

SIGMA GAMMA TAU
NATIONAL HONOR SOCIETY FOR AEROSPACE ENGINEERING

1997 Triennial Convention Minutes

April 5-6, 1997

1. The 1997 Triennial Convention was held at the Econo Lodge Hawaiian Resort, Kissimmee, Florida, to coincide with the 38th AIAA Structural Dynamics, and Materials Conference to be held April 7-10 in a nearby hotel. Formal meetings were conducted in the evening of Saturday, April 5, and in the afternoon of April 6, 1997.

2. The meeting was called to order at 5:00 pm on April 5, 1997 by the National President, Dr. Stephen M. Batill who welcomed faculty and student delegates to the convention. Introductions of the delegates followed. The following delegates were identified:

Region	Student	Faculty
Northeastern	Pradeep Fernandes Polytechnic University	
Mid-Atlantic	Paul Shank Penn. State Univ.	Frederick Lutze* Va. Tech.
Great Lakes	Kelly O'Brien U. Of Illinois	Harry Hilton U. Of Illinois
North Central	Siva Nadarajah U. Of Kansas	Saeed Farokhi U. of Kansas
Southeastern	Heidi Reimer N. C. State Univ.	Fred DeJarnette N. C. State Univ,
Southwestern	David Whitlock U. of Texas, Austin	Jeff Shamma U. of Texas, Austin
Western	Kandyce Smith Embry Riddle A. U.	Tracy Doryland Embry Riddle A. U., Prescott

* Substituting for Sam S. Fisher, Mid-Atlantic Regional Coordinator

* National Vice President

Also in Attendance was:

Stephen Batill National President University of Notre Dame

3. Nominations for Convention Secretary were taken. Traditionally the Vice President elect is selected, but in his absence, the current Vice President was selected as the 1997 Convention Secretary.

4. The minutes of the 1994 Triennial Convention were reviewed and accepted unanimously. A few key items that were in those minutes were highlighted since similar items were to be discussed later. These were the following: concerns with the financial strength of the society and the suggestion of an annual informal audit, consideration of alternate forms of the National Triennial Convention, and the utility of a student registry, called for at the 1994 Convention.

5. Dr. Batill, The National President, gave a short overview of the "state of the Society." Again, much of this presentation was for the purpose of giving background for future discussions and decisions, some of which were made during the overview. Included in this overview were:

a) A summary of the startup package that is sent at the beginning of each year. In particular it identified some activities that the society was going to implement and should include suggestions for the local chapters to incorporate as activities.

b) A review of new membership numbers for selected years. These were

1990-91 1176 new members

1995-96 397

1996-97 104 (as of April 5, 1997, only 14 schools submitted nominations)

The implication here is that since Sigma Gamma Tau (SGT) has certain fixed costs, the reduced numbers of new members leads to a financial burden. Currently expenses were about equal to the income, excluding the cost of the Triennial Convention.

c) The society has made a large effort to move to the world wide web and to electronic mail in order to increase its visibility, make access to the national office easier, and to reduce costs. It was suggested that all communication be done by E-mail and that each chapter develop its own web site and have it linked with the national site.

d) The student registry suggested in the last Convention has been generated the last two years and distributed to about 20 selected industries and to all aerospace engineering departments. There has been no feedback from these distributions. It was suggested that this effort is not economically sound, since at least the same information (if not better and more up-to-date information) can be provided at individual chapter web sites, which can be linked to the national web site. It was proposed that efforts be made to establish these links.

e) The Undergraduate Award program has been consistent in the number of chapters participating, somewhere between 25 and 30.. It was suggested that a copy of the letter soliciting nominations should be sent to the Department Heads who might help encourage a nomination to be submitted. A copy of the Undergraduate Award activity over the past several years is attached.

f) Local chapters should get an Employment Identification Number (EIN) from the Internal Revenue Service if they do not already have one and let the National office know what it is. Currently 31 of 50 chapters have an EIN.

g) A new Chapter at Tuskegee University was installed in 1995.

h) A small lapel pin has been created and is now available.

6. President Batill reported on the procedure used for the election of new officers. He attempted to follow the provisions of the society's constitution as closely as possible, meeting all the dates and deadlines, Nominations by Oct. 1, and ballots by November. The process included encouraging faculty advisors to run for offices. The results of these activities were presented.

Frederick H. Lutze, National President (Virginia Tech)

Mancil W. Milligan, National Vice President (University of Tennessee)

It was announced that Marilyn K. Walker has agreed to remain as the Staff Secretary- Treasurer for the immediate future.

