Pi Tau Sigma Chapter Annual Report

2017-2018

Texas Tech Sigma Epsilon Chapter

A. Initiations

Our initiation process starts with getting our initiate coordinators to contact the school of engineering's associate director to send out applications to all students who meet the qualification standards. The minimum GPA requirement to be accepted into the organization is 3.25, and the students must be enrolled, or have completed, at least one junior level ME course. Their transcripts and resumes are also examined. Once all submitted applications have been checked, our initiate coordinators will personally call all those who successfully meet the requirements and invite them to the smoker event. At the smoker, we inform them about what Pi Tau Sigma does and why joining would benefit them, and Dr. James, our faculty advisor and the Pi Tau Sigma President, will speak to them about his history in the organization and his vision. The initiation process is explained to them, and the initiate coordinators will set the scheduled weekly meeting times. It is at these meetings that the initiates will take their Pi Tau quizzes, which includes the preamble, the chapter name, our founding date, and more. Besides the quizzes, these meetings are meant to keep the initiates engaged in the society to ensure that they will be active members after initiation.

Before they can start the initiation process, the new prospective members must pay their one-time due of $75. This fee includes their shirt at the end of the initiation process. After they pay dues, they receive their key and a signature sheet. The key has to be filed and polished, and be completed and approved the chapter's president. For the signature sheet, the initiate is required to get at least 80% of the active members and 100% of the officers, graduate students, and faculty signatures. Along with the signature sheet and the key, we require the initiates to attend three service events. These service events help the initiates fill out their signature sheets as well as see how Pi Tau Sigma helps the community.

The initiation ceremony starts in the evening, around 6pm. All actives are invited to attend, and so is Dr. James. They are first taken into a room where they take two exams. On the Pi Tau Sigma Exam, they are required to make a perfect score to be accepted into the organization. The test has basic Pi Tau questions that they have been repeatedly exposed to during their weekly meetings. Second, they are required to take a mock FE Exam, this test is merely meant to have fun with initiates. The test includes questions from engineering classes that most of initiates will not know how to do. A few selected individuals are told they did not pass this exam, however, this is meant as a fun hoax and they are brought to the initiation room anyway, given that they passed the Pi Tau Exam. At the initiation, the president and vice president recite the RITUALS OF PI TAU SIGMA to the initiates making them full-fledged members. At the end of initiation, we select the new officers for the upcoming semester.

Figure 1: Fall 2017 Smoker

Pi Tau once again saw two relatively large initiation classes in the last two semesters. However, coming Fall 2018 the eligibility requirements will become more strict and so we are expecting a reduction in future class sizes. The initiates here at Texas Tech are an important function of our organization. This is the largest event of the semester and the largest expense that we have. Almost everyone in the organization comes, and initiates finally see all of their hard work come to fruition. It is a formal event that bookmarks the end of the semester and the beginning of a new chapter for Pi Tau. Officer elections are held, and the new guard replaces the old. Initiation is always held on the last day of classes, so the day after is Individual Study Day for the university. After initiation, all of our members are invited to a social at one of the officer's houses, usually this is the social chair, to let off some steam and socialize with the rest of the organization. At this end of the year party, people have the chance to say goodbye to the graduating seniors and congratulate the new members.

Figure 2: Spring 2018 Initiation

B. Chapter Activities

Our chapter had multiple activities for both the initiates and the members to attend during this past academic year. One of our major goals as an organization is to have as many service events available to our members and initiates. One of our major service events is volunteering at the local arboretum. At the arboretum, we help the grounds keeper clean the park, clean the old flower beds, clear out old stumps, dispose of dead plants, and whatever else they may need. This helps our members and initiates meet and become friends, while helping the local community at the same time. We go to the arboretum at least once a semester. It is our chapter's biggest service event.

Our other major service event is Meet ME. This is where we bring in middle school students from local schools and show them around the ME building. We give them lab tours, let faculty give speeches, feed them lunch, and then they participate in a design competition at the end of the day. We do this to help inspire these middle schoolers to become engineers. At the beginning of the day we have a well-known professor give a speech about what engineering is all about. Then we take them around to all the engineering labs we have, such as the robotics lab or the combustion lab. After the tour we feed them lunch, usually pizza, and then they are taken to rooms where they can begin the design competition. They are put in groups and have a limited amount of time and materials to come up with a design. Fall of 2017 the design challenge was a catapult, and it was a rocket Spring 2018. We are planning to add an additional Meet ME event in the coming semester, but for high schooler. These students are thinking about college

and their futures at this time so it is a great opportunity to inspire them to give engineering a chance. Some of our other service events this semester included the Texas Tech Arbor Day, where we plant plants all around the campus, Habitat for Humanity, and the officers spoke to a representative of a Lubbock community service organization who gave a booklet full of service opportunities around Lubbock.

