

## Personal Statement

When I first heard about Tau Beta Pi, it was through an email inviting me to join the fall initiation cycle. I saw the word fraternity and deleted it. In my mind fraternity and cult were almost synonymous: religious devotion and party commotion, kool-aid and beer, rituals and hazing. Even their definitions are suspiciously similar: “Cult: a particular system of religious worship, especially with reference to its rites and ceremonies. Fraternity: a local or national organization of male students, primarily for social purposes, usually with secret initiation and rites and a name composed of two or three Greek letters” (dictionary.com). They both have the word *rites*! I am over exaggerating, but I really am biased against fraternities/sororities. But as the gods of irony would have it, here I am a year later giving up precious Saturday morning sleep-ins and needed (though not always used) study time to join the dreaded fraternity. Here’s why.

One: it’s not actually a fraternity. This year, along with an email, I also received a letter from Tau Beta Pi and since personal property is a foreign and unpracticed concept when living at home, my mom and brother read the letter as well. My brother, who was better informed about Tau Beta Pi, kindly pointed out that it was really an honor society and recommended joining. I decided to visit the website and lo and behold the second sentence: “Tau Beta Pi is the premier engineering **honor society** in the United States and one of the top three **honor societies** in the nation.” I kept exploring and everything was fine until I reached the words ‘business attire required.’ Despite my eloquent writing style and posh word choice, I dislike formality with intensity comparable to a thousand white hot suns. The prestige, initiation requirements, and mandatory business attire just made me think that it was going to be a no nonsense, uptight organization with people who are too serious. This brings me to reason two: the people involved are actually really fun. When I went to the information session I was expecting intense, but the officers were really friendly, slightly disorganized and there was even swearing: it was awesome. I just really liked the dynamic and familiarity and wanted to become a part something where such relationships can be made. I’m only an initiate and I’ve already met some really fantastic people and had a lot of fun at the events. I think that it is great that so many of the events volunteer opportunities, which is the third reason of why I want to join. I enjoy volunteering, but so much of my time is consumed by class, homework, work, and everyday responsibilities that my motivation to help out the community ends up being drained. However, initiating for Tau Beta Pi has forced me to better manage my schedule and make time for volunteering and I want to keep that up. I think being in Tau Beta Pi will just be a great experience and I want to take advantage of that as much as possible.

As for what I can bring to the organization, I think that I would be able to help build community within the UCSD chapter because I enjoy helping people and have experience with teambuilding. When I make a commitment I put forth dedication and effort to follow through and do what is needed of me to the best of my ability. I know that if I am accepted into Tau Beta Pi I’ll put forth enthusiasm into this organization and be continuously involved. Thank you for this opportunity and your consideration.