7. A review of the financial statement for the 1994-1997 was presented with comparisons with the previous statement which included the years 1991-1993. These reports are attached. A few key observations were made. These include:

a) Dues were raised in accordance with the consensus of last Convention from \$15 to \$20.

b) Income from these dues has gone from approximately \$10,000/yr in 1994 to \$3,000/yr, in 1997 due to the decrease in new members.

c) Many expenses are constant, independent of the number of students initiated, e.g. annual dues to the Association of College Honor Societies, the AIAA SGT scholarship (SGT pays \$1100 for a \$1000 scholarship), printing of brochures and SGT Stationery, Undergraduate Honor Awards including the winner's \$200, plaques for the winners, and brass plates for all entries, @ \$5.00.

d) Certificates and the calligraphy costs about \$6.00/ certificate

e) Jewelry is approximately a break even situation. SGT simply serves as a distributor.

f) National Convention costs for 1990 and 1997 were compared at \$10,600 and approximately \$7,000 respectively. The reduction in cost being due to shorter duration of the conference as well as the apparent low air fares to the present location. Also all arrangements were made through the National Office.

g) Total Society financial balance has decreased from \$37,000 in 1992 to about (estimated) \$20,000 in 1997

8. Discussion of financial affairs led to the following conclusions and/or consensus:

a) Convention attendees received expense sheets to fill out and were voted a \$30/day for expenses over and above lodging.

b) Suggested investigating printing our own certificates and/or printing of names using PC. There was some concern about the effect of laser printers on certificate paper, retaining a seal as it currently appears, and other related items.

c) Suggested putting (blue) brochure information on the national web site so that local chapters could download to their locations. No printing necessary.

d) Decided to retain support of the AIAA scholarship as long as possible, but if financially unsound, gave permission to drop support. However it was requested that the recipient of the SGT fellowship must be at a school that has a SGT chapter and pursuing an aerospace engineering degree. The new officers were to request that AIAA satisfy these requirements.

The meeting adjourned at 8:45 pm Saturday, April 5, 1997

The Triennial Convention reconvened at 12:00 noon on Sunday, April 6, 1997

The discussion of the budget and recommendations to reduce costs continued leading to additional conclusions and/or consensus..

e) Voted to allow the initiation fee to be raised to a maximum of \$30.

f) Voted to reduce the amount awarded for the student awards from \$200 to \$100 for each regional winner, and add another \$150 to that for the national winner (for a total of \$250)

g) Suggested to reduce the amount of society stationery that is sent to each chapter under the assumption that not many chapters used it anyway, and that if they did want to use it, copying it to get the required number was sufficient.

h) Suggested that most of the startup information could be put on the national web site.

9. The final main topic of the Convention was the review and possible revision of the society Constitution. The Constitution was reviewed one section at a time. President Batill had provided each delegate with a copy of the constitution on which was marked areas of his concern. The review, however included the entire constitution and not just those areas. The objective was to delete outdated references and practices in the Constitution, as well change sections in language and practice which would reflect some of the changes in the way the business of the society is carried out. The results of this discussion were to be implemented in a draft of the revised constitution which on approval of the convention, would be circulated with the startup package next year for approval by the chapters. The details of the discussions and recommendations for the

various sections of the Constitution are presented below.

Considerable discussion followed, concerning the Triennial convention. The consensus was that it is important to keep as many students involved as possible and that one of the main purposes of the Convention is to get the student's input. Many of the sentiments expressed in the 1994 Convention minutes were repeated here concerning the Convention. It was recommended that the Society try and maintain a National Convention every three years as it is currently configured. However it was also suggested that the Constitution be revised to allow the flexibility of changing the format, if necessary, to reduce costs. One possible format could include a partial or full video or teleconference among the participants. In all cases student and faculty involvement from each region was deemed essential. The status and format of the National Convention was to be left to the best judgement of the executive committee.

Article 1

Sections 3,4 and 5. References are made to Appendices A, B, and C. Harry Hilton who helped author some of the Constitution indicated that he remembered such Appendices, but did not know where they were. Unfortunately, neither does anybody else. Hence it is required either to remove the references to the appendices, or provide them. It was proposed to reference the official records in the national office.

Section 6 - references the colors of red and white - The discussion of whether the colors should be spelled out in more detail arose - consensus, no, red and white is satisfactory.

Article II

Section 2 - National Convention - see comments above

Section 2-j - Mentions suspension of a chapter. Suggested that executive committee deal with any decisions about suspensions.

Section 3-e - delete. The agenda of the convention can be set by the executive committee rather than be specified by the Constitution.