Figure 3: Arboretum Fall 2017

We held several fundraising events as well. The last two semesters Pi Tau has been coordinating with restaurants to donate a portion of the money spent by Pi Tau members who go during a certain time on a certain day. Spring of 2018 we had a fundraising event with Heff's Burgers. At this one, Pi Tau did not receive the funds, but instead these funds were donated to the Boys and Girls Club of Lubbock and the people invited were not just limited to Pi Tau members. Also, a big fundraiser for us is the professional photography sessions. Engineering students are given the chance to pay a small fee to have their photo taken in business attire to spruce up their LinkedIn profile.

Figure 4: Meet ME Spring 2018

One of our main goals is to help our members and initiates to become friends and develop great relationships with each other. This has become a larger focus of our organization the last few semesters. The more we get initiates involved, the more active they will be when they are members. With active members we can have more people at social events and also better alumni retention. This is why we try to have weekly social events. We've had bowling nights, tailgates, intramurals, going to 4ORE, room escapes, going to the corn maze, and more. These social events helps our member and initiates to become better friends. This also helps them forget about school and to get away from that stressful mindset. We have continued our tradition of having a sporting competition with Texas Tech's ASME chapter for the glory of the Golden Gear Trophy. Sadly, Pi Tau forfeited the coveted prize this spring in a doomed dodgeball tournament. However, we will rise again, more proud and glorious than ever!

Some of our executive officers went to represent our chapter in the National Pi Tau Convention in Miami, Florida. Our officers went there with an agenda to learn from other successful chapters and to implement some of these ideas into our own chapter to improve. Dr. James likes to say we are one of the best chapters in the nation, and whether that's true or not, there is always something to be learned even from the smaller chapters. As always, we made great friends and contacts there and look forward to the next convention.

Figure 5: Softball Intramural Team Fall 2017

C. New Projects

Our vision of having a large monument in front of the ME building at Tech will finally be realized this coming fall. The project has been approved and everything is in place to see its completion. This piece will consist of a large steel post with a chain holding a 2 foot Pi Tau Key. Our executive officers have already begun this project with the help of Tech's machine shop. We plan to host a large ceremony for its unveiling, and Pi Tau alumni will be invited. Also, a new smaller project was started this spring, and that is the Pi Tau Sigma plaques for members' keys. These were received very well by those who ordered them. However, they may only be sold one semester a year. When and if these plaques return, all members and alumni will be notified.

We are very excited for the future of Pi Tau, as we continue to grow and evolve so does our influence and so does our ability to reach others and spread the great word of engineering.

