Pi Tau Sigma Annual Chapter Report

2016-2017

Texas Tech Sigma Epsilon Chapter

A. Initiations

Our initiation process starts with getting our initiation coordinators to contact the college of engineering's associate director to send out the applications for the qualifying students. The minimum GPA requirement is 3.25, along with that they must have taken or currently be taking a junior level mechanical engineering class. In the email is an application they have to fill out and attach their resume and an unofficial transcript. We require them to get this application to us in about 2 weeks after the email is sent. Once we get all the applications we go through one last time and check that they meet all the requirements to join Pi Tau Sigma. Once we have sorted through the applications, the initiate coordinators personally call all the accepted initiates and invite them to a smoker. At the smoker, we inform them about what our organization does and why they should consider joining Pi Tau. We also explain how the initiation process works. Also during the smoker, the initiate coordinators set up the times for the initiate meetings. These meetings happen twice a week and are for the initiates to have two chances to take a weekly quiz that has basic Pi Tau Sigma history questions. These meetings are mandatory for the initiates to attend the entirety of the semester. For the quizzes, we require our initiates to gradually memorize the preamble to the Pi Tau Sigma constitution, along with other basic history and current happenings within our chapter. 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.

First, the new initiates have to pay dues. This is a onetime fee of $75 which includes a shirt at the end of the initiation process. After they pay dues, they receive a key and a signature sheet; with the key they have to file and polish until it is shiny and has to be approved by the president of the chapter. The key must show progress throughout the semester, and must be done to be initiated. For the signature sheet, the initiate is required to get 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 3 service events. These service events will help the initiates fill out their signature sheets as well as see how Pi Tau Sigma helps the community.

The initiation ceremony starts around 6 PM for the initiates. All actives are invited to come, as well as our faculty advisor Dr. Darryl James. They first are taken into a room where they take two exams. On the first test, they are required to make a 100 on to be accepted into the organization. The test has basic Pi Tau questions that they have been quizzed on all semester, so they are well prepared. The second test is a mock FE engineering test we use to have some fun with the initiates. This test includes questions from engineering classes that most of the initiates will not know how to do. After we mess around with the initiates a little more and make sure they all passed the first exam, initiation begins. This is where 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: Initiation Class Fall 2016

The two initiation that happened this academic year included a large amount of new members. The Spring 2017 class was the largest initiate class in the history of this chapter. On December 7th, 2016 we had our Fall 2016 initiation, which included an induction of a total of 19 new members. On May 9th, 2017 we had our Spring 2017 initiation, which included and induction of 32 new members, our largest class ever.

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 that semester and the begging of a new chapter for Pi Tau. Officer elections are held, and the new guard replaces the old guard. Initiation is always held on the last day of classes, so the day after is Individual Study Day for school. After initiation, all of the members are invited to a social at one of the officer's houses to let of 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 2017 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 place up, clean out old flower beds, clear out old stumps, dispose of dead plants and even help at their fundraisers. This helps our members and initiates become friends, while helping the community at the same time. We go to the arboretum at least once every semester. We had a large turnout for the fall, and an even stronger turnout in the spring.

Figure 3: Spring 2017 Arboretum Group Picture

Our next big 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 even get them to 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 some food and then the design competition begins. For the design competition we have them design something in a given amount of time with only the materials we provide to them and then we test it. Many different designs include egg drop contest where they try to prevent the eggs from breaking and building a boat to see how many pennies can fit in it until it sinks. We do Meet ME at the end of every semester to hopefully get as many schools and students involved in engineering.

Figure 4: Spring 2017 Meet ME

Our other service events include volunteering at a local animal shelter, where we help clean out the living areas for the animals. Pi Tau also participates in Texas Tech Arbor Day celebration where we plant plants all around campus. We help Paul's Project Grace Campus, a homeless shelter, do anything they need throughout the semester. Another little side service we did was during all the officer's office hours they would tutor people in any classes they felt comfortable tutoring fellow students in. This service was offered every semester all semester long. Pi Tau brought judges for a robotics competition for local students. Tech to Town in a community wide service event that we also participated in. Habitat for Humanity is a cause that we always help with every semester. In the spring semester, Pi Tau made it a goal to get as many cans as possible for the local food bank. We were proud to get over 500 pounds of cans for the community!

Figure 5: Arbor Day Celebration Spring 2017

We do many fundraising events as well. In the fall we participated in a meat tasting event that both gives us money and a full stomach. A photo op, where we get a photographer to take professional head shots for only five dollars. We have also gotten the chance to do a Pi Tau give back night on of the local restaurants, where if we go eat at the restaurant and tell them we're there for Pi Tau give back night they would donate a portion of our ticket to our organization. In the fall we auctioned off a cooler and cups to the public. In the spring we raffled off a coach Kliff Kingsbury (the hottest coach in football) to the public as well.

Our second main goal 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 org the past 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 have almost weekly social events. Our social events include bowling, going to Altitude trampoline park, both the shooting range and the golf range, ultimate Frisbee games, volleyball games, all types of intramural sports, room escapes, weekend get togethers at restaurants, and hosting tailgates. Having these social events helps our members and initiates to become better friends. This also helps them wind down from the stressful life of being an engineering student. At the end of each semester we have a tradition where we have a friendly competition with our local ASME chapter where we compete against each other in some game and see who wins. In both semesters Pi Tau has won, and we plan to continue to dominate this rivalry.

Figure 6: Pi Tau Baseball Tailgate Spring 2017

Figure 7: Pi Tau Sigma vs. ASME Ultimate Frisbee Fall 2016

In the Spring, a few delegates from the Sigma Epsilon chapter went to Drexel for the Pi Tau National Convention. The goal for us was to show other schools how great our chapter is. I believe we succeeded in this by showing how involved our initiation process is and always being personable and ready to hang out with anybody. We made some great friends, and found ourselves learning from even the smallest chapters. I believe that if you asked many of the chapters, even the host Drexel, they would remember the people from Texas Tech and hopefully would say that we made the convention just a little bit better.

Figure 7: National Convention Spring 2017

For the next academic year we are planning to have an even more successful year by serving our community as well as having many more opportunities for our members to develop lasting friendships. Pi Tau at Texas Tech has been growing substantially and we believe that the future is brighter than ever.

C. Other

The Sigma Epsilon chapter here at Tech has wanted to try and put a Pi Tau Sigma monument in front of the ME building. For over a decade now, previous attempts have been made but have been shut down. This past year the ME department got a new Chair, and we have maintained great relations with him. We have had formal meetings with him and he has approved us a spot right in front of the building. The funding in not as issue, but making the 2 foot key will be the challenge. This is going to be a big goal of the organization next semester.