PI TAU SIGMA ANNUAL CHAPTER REPORT
2013-2014
South Dakota State University Tau Chi

A. Initiations

The selection process for new candidates started by obtaining a list of eligible Mechanical Engineering students that are within the top 25% of their class and have a minimum of 60 credits if a junior (60-90 credits), or within the top 35% if a senior (> 90 credits). The president, advisor, and several officers then met to discuss the candidates in order to ensure each was worthy of an invitation. Following this meeting, letters of invitation were drafted and distributed to the prospective members. Then a meeting between current and prospective members was held. This serves as an "informative meeting" to which we invite the candidates for their first introduction to the organization. The informative meeting begins with the president giving a brief presentation to summarize the goals, requirements, and activities of the organization. One of the requirements for each new member is that they provide four hours of tutoring through our peer tutoring events. At the end of the meeting, bents and plaques are provided to those candidates that would like to be initiated.

The initiation ceremony begins by preparing a classroom by dimming the lights, closing the blinds, and setting up the candles, etc. Once this is completed, the current members join the waiting initiates in another room adjacent to where the ceremony will take place. Then the initiates must present their plaques to verify they are of acceptable quality and are signed by ten active student members and two faculty members of the chapter, as well as our chapter's faculty advisor. When all plaques are accepted, the initiates are lined up single file and have blindfolds placed over their eyes. One current member leads the initiates for a short walk around the building while the other members gather in the ceremony room. At this point, the standard ceremony is performed and all members sign a log-book for the organization to keep record of all initiations.

Finally, to end the night, the new members and current members go out to eat at a local restaurant, complements of the organization. This night allows the new members to meet in a more social setting and get to know each other on a casual basis. This event has proved to be quite enjoyable as well as important for the vitality of our organization. New initiates are more even more eager to participate once they have spent time with current members in this relaxed atmosphere.

This academic year, initiations were held on December 5th, 2012 for the fall initiates and April 14th, 2014 for the spring initiates.

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 honors societies to provide tutoring services for students on Wednesday and Thursday evenings for two hours. Courses covered in these tutoring sessions ranged from

basic introduction level physics courses to more advanced courses such as thermodynamics and fluid mechanics.

Our chapter maintains four miles of interstate highway I-29 with the Adopt-A-Highway program. Each semester we gather and walk four miles while picking up all trash in the ditches near the highway. Although members aren't overly excited about picking up trash, we have always had good results with the activity. Typically, there is a lot of discussion and joking around that allows students to have a little fun while still doing a service to the community. Due to ongoing construction, we were unable to have this event this year, but will promptly resume it this coming year now that the construction is finished.

In addition, our chapter provides MC's for our department's annual banquet and also assists in some of the planning. At this event 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.

Finally, the chapter vice president attended the national convention at Texas A&M University in College Station, Texas, this spring. The convention was a good time and also a valuable experience. It provided a great opportunity to meet students from all over the country, discuss chapter matters, and gain a better sense of the organization on a national scale.

C. Other

In closing, we made great strides this year in various areas. The tutoring program continues to make the organization visible both within the college of engineering and the university itself. We have multiple officers carrying over to next year in order to continue this momentum and further our improvements. The new officers are excited to add ideas and energy to the chapter as well. Overall, our future is bright!