As the world transitioned back into a non-mask (or shall we say masque) environment, Ohio University’s Pi Rho/Tau chapter of Sigma Delta Pi chose to combine the best of both modes and enjoy a hybrid year. One lesson the chapter officers learned was that some activities actually work better virtually - bringing in a different audience; and some just really need human contact – and donuts!

The executive team, featured in the photo above, planned a busy year of outdoor, indoor and cyberspace activities that suited everyone’s needs and kept the local community, who were interested in all-things Hispanic, involved. Weekly executive meetings were a must to organize and advertise venues and involvement. The list of events continues to grow each year; this year’s new activities included: a wilderness hike, a café y chisme event with a related organization, hosting and running a large international conference, and highlighting the presentation of an Honor thesis.
In addition to the interactive list of events cited below, Ohio University’s chapter president and advisor attended the AATSP meeting in Atlanta, GA and enjoyed the Sigma Delta Pi events. President Suzy Aftabizadeh presented “Best Virtual Practices” and was recognized for her outstanding involvement in chapter activities with the Premio Gabriela Mistral. Later on, Pi Rho/Tau’s advisor, Dr. Betsy Partyka, received the Lucy F. Lee Advisor Award for her exemplary initiative in encouraging and assisting with chapter activities. To the chapter’s great delight, it was recognized with the Certificado de Honor y Mérito for the 4th time and also with the Premio Ignacio y Sophie Galbis, for the second time, for the group’s model activities representing the highest ideals of the Society.

Sigma Delta Pi at Ohio University lines up previously and newly awarded Sigma Delta Pi premios...

...plus one more: Suzy Aftabizadeh’s lovely Gabriela Mistral award and the book she received.

Once again, Ohio University’s Sigma Delta Pi executive committee and their advisor have prepared this report to provide a detailed document of the 2021-22 academic year activities designed to promote Hispanic culture and the Spanish language to Ohio University and the greater southeast Ohio community.

Fall events – 10+
Spring events – 9
+Executive meetings – 29
Fall 2021-22

1. August 22, 2021 – Feria de involucramiento/ Involvement Fair
   • Attendance: ~ 7 + Ohio University students – especially freshmen

All 6 executive members and the advisor of Sigma Delta Pi enjoyed sharing information about the organization with students at Ohio University’s annual Involvement Fair on the college green. The event promotes 500+ organizations and clubs to freshmen, and, this year, to all underclassmen who missed out on the activities in 2020. Sigma Delta Pi showcased its activities and opportunities and encouraged students to join. They played word games, posted questions on social media, and rewarded participants with Mexican candies. Even though a rainstorm curbed the celebration, everyone appreciated a fun day back on campus.

   • Attendance: ~ 11 + kitty

Chapter Pi Rho/Tao started off the 2021-22 academic year with its first event held during the second week of classes: movie night! Members had the option to gather in person (masked and distanced) or via Microsoft Teams to tune into a viewing of El estudiante (2009), a Mexican drama. Eleven members attended, with most opting to join online, and the officers facilitated a thoughtful discussion after the credits rolled.
3. September 18, 2022. – **Caminata a los Ridges (new event)/ Hike at the Ridges**

- Executed in cooperation with Ohio University’s Spanish MA program
- Attendance – 11 + puppy

**¡Por fin en persona! Caminata a los Ridges.**

Since it was still risky to plan an all-day event, this fall the chapter introduced its more adventurous students to a 4-hour hike around an Athens historical site – the Ridges, a 19th century *manicomio* for the “mentally disturbed”. The group of hot and sweaty graduate and undergraduate students - and an energetic pup - walked the hilly paths that surround the zone. They visited the Kennedy Museum of Art, housed in the ancient structure, and absorbed a lot of vitamin D. The day culminated in a picnic lunch on a hill with a view. This activity allowed chapter members to meet the newly arrived Spanish MA students and enjoy the final days of the summer, while practicing Spanish and having fun.

