PI TAU SIGMA ANNUAL CHAPTER REPORT
2017-2018
South Dakota State University Tau Chi

A. Initiations

The following section describes the selection process, initiation requirements, and ceremony proceedings for the 2017-2018 academic year. Initiation ceremonies were held on November 13, 2017 (Fall Initiation) and February 15, 2018 (Spring Initiation). The South Dakota State Tau Chi initiate classes were composed of 3 students in the Fall and 6 students in the Spring.

Selection Process
The selection process for new candidates started by obtaining a list of eligible Mechanical Engineering students: students in their last two years of the program (having passed a minimum of 60 credits and completed ME 311 *Thermodynamics I*) and ranked in the top 25% of their class with a minimum GPA of 3.25/4.0. Further evaluation was performed for each candidate by the president of the chapter, Cody Reed, and the faculty advisor of the chapter, Dr. Michna, to ensure that all candidates were qualified for membership. All eligible students received a personally signed welcoming letter and were invited to attend an "Introductory Meeting". This meeting was held with the prospective members, in which the president gave a brief presentation on the organization and its vision, goals, and mission(s) and the required activities for the new members.

Initiation Requirements
Outside of meeting the eligibility criteria, candidates wanting to join our chapter were required to complete a few activities. One of these required activities for each new member was to provide four hours of tutoring through our peer tutoring events. Additionally, candidates were required to polish and prepare their bents and plaques for the initiation ceremony. Part of preparing their plaques included gathering signatures from active student members and faculty members of the chapter.

Initiation Ceremony
The initiation ceremony began in a classroom by dimming the lights, closing the blinds, and setting up the candles. Once this was completed, the current members joined the initiates waiting in another room, which was adjacent to where the ceremony took place. Then, the initiates presented their plaques to verify that they were of acceptable quality and were signed by ten active student members and two faculty members of the chapter, as well as our chapter's faculty advisor. When all plaques were accepted, the initiates were asked to again wait outside while the quality of their bents was further judged. Upon returning to the room, the initiates were told the decision for which plaque was voted the most exquisite. At this point, the standard ceremony was performed and all members signed a logbook for the organization to keep record of all initiations.

Finally, to end the night, the new members and current members introduced themselves, respectively, and discussed future endeavors for the organization. This night allowed the new members to get to know each other on a casual basis, as well as give input in upcoming organization activities. At the Spring initiation, we also elected a new set of officers for the 2018-2019 academic year.

B. Chapter Activities

As in previous years, the organization offered peer tutoring sessions to provide an additional resource for students. The Pi Tau Sigma group worked in conjunction with Tau Beta Pi and Eta Kappa Nu engineering honorary societies to provide tutoring services for students on Wednesday and Thursday evenings for two hours. Courses covered in these tutoring sessions ranged from basic introductory level physics courses to more advanced courses such as thermodynamics and fluid mechanics.

For the past three years, the chapter has hosted review sessions for the Fundamentals of Engineering exam, specifically tailored for mechanical engineering students. The officers worked with ME faculty to organize 12 review sessions covering each of the main topic areas of the exam. The complete set of review sessions was held in both the Fall and Spring semesters. These efforts have led to a promising improvement in students' test results.

Our chapter maintains six miles of interstate highway I-29 with the Adopt-A-Highway program. Each semester we pick up trash in the ditches near the highway. This activity allows Pi Tau Sigma members to provide a service to the Brookings community while also enjoying the bonding time between members. We held the cleanup event in the Fall semester but were not able to do it in the Spring, due to weather.

At our mechanical engineering department's annual banquet, each of the department's organizations, including Pi Tau Sigma, presents an overview of their group to inform others about their intent, participation, and membership opportunity. This year, chapter President, Cody Reed, presented for Pi Tau Sigma on the chapter's highlights from the past year.

Finally, senior chapter member, El Hussein Shata, attended the national convention at the University of Miami in Coral Gables, Florida, on February 23-25. The convention proved to be an invaluable experience by providing a great opportunity to meet students from all over the country, discuss chapter matters and activities, and gain a better sense of the organization on a national scale. As the incoming President for the 2018-2019 academic year, El Hussein will be able to take what he learned from the national convention and implement some of these ideas, activities, and service opportunities into our chapter next year.

C. Concluding Remarks

In closing, we continue to make improvements to our chapter. The tutoring program and the FE review sessions make the organization visible within the college of engineering and the university itself. With a higher number of new initiates than in recent years, we have a larger chapter that will be able to organize more chapter activities for next year. In addition, we have a fresh officer team for the next year who are all excited to be part of the organization and will take on the chapter responsibilities exuberantly. We strive to continue building the organization to the best of our ability.