PI TAU SIGMA ANNUAL CHAPTER REPORT

2014-2015 Academic Year

Notre Dame Sigma Beta

A. Initiations

To select the initiates, the top 25% of juniors and 35% by GPA of mechanical engineering seniors were contacted and asked if they would like to be a part of the society. In order to increase the number of members, the selection process was a simple yes/no response to the invitation. If the number of people responding in the affirmative was greater than 17% of the junior class or 33% of the total senior class, a more stringent process would take place, involving professor recommendations and extracurricular activities. This year, this was not necessary.

The initiates were required to attend the initiation ceremony and also two other events organized by the Notre Dame chapter of PTS. There was a single initiation ceremony held in the Fall, on Thursday, October 16, 2014. There were 27 initiates for this ceremony. The ritual was taken directly from the Rituals of Pi Tau Sigma document, with all officers reading their respective roles and following the lines for the initiate responses. All initiates as well as the officers were in attendance. The ceremony was catered by a local Italian restaurant, Papa Vino's, for celebration.

B. Chapter Activities

In order to keep everything organized with initiation, budgeting, and other events, the officers held weekly meetings on Mondays at 9 PM that were open to all members. The meetings were primarily attended by the officers, with occasional entrances from other members to discuss an idea they had.

The most important activity for the society was our role in the Math Counts competition. The Math Counts competition, held for 6th-8th graders, took place on campus. Our role in the competition was to act as graders, scorers, and runners, who ran the tests from room to room. Overall, the competition was successful, and we had great participation from the PTS members. They had asked for about 20 graders, and, because of our increased membership, we were able to have over 20 members in attendance.

Next, this year, we began to hold a Speaker Series event, for which we would bring in engineering professors to talk about some idea related to engineering but not covered in class. The point of this Series was to encourage more interaction between professors and students and to foster intellectual discussion. Some topics covered this year involved the engineering curriculum, engineering broadly in today's society, and the different directions that engineers have gone in the past. Future ideas include discussions of energy policy, bioengineering, and many other relevant topics. The Speaker Series events held this year had a good showing, with one of the events having almost complete participation from the current members.

This year, we also attempted to institute a mentorship program where Pi Tau Sigma members would meet with underclassmen to provide advice on clubs, internships/careers, classes, girls etc. Unfortunately we did not get very much enthusiasm from our members (only the officers volunteered to participate) and even after going and speaking to classes, did not get any underclassmen interested, thus the program never came to fruition.

A field trip was meant to be organized in tandem with the AIAA on campus. The plan was to go to the Chicago Museum of Science and Industry. However, there was not enough interest in the field trip to make it worthwhile and economical.

Nearing the end of the school year, it was time for the new officers to be elected. To gauge interest, we sent a message to the current members asking for those who were interested in positions to respond to the email. There was no need for elections, because we received four responses. These members were notified of the duties that the roles would take on, and they accepted the positions.

Finally, the current officers met with the future officers to discuss what could be done next year to improve PTS's presence on campus. One idea discussed was the possibility of improving the Speaker Series by bringing in executives from engineering companies (Ford, GM, GE, etc.) to talk about a specific idea. Also, the officers encouraged pursuing the mentorship program in a different way, such as encouraging occasional coffee chats with professors.