4. September 28, 2021 – **Ceremonia otoñal de iniciación / Fall Initiation Ceremony (6 new initiates)**

- Attendance: 14

This was the first semester, since the pandemic, that the initiation ceremony for Sigma Delta Pi was held in person. Students maintained a distance of 3-feet and wore masks during the ceremony, in an effort to uphold COVID-19 safety regulations. Pi Rho/Tau welcomed six neófitos in the presence of a small audience of members and professors. Congratulations were given Sigma Delta Pi, as well as headed outside for an unmasked photo opportunity. This organization thanks its new members for their efforts in fostering intercultural relationships personal contributions.

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*Jafet Ix (Editor); Suzy Afrabizadeh (President); *Sabina Hordinski; *Caroline Rhude (media); *Grace Miller; *Brenna Daugherty (new); *Isabella Daley; *Abby Neff; Betsy Partyka (advisor); Rory O’Malley (Vice President); Carrie Summerford (Secretary). *New initiates*
5. September 29, 2021 – Café y chismes (new event)
• Executed in cooperation with Ohio University’s Latinx Student Union
• Attendance: ~20

This year, one of Pi Rho/Tau’s goals was to collaborate with more Hispanic/Latinx/Spanish organizations and the Multicultural Center at Ohio University. The fall event was “Café y chisme” to celebrate Hispanic Heritage Month. The officers of SDP and LSU encouraged members to discuss, in English or Spanish, their perspectives on heritage, language, culture, identity, and more while drinking coffee, tea, and hot chocolate. Sigma Delta Pi shared their events with these organizations throughout the year.

6. October 4, 2021 - Noche de artesanías / Craft Night I
• Attendance: 8

During this Spanish-speaking event, in accordance with COVID-19 protocols, members of Sigma Delta Pi enjoyed an evening of arts and crafts projects native to Mexico: papel picado and paper flowers, traditions of Day of the Dead. Some participants designed t-shirts inspired by the theme of the Day of the Dead and to highlight Sigma Delta Pi. Ohio University requests that non-alcoholic events be offered during Homecoming week, and SDP was happy to oblige!

Secretary Carrie Summerford shows her artistic skills as she made a papel picado of skulls and helped decorate the ever-present SDP banner.
7. October 19, 2021 — **Español en las profesiones / Spanish in the Professions I**

- **Attendance:** 22

Pi Rho/Tau hosted “El español en las profesiones” virtually using Microsoft TEAMS. They invited Spanish classes, the public, and members to listen to presentations about using Spanish in the professional world. The first speaker discussed the challenges of finding a teaching job during the pandemic and general tips for networking after graduation. The second presenter, a program director for Rural Action in Appalachian Ohio, explained how he uses his Spanish degree in a community with few native speakers. The third presentation described teaching Spanish in the “I Promise School” in Cleveland, Ohio. The final presenter expanded upon working as a medical interpreter for UC Health in Cincinnati, Ohio. This event is a great chance for students to discover the plethora of professional opportunities that exist for Spanish speakers.

8. November 1, 2021— **Día de muertos y Todos los santos /Day of the Dead and All Saints Day**

- **October 25, 26, 27, 28, 2021** — flower preparation, decorations, altar preparations
- **November 1** — Pan de muerto competition, lottery, altar
- **Attendance:** 28

“**Después de todo la muerte es síntoma de que hubo vida**”

Sigma Delta Pi has a lot of favorite traditions to celebrate and share with members of the community, and “Día de muertos” is a very special day to highlight *sincretismo*. The festivities started a week before November 2nd when members decorated the main hallway of Gordy, and Mexican graduate students designed the altar. When November 2nd arrived, Sigma Delta Pi held a “pan de muerto” baking competition in person! The sample breads were delicious, and everyone taste-tested and voted for their favorite. While everybody enjoyed a slice of *pan de muerto* and apple cider, videos explaining different traditions of *Día de muertos* and how this festivity is celebrated in Mexico rolled on the screen. After the video, for the second year in a row, members played the traditional Mexican “Lotería”, a very fast game that helps practice vocabulary and picture recognition.
9. November 15, 2021 – Ceremonia de Cuerdas y Aniversario / Cords Ceremony and Birthday Celebration

- Attendance: 11

Fall semester Pi Rho/Tau celebrated only one graduating senior, Iyana Davis during the annual cord ceremony, but that didn’t mean the event was any less elaborate. Like years past, Sigma Delta Pi combined the celebration of graduating students with Sigma Delta Pi’s 102nd birthday. There were activities, snacks, informative presentations, and of course, happy chatter amongst the members of the organization, as the semester wrapped up. Iyana shared her post-university plans (which include more school!) and received her own SDP cord to proudly represent Sigma Delta Pi during her graduation ceremony. The event also highlighted the many awards that Ohio University’s chapter of Sigma Delta Pi has received.