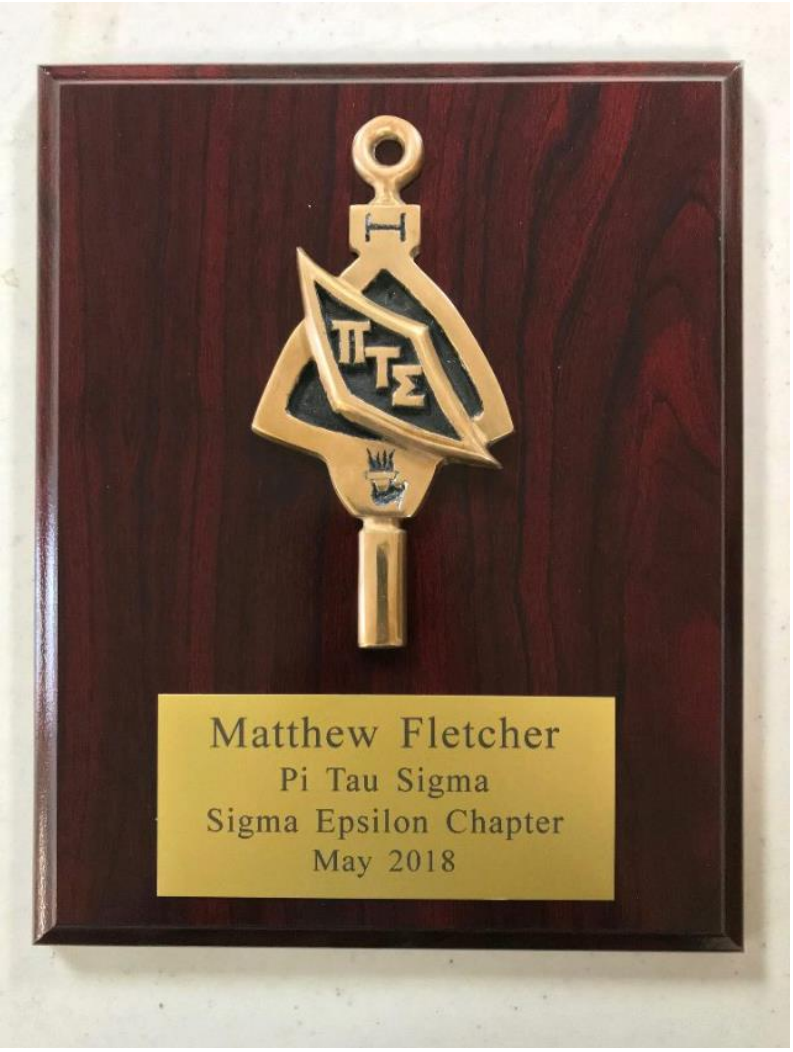

Figure 6: Pi Tau Plaque

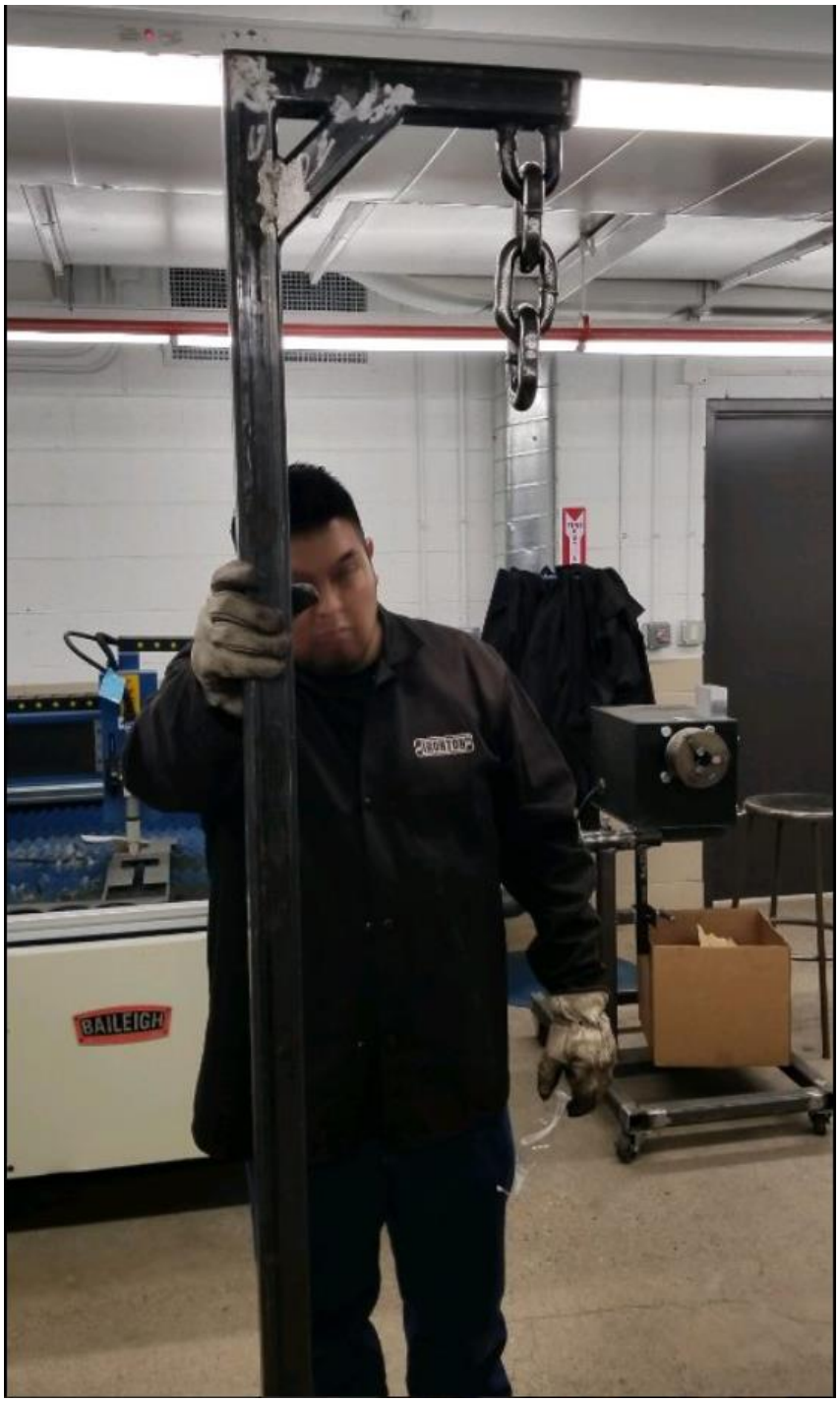

Figure 7: Post for Pi Tau Key Monument