Section 4 - Concerning declaring a chapter inactive. A discussion was held regarding what would be the contributing factors for making a chapter inactive. Suggestions were made that 2 years with no nominations would be grounds for declaring a chapter inactive. Further before such a deceleration were made, a letter to the faculty advisor, copied to the department head, should be sent warning of impending action.

Section 4-e Suggested that President and Vice President or President and Secretary Treasurer have signature authority for CD and savings account, not just the President. Also should require an annual financial report. Also deleted references to National Publication.

Section 4-I - Deleted references to national historian.

Section 5 - Timing of the convention and election of national officers should be left to the executive committee.

Article III

Section 3 - Others forms of coordination between a school, petitioning for a new chapter, and SGT are available than having a representative visit the school.

Section 4 - It was debated if the concept of a club should be removed from the Constitution. The consensus was that the concept of a club remain, but that all references to chartering fees etc. be removed form the Constitution.

Article IV Chapter By Laws

It was decided that this section should be revised to reflect the way the chapters currently operate. References to the National Publication should be removed. It was suggested that a lot of the reporting activities could be carried out by establishing a chapter web site.

Section 1-d - Remove the sentence listing the term of a faculty advisor.

Section 1- j - Require the chapters to submit names of officers to the National office before some specified date. Delete what is currently in this paragraph regarding an annual report.

Section 1 - l - Delete this part which says that official stationery can only be used for Society business. As indicated previously, there was some sentiment that Society stationery was not a critical need.

Article V Membership in the Society

Section 3 - b - Replace requirements for graduate students to simply state they must be graduate students in good standing.

Section 3-C-4 - Delete the requirement for the special nomination recipient to send a letter of acceptance. Many of the special nominations are in reward for some activity at the chapter's school. It was desired to be able to surprise the nominee with a membership at some award banquet or equivalent.

Article VII Discipline

Here the big changes were to replace discipline by the Convention to discipline by the Convention or the Executive Committee. Also change actions by three-fourths vote of the convention to three-fourths vote of the active chapters.

Article VIII Reserve Fund

It was proposed to change the reserve fund requirement to be \$15,000 instead of \$5,000 to reflect the effect of inflation over the time since the Constitution was written. The Executive council is still required to put it in safe securities.

Article IX Amendments

The current constitution gives the right of interpreting sections of the constitution to the National Convention. The current Convention delegates agreed to interpret the three-quarters vote of the active chapters required to change the Constitution to include the vote of chapters who did not respond to the vote as a positive vote.

This discussion concludes the business on the revision of the constitution.

10. New Business

- a) Voted to remain a member of the Association of College Honor Societies
- b) Suggested that the Society should use the world wide web and E-mail as much as possible including the startup package, minutes of this meeting, the constitution, officers duties, order forms, etc. It was also suggested that there be a transition phase for this change. It was expected that in the near future, virtually all business could be carried out electronically. Clearly there will be a learning curve on making this idea happen.
- c) Need a world wide web SGT symbol
- d) Suggested that regional coordinators use teleconferencing for communication in their regions. The national office should encourage it to happen.
- e) It was pointed out that many chapters will have a 25 or 50 year anniversary soon. It was suggested that an appropriate certificate be given these chapters. The Convention tabled this motion.
- f) There was some concern over the amount of material that the Society has accumulated. The question was posed as to what should be required to be kept and what could be disposed of. The consensus was that the following should be kept:
 - member information, who where and when initiated
 - constitution-evolution history
 - minutes of conventions
 - chapter information
- g) It was suggested that Regional Coordinators should examine their regions to see if there are any opportunities for new chapters.

11. Graduation Stoles - A company had sent a sample of a graduation stole to be worn over the cap and gown during graduation, which indicated an affiliation with SGT. There was strong

interest among some of the students at the convention. There was considerable discussion concerning the proper procedure to go ahead with these if it were to be done for this year, and how to proceed if it were to be a Society option in the future. The Convention members picked the style that they liked best and it was decided to try and get the orders in for this year if the company could meet the deadline. It was further decided that SGT would put in a minimum order and that the chapters could deal with the company directly. This final decision was subject to change depending on the ability of the company to meet the orders. It was left up to the next executive committee to decide how to handle this option in the future, that is, should SGT order the stoles and distribute them, or should we let the company distribute them after SGT ordered them or some other scenario. In any case this item should be put in the next years startup package. A view of the stoles is available on the national web site.

12. A plaque was presented President Batill for his activities as President of Sigma Gamma Tau.

13. The meeting was closed at 4:00pm, Sunday, April 6, 1997

Respectfully submitted

Frederick H. Lutze,
Convention Secretary