- Attendance: 15

OHIO’s Sigma Delta Pi ended the year 2021 with one of its most popular events of the semester: movie night! Members gathered online via Microsoft Teams to tune into a viewing of Toc Toc (2017), a Spanish comedy. Throughout the showing, members and officers interacted and asked questions in the chatbox. With a turnout of 15 people, there was an intense discussion about disabilities, mental health, and the Spanish healthcare system after the showing. Movie nights are always good for decompressing, and Sigma Delta Pi’s intention was just that: to host a relaxing and fun final event to help our members prepare for finals week.

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Spring 2021-22

   - Attendance: 12

   Pi Rho/Tau kicked off the new year with another virtual Noche de película, but instead of a movie, they presented the first episode of the series Bolívar on Netflix. Throughout the showing, members and officers interacted and asked questions in the chatbox. The episode was about an hour long, which gave members plenty of time for an interesting discussion afterwards, including topics like Latin American history and politics, religion, medicine, race, and more. Movie nights are a great way for the chapter and its members to not only practice their Spanish, but also to socialize and enjoy themselves in a semi-academic setting.

   Suzy Aftabizadeh, Dr. Partyka, Grace Weisel, Kaia McKinney, Isabella Daley, Jafet Ix, Kyla King, Regan Burridge and Caroline Rhude learn a little history about Latin American independence.

2. February 10, 2022 – Iniciación primaveral / Spring Initiation (9 new initiates)
   - Attendance: 21

   Sigma Delta Pi at Ohio University once again welcomed new members to the Spanish Honor Society. Following COVID protocols from OU and the CDC, the traditional initiation ceremony was held in person with SDP members. Nine new members, who share a love for Hispanic cultures and the Spanish language, were welcomed. The initiates as a group pledged to encourage and promote the Spanish Language in their daily lives.

   Mia Citina, Jailei Maas, Agustín Klaric, Clara Zanini, Jaden Kenner, Lucia Ayelén Vallaro, Chloe Kerns, Izzy Walther and Daniel Dunfee pledged their allegiance to Sigma Delta Pi.
3. February 10, 2022 – Noche de artesanías / Craft Night II

- Attendance: 21

This year’s spring initiation celebration occurred close to Valentine’s Day, so the chapter invited everyone to stay after the ceremony and write poetry in Spanish while they created sparkly Valentine cards during the Noche de artesanías! Participants shared a laugh as they were challenged to create romantic verses incorporating disparate words like gallo, águila, and azúcar into their verses. Following the hilarious sharing of ideas, a social media contest was posted on the SDP Instagram account where members voted for their favorite poem and card. This was an amazing way to welcome new and old members with poetry and glitter, showing that language is meant to be shared.


- Executed in cooperation with The Ohio State University, The Department of Modern Languages, Latin American Studies program at Ohio University
- Attendance: ~ 68 presenters + public (100+)

This semester, Ohio University was fortunate to host the Ohio Latin Americanist Conference (OLAC) at Ohio University for the first time since the beginning of the pandemic! Sigma Delta Pi played an important role in the organization of the conference, which included volunteering as moderators, running the registration desk, and creating a new “open-mic” panel. The Society procured funding and sponsored the band El son del Caribe.
During Saturday’s lunch break, Sigma Delta Pi hosted an open panel in which participants could share creative works. Not only did several of our own members read their work, but some of the visiting scholars also shared their poetry. With a total of ten readers, we listened to pieces in Spanish, English, and Portuguese. The event was such a success that Sigma Delta Pi is looking forward to organizing another panel during next year’s conference!

SDP front and Center!  
OU’s Jafet Ix reads some of her creative writing.

University of Cincinnati graduate students lead the way with their creative poetry.

