed to boost our co-operation with the engineering student council (ESC), other engineering student organizations and the university community as a whole.

Pi Tau Sigma national convention (February 26-28, 2010)

All five members of the Maryland Tau Mu executive board (president, VP, junior VP, secretary, and treasurer) attended the 2010 PTS national convention at Texas Tech, Lubbock, TX, hosted by the Texas Tech Sigma Epsilon chapter. Amongst participating in committee legislation and voting on matters of concern, we sought advice from the Illinois Alpha, whose administrative structure and chapter activities we admired. As the pictures below suggest, we certainly did our part to spice up the social event.

Figure 3: Maryland Tau Mu at the 2010 PTS national convention

Habitat for Humanity trip (March 6, 2010)

Eight members (including 2 inductees) volunteered and spent eight hours in the community of Sandtown in Baltimore, MD, working with the local Habitat for Humanity chapter. Our supervisors, Danny Waid and Gary Mitchell, led us in renovating a rot-ridden townhouse. Our tasks involved knocking down the back wall and installing the new attic floor. This was the second time the Tau Mu chapter had worked with the Sandtown Habitat for Humanity chapter and we intend to make it an annual fixture for our chapter. The Sandtown staff enjoyed working with us so much that they have repeatedly asked that we come back at least once every semester.

Maryland Tau Mu Big/Little launch party (March 6, 2010)

As part of our chapter's discussion with the Illinois Alpha during the convention we shared ideas on how to recruit new PTS members with special emphasis on maintaining their interest so that we do not lose them shortly thereafter. To this end, our secretary, Chris Kim, envisioned and developed a big/little program within the Tau Mu chapter.

In this program, a pair of inductees (called littles or siblings) are assigned to a pair of members/officers (called bigs or parents) and the whole group is called a family. The bigs are expected to spend at least one hour a month participating in an activity of their choice with their littles. The hope is that by encouraging an inductee to form at least one bond with any of the three others in their family, they are rendered more likely to form additional bonds with others in the society. These bonds of friendship will then serve as motivating factors in increasing inductee participation and decreasing drop-out rates.

We threw a launch party for this event because it was decided that the relaxed venue and nature of the event would enable the just announced family members to interact with the least possible amount of awkwardness involved. The party was a success and the big/little program showed signs of promise after we evaluated its impact at semester's end. Our chapter has decided to carry this program into the future as one of our staples each semester.

Figure 4: Big/little launch party

UMD Relay for Life (April 17, 2010)

The Maryland Tau Mu chapter participated in the American Cancer Society's UMD Relay for Life, a fundraising event for cancer research. Each PTS member who attended paid $10 so that our chapter's total donation to cancer research was $150. We spent time outside on the chilly night, making laps around the stadium track, competing in the 5-on-5 soccer tournament, playing laser tag and paying tribute to those who had been lost to the terrible disease.

Figure 5: Maryland Tau Mu at the 2010 UMD relay for life event

Maryland Day (April 24, 2010)

In 1998, then university president C.D. Mote, Jr. introduced the now annual event of Maryland Day. Every April, school societies, clubs, religious organizations and academic departments put on shows, exhibitions and presentations aimed at entertaining and informing the Maryland public. A family day, Maryland day is enjoyed by children, teenagers, young adults, parents and the elderly.

Under the supervision of the ESC (engineering student council) and in close collaboration with the UMD ASME (American Society of Mechanical Engineers) student chapter, and SoBe (Society of Bioengineers), Maryland Tau Mu designed and built two projects for the engineering exhibition: a biomechanical-arm themed trebuchet, and an oversized enzyme-transport themed plinko board game. Both projects were hits with the Maryland Day crowd. We also had our banner, crest and numerous miscellaneous items from our lounge on display for the public.

Engineering capture the flag (CTF) game 2 (May 1, 2010)

We participated in a rematch CTF game that pitted mechanical, civil, bio, and fire protection engineering students against computer, electrical, chemical, and aerospace engineering students. Unfortunately, we lost again.

Engineering Field Day (May 2, 2010)

In assisting the ESC, PTS/SoBe/ASME once again collaborated in planning, organizing and executing the first ever UMD Engineering Field Day event. The event saw engineering societies competing against one another in various events such as basketball, ultimate frisbee, football throw, three-legged race, and even a dance-off, amongst others. Maryland Tau Mu performed admirably; coming in at 2nd place after all points were tallied.

Figure 6: Maryland Tau Mu at the 2010 UMD engineering field day

C. Other

Hot Dog sales

Over the course of the academic year, the Tau Mu chapter occasionally held hot dog sales as a means of fundraising and friendly competition for ESC points with other UMD engineering societies.

Organizational restructuring

Inspired by the Illinois Alpha chapter, Maryland Tau Mu decided to restructure its organizational hierarchy for streamlined information flow and increased communication amongst relevant parties. To this end, we created an executive board, comprised of the president, VP, junior VP, secretary, and treasurer. We then proceeded to create one Gmail account (to which only executive board members have access to) for all correspondence between members and the board. All messages would have to be approved by the president before going out to the rest of the society. This was to solve a problem we had with inconsistent, unapproved messages being sent by some officers from their personal mailboxes. Using the linked Google Docs page, all chapter documents were uploaded online and subsequently updated by the secretary and VP. This way, all five executive members could share and update information that previously, was solely in the possession and responsibility of the president.

These overhauls allowed for more lucidity between the higher offices within the society and reduced confusion at all levels. We aim to follow this format for the foreseeable future.

Fundraising

At the start of the 2009-2010 school year, the Maryland Tau Mu chapter was faced with a huge shortage of funds. The university's financial crisis had trickled down and the yearly budget of PTS had been cut by 60%.

In order to combat this loss, the executive board stepped up the fundraising efforts, applying for and receiving sponsorship from ExxonMobil, receiving money from our alumni as a result of our alumni donation drive, and co-operating with other organizations (like ASME, SoBe, ESC) in order to divide up the cost of events. The videogame tournament and hot dog sales also served to pull in some more capital.

As a result of our efforts, the next generation of executive officers will inherit a reasonable amount of money, enough to fund the semester's events comfortably. We plan to continue our increased fundraising efforts into the future.

Spring 2010 Graduation

The Maryland Tau Mu chapter is proud to graduate some of its members and wishes them the best of luck in the future:

PTS graduating members

Justin Pearse
Josh Davis
Chris Kim
Frank Robinson
Brian Russ
PK Hadfield
Nick Redding
Dibesh Shesthra
Peter Riley
Jackie Lopez
Matt Pereira
Gary Wu
Bizhan Zhumagali
Benjamin Yang

2010 - 2011 Maryland Tau Mu officers

The following PTS members were elected at the spring 2010 induction ceremony to lead our chapter for the next school year:

President	Anne Lederer
Vice president	Dusita Khimsuksri
Secretary	Michelle Rosen
Treasurer	Aviva Molotsky
Junior VP	Lauren Finkenauer
Food/Events	James Wissman, Maxwell Keeling
Fundraising	Ted Lillie
Service	Jack Leonard
Webmaster	Peter Phelps
Tutoring	Rabee Zuberi