



SIGMA PI SIGMA

The physics honor society

University of Maine Chapter Project Award Proposal





The Sigma Pi Sigma Induction and Awards Banquet

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At the University of Maine we have a small, familial community within our Physics Department. Our Sigma Pi Sigma Chapter lies as a special and silent vesicle within our Society of Physics Students Chapter. Understanding that our time and energy is better spent organizing and promoting the Society of Physics Students, our Sigma Pi Sigma Chapter gets one singular event to relish in its members accomplishments. At the end of every Academic Year, the entire Physics Department come together to hold the Sigma Pi Sigma Induction and Awards Banquet. The Banquet serves in many capacities; it allows Sigma Pi Sigma members to be recognized and new members to be inducted, it allows the Physics Department to celebrate its undergraduate students by giving out Department Scholarships, and it allows our Physics family to say farewell to our seniors as they graduate the following week and head off to their next chapter.

Project Proposal

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In the past, our Department has had a difficult time with our involvement in Sigma Pi Sigma. We have an incredibly small physics department and we were struggling to maintain an active Society of Physics Students, let alone a Sigma Pi Sigma Chapter. Every year, the Department would induct a few outstanding undergraduates in a small ceremony that barely was able to get the faculty to attend. There was little value to being a Sigma Pi Sigma member at UMaine and no one is willing to put in work into things they do not value.

The past year we spent an enormous amount of time and energy revitalizing our Society of Physics Students Chapter, resurrecting it from its feeble grave into a staple of our Department. With the stability of our SPS Chapter comes the luxury of having the motivation and enthusiasm to invigorate our Sigma Pi Sigma Chapter. We, as a Department, understand that we will not be able to have an active Chapter separate from our SPS Chapter, due to our Department numbers. However, we can work to provide value to being a member of Sigma Pi Sigma.

The Sigma Pi Sigma Induction and Awards Banquet will combine the framework of two ideas: a Sigma Pi Sigma Induction Ceremony and a Department Awards Banquet. This is advantageous for both of these events. The Sigma Pi Sigma Induction has long been a poorly attended event that under-delivered in the recognition of the inductees. By pairing it with the Department Awards Banquet, which brings together students, faculty, and alumni, we can provide the sense of pride warranted by an induction into the Honors Society.

This project fits many of the purposes of this award. The Awards Banquet is well attended by undergraduates, graduates, faculty, and alumni. It is a chance for the entire Physics community of the area to come together. By holding our induction ceremony here, we continue to raise awareness of Sigma Pi Sigma and build community amongst our physics family. It adds distinction and a greater sense of pride to the induction, since you are being inducted in front of your peers, professors, and distinguished physicists. By using the event as a fundraising opportunity, it allows us to promote scholarships and capital opportunities. Finally, it allows us to properly recognize outstanding achievement.

The proposed plan is to hold the Physics Banquet at the Buchanan Alumni House, a historic and beautiful building on the University of Maine campus designed for scholarship, fundraising, and community events. We will hold the event on Maine Day, a day in May in which the entire school does not hold class in order to participate in volunteer work in the morning and celebrate UMaine in the evening. We will serve dinner and provide an opportunity for the community to gather and socialize. Once dinner has completed, we will begin the formal proceedings with the Sigma Pi Sigma Induction Ceremony, followed by the Physics Department Awards, and finishing with a farewell to our graduating seniors.

The entire event will be planned by Samuel Borer, Graham Van Goffrier, and Hannah Stetson; the three physics undergraduate leaders. This will be in collaboration with Patricia Byard, our Department Administrator, and Dr. John Thompson, our Department Chair. The event will be marketed to all the undergraduates, graduates, faculty, and alumni through personal invitations, as well as public signs around the physics department, emails, and announcements at the Physics Colloquium Series. All current Sigma Pi Sigma members will be required to be in attendance and will play a part in the induction ceremony.

The Project Timeline is as follows:

- February 28th: Have secured the Buchanan Alumni House
- March 30th: Create marketing material, begin printing
- April 14th: Begin distributing marketing material, invitations, posters, emails, and announcements at Physics Colloquium
- April 20th: Order food from Black Bear Dining
- May 1st: Run through final preparations, finalize script and slideshow presentation
- May 2nd: Sigma Pi Sigma Induction and Awards Banquet

Every great project needs great metrics for success. The metrics for success for this project will center around proper record keeping, attendance numbers, and a feedback survey from Sigma Pi Sigma attendees. We will maintain an accurate record of what occurred and how things unfold so that there is continuity from year to year. Additionally, we will measure success by getting over 50 participants, including all the Sigma Pi Sigma members. Finally, sending a post-feedback survey to Sigma Pi Sigma members, we will gathered their feedback to incorporate into next year's event.

Our Core Values

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Question Assumptions

To challenge the status quo is the path of the scientific pursuit. In a society that is quick to conclude without further investigation, we intend to foster an environment of healthy criticism and inquisition.

Ancora Imparo

“Yet I am learning.” Learning is a lifetime endeavor. We believe in order to achieve great results, we must not be afraid to fail greatly. Mistakes are a learning curve and we are students within every aspect of our life.

Engaged Leadership

Every member of Sigma Pi Sigma is a leader in their own right. Too often budding leaders are discouraged and not given the tools needed to succeed. We foster leadership by creating an open, accepting environment that allows our members to continue developing their leadership style.

Realization Through Participation

An important step towards success is showing up and being present. Goals remain goals unless there is active participation to convert them into achievements. We value the commitment of our members to vigorously realize the Chapter's goals.

Celebrating Diversity

Scientific exploration is a human endeavour. It underpins who we are as a species and it knows no division. Neither will we. Science brings us together and it would be a detriment to science to allow any form of discrimination.