5. March 20, 2022 – Español en las profesiones / Spanish in the Professions II
   • Attendance – 26

For the spring edition of “El español en las profesiones”, Sigma Delta Pi invited three presenters to speak about their careers and opportunities to use Spanish in the professional world. This virtual event is popular amongst the chapter’s members, as well as students in the Spanish department. Maggie Saine, who graduated from Ohio University in 2021 with a Masters in Spanish, works as a translator for the National Inventors Hall of Fame. Ryan Flynn, a 2019 OU graduate with degrees in journalism and Spanish, taught English in Spain for two years before returning to the U.S. for a job as a production assistant for Fox News. Elisa L, graduate student Ohio University, works as an assistant in the Infectious and Tropi Institute in the College of Medicine; she spoke about the opportunity for Spanish students to travel to Ecuador and assist in the research of chagas disease. After the presentations, the audience participated in a conversation about career opportunities beyond teaching.
6. April 14, 2022 – Ceremonia de cuerdas primaveral / Cord Ceremony II

- **Attendance** – ~30

Cords recipients and outgoing officers: Kaitlyn Booher, Rory O’Malley (VP), Carrie Summerford (Secretary), Jafet Ix (Editor), Regan Burridge (Treasurer), Suzy Aftabizadeh (President), Dr. Betsy Partyka (Advisor)

On April 14th, Sigma Delta Pi hosted its annual spring cord ceremony to celebrate its graduating members and officers. The ceremony included a presentation of the cords, a farewell to the current executive board, a welcoming of the new officers, and a buffet of tapas and other snacks. Some of the food included homemade dishes like Mexican refried beans, flan, vegan cupcakes, and various dips.

New officers for 2022-23: Lucía Ayelén Vallaro (President), Caroline Rhude (Vice President), Abby Neff (Treasurer), Grace Weisel (Media), Diana Contreras (Editor), Sabina Hordinski (Secretary) [not pictured]

7. April 14, 2022 – Presentación de tesis de honores / Honors Thesis Presentation

- **Attendance** – ~30

After the cord ceremony, Kaitlyn Booher, a senior Spanish and Political Science student in the Honors Tutorial College at Ohio University presented her final thesis to an audience of nearly 30 people, after receiving her SDP cords. This engaging event was open to nonmembers, so various family members, Modern Languages faculty, and other students attended. The event was a resounding success, and it was an excellent opportunity for members to practice their Spanish through asking questions to our presenter, casually conversing, and communicating academic ideas to professors and colleagues.

Serious discussion about Spain’s transition period… …followed by light banter and tapas.
• Attendance – 8

Sigma Delta Pi enjoyed a second Virtual Movie Night, where members watched *Contratiempo*. This mystery film gripped all participants, who had a detailed discussion about the outcome of the events. Since the movie was not too long, members discussed how complex the plot is and how much they were entertained by the film. They discussion included topics about feminism, women as protagonists, and the function of the antihero. Multiple viewing was recommended! This Movie Night was the last official event of the spring semester, so the participants also used part of the discussion to share their plans for the summer and their future, as many members were about to graduate. This was a time for participants to get to know each other better and share a few relaxing hours before finals week.

9. April 23, 2022 – Celebración del fin del año / End of Year Celebration
• Attendance - ~30

Each semester, Pi Rho/Tau’s chapter advisor invites a group of students to her farm in rural southeast Ohio to experience some Appalachian scenery and history while speaking Spanish and eating great food! The executive committee is among this coveted list and are always happy to participate in the festivities. Several of the graduate and undergraduate students who were graduating the following weekend spoke about their accomplishments at Ohio University, most memorable experiences, and future plans, before cutting into a cake and relaxing by a bonfire. Several of the international students enjoyed s’mores for the very first time - softened, browned, and flaming! This event is always a lovely way to end the semester after working hard to keep the chapter running and active. The graduating officers had a memorable sendoff, while the new officers started with a bang!

Paige Wilson, Alyssa King, Jafet Ix Camaal, Juana Eslava-Bejarano, Julio Beltrán, and Mandarina

Very excited new officers: Grace Weisel (Media), Diana Contreras (Editor), Caroline Rhude (Vicepresident)

2022-23 promises to add a Spanish immersion day for area high schools, virtual conversations with Argentine students learning English, another OLAC conference, and so much more!!