PI TAU SIGMA ANNUAL CHAPTER REPORT

2009-2010

Louisiana Tech Tau Xi

A. Initiations

The selection process for our candidates begins by selecting the top percentages of the junior and senior classes in accordance with the standards set by Pi Tau Sigma. We require that a first term junior be in the top 25% of their class, and second term junior be in the top 33%, and seniors be in the top 35%. If the situation arises where candidates with relatively low GPAs are in the top percentages due to small class sizes, we may consider implementing a GPA cutoff. The cutoff may vary depending on the number of candidates, but typically the cutoff will lie around a 3.3. The Tau Xi chapter believes that Pi Tau Sigma should be comprised of the highest scholastically achieving students. Afterwards, we conduct a screening process where we consider the candidate's character and college involvement. If a candidate does not seem worthy to be a member of Pi Tau Sigma, then he or she will be removed from the invitation list.

Upon completing the selection process, we issue formal invitations to each candidate inviting them to a mixer. The mixer includes the new candidates, as well as active and faculty members. The mixer begins with conversing with new candidates while enjoying dinner. After dinner, the president will begin with introducing the officers and advisor. He or she will then review the qualifications and requirements for acceptance in Pi Tau Sigma. The advisor will then share a few words. At the closing of the mixer, the candidates will be given the bent and study information.

The candidates are then required to pass a candidacy exam, where their knowledge of Pi Tau Sigma and mechanical engineering is tested.

On the night of initiation, all the initiates gather in the room, pay their dues, and place their finished bents on a table in the front of the room. Afterwards, out of tradition here at Louisiana Tech, we have the initiates line up outside in the hall from tallest to smallest. Then they are blindfolded and giving a penny to hold in their right hand. Then they must hold each person's hand next to them with the penny clasped between one another's hands. We then require them to walk to familiar locations within our engineering building without talking, dropping the penny, or breaking the chain. If anyone drops the penny, talks, or let's go of someone's hand; they must start all over. Finally after the group has travelled to a couple of places, they must travel of to the fourth floor of the building and enter the attic. In the attic, the candidates must recite the preamble word for word; but there's a catch. The first person in the line begins with the first word, the second person then follows with the second word, and so on. Once we get to the last person, it begins again at the front until the preamble is completed. If someone forgets their word, the candidates must start over from the beginning. Once the preamble is completed, the group must travel back to the room where they gathered earlier. We do

this to make the candidates realize the value of teamwork, that things great and small can be accomplished when we work together, and that we must encourage our brothers of Pi Tau Sigma to stay on course, even when things get tough.

At this point they may remove their blindfolds. The candidates enter the dark room and sit in a row in front of the table with the president and vice president. The president and vice president then recite the required ritual set by Pi Tau Sigma. After the ritual is completed, the officers vote on the best prepared bent and recognized that member. At this point the initiation ceremony is completed.

We had two initiations this school year. The fall initiation was on October 12, 2009 and fifteen people were initiated. The spring initiation was on April 27, 2010 and two people were initiated.

B. Chapter Activities

The Louisiana Tech Tau Xi chapter has been active in the College of Engineering and Science, as well as in the community. Our chapter participated in Engineering and Science Day held here on Tech's campus. During this event, high school students from around the state come to Tech to learn about our engineering programs and what Tech has to offer. Many organizations within the College of Engineering and Science participate in this event; whether it's helping setup, doing a presentation, or other necessary tasks. Our chapter members volunteered as tour guides for the groups. As tour guides, members escorted the student groups around campus to the different presentations and activities the college has planned for them.

During the spring we had our annual service project. This year's project involved painting the hydraulic systems laboratory in the engineering building. The old paint job was dirty, cracked, and unsightly. We completed half of the laboratory and will finish the other half next fall.

C. Other