Pi Tau Sigma Annual Chapter Report

2010 -2011

Texas Tech University Sigma Epsilon

Initiation

The selection process for initiates has been heightened this year. Minimum requirements are top 25% of their class for Juniors and top 35% for Seniors, and all must have a minimum of a 3.25 GPA. During the fall semester 15 classmen were accepted through applications, and 12 met the requirements and were allowed to initiate. For the spring semester 18 initiates were accepted through the applications, and 18 met the requirements, allowing them to initiate.

Initiates were required to attend at least three out of four service events. Attendance at all weekly meeting is mandatory, which is 10 meetings over the course of the semester. At eight of the 10 meetings quizzes given to test the initiates' knowledge of Pi Tau Sigma history, tradition, and symbols. Students must maintain an 80% average for the semester. Polishing keys is also a required responsibility of each initiate; the keys must be submitted for acceptance by all officers during initiation. Another major requirement of the initiates is getting signatures from active members, graduates, and faculty members. Rules require that each initiate receive 80% of all actives signatures, and 100% of both graduate students and faculty members. Finally, the initiates must be able to replicate the entire preamble in perfect form, from Constitution of Pi Tau Sigma, during the initiation ceremony.

The initiation process is always scheduled for the last day of classes. The fall semester initiation ceremony took place on Wednesday December 9th, and Tuesday May 3rd for the spring semester. The initiation ceremony is a requirement for all initiates wishing to become a part of our society. Actives and graduates are encouraged to attend the ceremony and take part in rituals for future members. An average of around 30 people attended both initiation ceremonies this year. A dress code of business casual is enforced to show the true importance of this event. For the event, there is a room for final quizzes, a room for the ceremony and dinner, and one room reserved for any initiates who do not completely meet the requirements to initiate, such as re-polishing keys or getting more signatures.

The ceremony begins with the initiates entering a dimly lit room where they stand in single file in front of the active and graduate members. The rituals of Pi Tau Sigma are read to the initiates, and they are asked if they accept the responsibility of being an active member of the Society, upon which they are now new members. The new members are greeted by a congratulatory hand shake from all actives in attendance. A formal meal is served and officer elections are held for the following semester. The best and worst professor of the semester is discussed and voted on. A celebration is always held after the ceremony, for all who can attend, which is usually held at a member's house or is held at a public location close to campus.

Chapter Activities

During both semesters a smoker was held at the beginning of each semester, to inform prospective initiates on the prestige of Pi Tau Sigma, and to show them attributes Sigma Epsilon is looking for and what is to be expected if they want to become members. Also at the end of each semester initiation is held to welcome the new members and congratulate them on showing their dedication to our fraternity and honors society. After both initiations a celebration was held to allow students to unwind after the semester.

This year, Sigma Epsilon held its bi-annual event *Meet Mechanical Engineering*, which is a chance for youth at risk to see what Mechanical Engineers do in the field and at Texas Tech. Each semester local junior high and elementary school students visit the Mechanical Engineering department, where they take tours, compete in an engineering based design challenges, and enjoy lunch. The event helps these young people not only realize the benefits of pursuing a degree in Mechanical Engineering but also the benefits of pursuing higher education of any sort.

Sigma Epsilon volunteered both semesters as a chapter at the local Lubbock Arboretum. The Lubbock Arboretum volunteer event has become a tradition and is looked forward to by many of the members, being one of the highest attended volunteer events. This year the arboretum was cleaned of weeds and unwanted vines in many areas. Sigma Epsilon also reorganized and labeled plants to be placed for viewing, and helped move and organize pallets, rocks, and bricks.

In fall of 2010, Sigma Epsilon volunteered in a joint effort with ASME, with Habitat for Humanity. The group cut and placed drywall, cut wood for doorways, and painted. A few members also moved appliances between houses, and a few landscaped a front yard.

In the spring semester, a volunteer event was held at the South Plains Food Bank. The event was considered a great time and huge success by everyone who attended. Sigma Epsilon is hoping to make the food bank an annual service event. The volunteers packaged hundreds of bags of cereal and place packages in a boxes to be shipped out. The cereal is used to feed poor children attending school who cannot afford to breakfast and lunch. The volunteer's work was able to help many needy children in Lubbock and many surrounding cities, and this was one of the big reasons so many students enjoyed this event so much.

Other

Currently Sigma Epsilon has had quite a few changes in officers since the spring semester. At the end of spring 2011 a transitional meeting was held to inform and educate new officers on their future jobs and what is expected of them. A book was compiled by the last Vice-President, containing descriptions of each officer position along with important dates and events, efficient ways to get certain jobs done, and a list of all references one might use throughout the semester.

For the next semester, Sigma Epsilon has set some goals. Currently there is a very good turnout for all volunteer events, with many people meeting their requirements to stay in good standing with the group. The hope is that we can continue this great turnout but also have people volunteer at more events than are required, in order to benefit more groups. Another goal is to decrease the number of students in bad standing by informing members early on all events, such as meetings and volunteer events. By informing the members early, they are given a longer period to make arrangements to make the meetings. The meeting will also be placed on different days of the week to allow all students the opportunity to make the meeting if they have late classes or discussions.

Last year, a goal was set to create a new website that would be updated weekly, so that all members had access to any new information about the fraternity. The website has been created and is currently available to all. We have set the goal for this year, to maintain the site with all news and events by making updates regularly.

Sigma Epsilon is also hoping to continue helping the Lubbock community by having volunteer events that truly help the needy in the community. We would also like to continue supporting the Mechanical Engineering department and the Engineering College. We hope to initiate new members in both of the semesters.