PI TAU SIGMA - TEXAS SIGMA RHO - ANNUAL CHAPTER REPORT
Fall 2015 – Spring 2016

A. Initiations

The initiation procedures for the 2015-2016 academic year for the Texas Sigma Rho chapter are listed as follows, and closely match those performed the previous year.

The candidates for initiation into the Texas Sigma Rho Chapter were chosen based upon their grade point average, academic standing with the university, number of credits completed in The University of Texas at Arlington and their year of study. Although it was initially decided that no freshmen or sophomores be invited, a decision was made to invite the second semester sophomores to the information sessions, thereby providing them with the requisite information and inspiration to be a part of Pi Tau Sigma in their following semesters.

In the Fall 2015 semester, 117 students were invited to join Texas Sigma Rho. Out of those, 86 were seniors and 31 were juniors. In the Spring 2016 semester, 116 students were invited. In addition, 28 second-semester sophomores were also invited to the information sessions as way to garner interest in the organization. The invitees met ranking requirements established by Pi Tau Sigma and also have a GPA greater than 3.30 on a scale of 4.0.

Several requirements were placed upon the candidates before they could be fully initiated as members into the Texas Sigma Rho chapter. The first requirement was to attend an informational session. Several info sessions were held each semester in order to inform the candidates what Pi Tau Sigma is, what the Texas Sigma Rho chapter does, and to answer any questions they may have. The information sessions also elaborated on the history of Pi Tau Sigma and the numerous opportunities that it has presented to all its members. Usually, plans for the upcoming semester are also discussed in these sessions along with plans for the national convention. These sessions were attended by the President, Vice President and some of the other officers depending upon their availability and the faculty advisor.

Another requirement was for the candidates to take one of their engineering textbooks and have various professors in the Mechanical and Aerospace Engineering department sign the inside cover of the textbook. This requirement is a good experience for the candidates to familiarize themselves with their professors, and it has been a long-standing tradition of the Texas Sigma Rho Chapter.

The Initiation Ceremony for our chapter typically takes place two weeks before final examinations and conducted according the Pi Tau Sigma guidelines. Two initiation ceremonies were held in the 2015-2016 year, one in the spring and one in the fall. The first ceremony was held December 10, 2015 where 7 candidates were officially initiated. The second ceremony was held April 29, 2016 where 10 candidates were officially initiated.

Following the ceremony, it is customary to have a PTS Social or dinner at a local restaurant. All current members of the chapter are also invited to this social to meet and interact the new members. This practice, allows for a strong bond to form between the current members and the new members thereby creating a comfortable and fraternal environment.

B. Chapter Activities

The Texas Sigma Rho chapter participated in several activities during the 2015-2016 year. Texas Sigma Rho had a presence at many of the activities run by the College of Engineering as

well as the Mechanical and Aerospace Engineering department. These include the College of Engineering Welcome Bash and the Explore MAE event for freshmen. At both of these events, Texas Sigma Rho had a table, poster, and informational materials to explain what Pi Tau Sigma was and what it meant to be a member. This community engagement helped spread awareness of the organization throughout campus.

As a part of Engineering Week, Pi Tau Sigma officers built and programmed a Vex Robot as display item for the Pi Tau Sigma Table. The robot served as an attention getter to bring interested members to our table. The volunteers at the table would then tell interested students the benefits of the organization and why they should strive to join it. The robot was a Remote controlled robot programmed not to fall of the display table. The officers put forward an open challenge to students to try and drive the robot off the table. None of the students succeeded in doing so. This gadget garnered most interest from students in the age bracket of 13 – 18 years. Through the interactive nature of our display, the officers were able to spread the word about Pi Tau Sigma to numerous prospective engineering students. It was also a proud moment for us since despite there being numerous other displays for Engineering Week ranging from industry to other engineering organizations, it was the Pi Tau Sigma table that garnered the most interest. A picture of the robot is attached at the end of this report.

Other activities include a designated Texas Sigma Rho officer attending the monthly Engineering Student Council meetings. Representing our organization at each of these meetings provided financial support to the organization.

Texas Sigma Rho held three member meetings in the fall, and three in the spring. These meetings were held to facilitate the general business of the organization, including planning events, electing new officers, and informing the members of any necessary information. In the fall meeting, new officers were elected including the Vice-President, Treasurer, Engineering Student Council Representative, Secretary and Social Coordinator.

Two officers of the Texas Sigma Rho chapter, the President and the Secretary attended the annual Pi Tau Sigma convention at the University South California, Los Angeles in the spring semester. Upon their return they presented a report detailing their experience at the convention and recommendations to improve the current Texas Sigma Rho chapter after talking to other members.

Several members and officers of the Texas Sigma Rho chapter graduated in both the fall and spring of the 2014-2015 school year and a large majority chose to display their membership by wearing the traditional Pi Tau Sigma stole and chords during the graduation ceremony.

C. Other

This year, the Texas Sigma Rho chapter of Pi Tau Sigma participated in several university events, held various meetings, elected new officers, and attended the national Pi Tau Sigma convention. A total of 16 new members were inducted into the organization and several old members are returning to school the next academic school year. Moving forward, the Texas Sigma Rho chapter has a bright future ahead of it. It has the membership levels, participation, and funds to be able to hold more events, increase campus awareness, and give back to the university. This will allow the Texas Sigma Rho chapter to grow and prosper, while at the same time upholding the tradition and legacy of the Pi Tau Sigma honor society.

D. Pictures

Figure 1. Pi Tau Sigma Table at Engineering Week 2016

Figure 2. Spring 2016 Initiation Ceremony