Constitution of the Rubenstein Graduate Student Association

Article I: Name of Organization
1. The name of this organization is The Rubenstein School of Environment and Natural Resources Graduate Student Association of the University of Vermont (RGSA).

Article II: Purpose and Goals
1. The RGSA is an association of and for graduate students of the Rubenstein School of the Environment and Natural Resources. Its purpose is to represent the needs, interests, and perspectives of graduate students of RSENR. The RGSA will represent the diversity, common goals, needs and perspectives of graduate students in RSENR. The organization will draw upon all areas of graduate education within the school for membership and elected officers. RGSA will replace the previous RSENR Graduate Student Advisory Board (GSAB).
2. The goals of the RGSA are: to promote the interests and welfare of RSENR graduate students; to serve as a commons for all RSENR graduate students to provide input on RSENR policy, curriculum, and operation; to serve as a conduit of information relevant to graduate education in RSENR and UVM; to promote an intellectual and social community of graduate education; to sponsor opportunities for academic and professional development among its members.
3. The RGSA is a graduate student organization that is recognized and by the UVM Graduate Student Senate (GSS) and is intended to support their work to enhance the graduate student experience at UVM.

Article III: Membership
1. All graduate students enrolled in RSENR are members of RGSA. There shall be no other criteria for membership.
2. Non-discrimination: The RGSA shall not discriminate where discrimination is defined as denying individuals membership or appointment on the basis of gender, age, disability, race, color, religion, political affiliation, marital status, veteran’s status, national or ethnic origin, gender identity or expression, place of residence, or sexual orientation.
3. Members will not have to pay any dues.
4. The RGSA will meet at minimum once per semester.
5. Incoming students will receive information provided by RGSA in their acceptance package and will learn more about the RGSA during orientation.

Article IV: Responsibilities
The RGSA shall assume the following responsibilities:
1. Hold meetings of the RGSA membership at least once per semester.
2. Manage a mini grant program each semester to support RSENR graduate student research and travel.
3. Plan and hold community social events.
4. Organize and execute the RSENR Graduate Seminar Series each fall semester.
5. Collaborate with the UVM GSS and appropriate RSENR undergraduate student body.
6. Maintain the graduate student facilities in the Aiken Center including computers and printers.
7. Facilitate the mentoring program to connect graduate and undergraduate students.
8. Represent graduate student interests with the faculty and administration of RSENR.

Article V: Administration
Section A. Executive Committee

The RGSA executive officers shall serve on an executive committee. This committee shall meet at least once per month and shall assure that the responsibilities of the RGSA are fulfilled. The elected positions on the executive committee shall be: President, Aiken Chair, Treasurer, Communications Chair, and Social Chair. Elections shall occur every spring semester. Executive committee members shall commit to serve one calendar year in their positions and must be registered as RSENR graduate students for the entirety of their term.

1. **President:** Preside over executive committee and membership meetings; act as official spokesperson for the RGSA; set agenda and preside at executive committee and membership meetings.

2. **Aiken Chair:** Oversee the mini grant program; maintain Aiken graduate facilities; advocate for membership interests in the Aiken Center; attend monthly faculty meetings; assume the role of president in the event that the office is vacated until filled (see Article VIII.2).

3. **Treasurer:** Monitor and report on budget activities; act as fiscal agent for the group; prepare and maintain a ledger and budget; facilitate purchases and reimbursements for the executive committee; maintain graduate printers; facilitate dispersal of mini grants.

4. **Communications Chair:** Communicate activities of RGSA to the membership body via RSENRRGRAD listserv, RSENR website, and fliers; record minutes during meetings; prepare and distribute agendas and minutes of both executive committee and membership meetings; maintain current and historical records of RGSA membership list, meeting minutes, and agendas.

5. **Social Chair:** Coordinate social events including purchases, location reservation, and logistics; represent RGSA interests in departmental and GSS event planning.

Section B. Non-Elected Positions

These positions will be filled in the fall semester. Other than GSS
senators, all positions will be appointed by the President. The President will solicit nominations from the RGSA membership. The positions may be filled by elected members of the executive committee.

1. **Seminar Chair (2):** Facilitate Rubenstein Graduate Seminar series with faculty advisor during Fall semesters; invite speakers, visit coordination, publicity, and provision of refreshments; introduce speakers and field questions on their behalf.

2. **Mentoring Program Chair:** Coordinate and ensure the effective operation of the mentoring program.

3. **Graduate Student Senator(s):** Attend all GSS senate meetings; report GSS activities and interests to the RSGA. Appointed via direct nomination by the RGSA president in the Fall semester, subject to all GSS bylaws. The number of senators (one per each 25 students in RSENR) may vary on an annual basis.

**Article VI: Amendments**

1. Amendments to this constitution can be made at any time by distributing drafted changes to the membership body and voting. To be adopted, a simple majority (51%) of the membership must participate in a vote within seven days of distribution of the changes with the plurality voting in favor of adopting the amendment.

**Article VII: Removal/Resignation of Officers**

1. In the case of a member of the executive committee not fulfilling the duties described above, removal may be deemed necessary. If this is agreed upon unanimously by the executive committee (other than member in question), then the issue of removal should be voted on by the entire membership. To be adopted, a simple majority (51%) of the membership must participate in the vote with the plurality voting in favor of removal.

2. In the case of resignation before completion of the term on an executive officer, a new member shall be identified via appointment or special election within the first month of the following semester.

**Article VIII: By-Laws**

Section A. Elections:

1. Elections for the executive committee shall occur each Spring semester for the upcoming academic year.

2. In the case of no students running for a position, an appointment by the RGSA President during the first month of the fall semester shall be made.

3. Elections will be online and anonymous.

4. A majority of the membership (51%) must vote for elections to be valid. The candidate for each office that receives the plurality of votes will assume the office.

5. No candidate running for office may take a substantive part in the election process.

6. Candidates shall submit for distribution to RGSA membership a 100 word
description of their qualifications/interest in the position.

7. Candidates may run for more than one position. In the case of the same person receiving the plurality of votes for more than one position, the candidate may abdicate any of the positions and the person who received the second most votes who will then will assume the office.

Constitution completed on April 18, 2012.