

# **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.
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 intended to supplement the work of the UVM Graduate Student Senate (GSS) 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. Incoming students will receive information provided by RGSA in their acceptance package and will learn more about the RGSA during orientation.

## **Article IV: 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 for executive officers on the executive committee shall be: President, Aiken Chair, Treasurer, Communications Chair, and Social Chair. Elections shall occur every spring semester. Executive officers 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:** Set agenda and preside over executive committee and membership meetings; act as official spokesperson for the RGSA; act as liaison to other student body organizations, Rubenstein faculty and staff, and other UVM affiliates.
2. **Aiken Chair:** Maintain Aiken graduate facilities and office supplies (excluding printers); 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:** Maintain the annual RGSA budget; monitor spending and group fundraising; facilitate purchasing and reimbursement for executive committee; routinely update the executive committee and the Graduate Program Student Services Specialist on fiscal activities; oversee the mini-grant program, including distributing blind mini-grant applications to the executive committee and notifying mini-grant applicants of award status; maintain graduate student printers.
4. **Communications Chair:** Communicate activities of RGSA to the membership body via RSENRRAD listserv, RSENRR website, and fliers; record minutes during meetings; 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 making food and equipment purchases, location reservation, and other logistics; collaborate with communications chair to publicize events and with treasurer to ensure budgeting for events.

#### *Section B. Non-Elected Positions*

Non-elected positions are optional positions. The Executive Committee shall determine the need to fill these positions. Non-elected positions will be filled in the fall semester. Other than GSS senators, all positions will be appointed by the President. The President may solicit nominations from the RGSA membership. The positions may be filled by elected members of the executive committee.

1. **Seminar Chair:** 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. The number of members holding this position should be a minimum of two (2), with more appointed by the President as necessary.
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 or by self-nomination of an RGSA member willing to hold the position, subject to all GSS by-laws. The number of senators (a maximum of 3 in RSENRR) may vary on an annual basis.

## **Article V: 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 other student body organizations, including the UVM GSS and appropriate RSENR undergraduate student body organizations.
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 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 participating in the vote must vote in favor of adopting the amendment within seven days of distributing the drafted changes.

## **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 presented to the entire membership. To be adopted, a simple majority (51%) of the membership participating in the vote must vote in favor of removal.
2. In the case of resignation before completion of the term of an executive officer, a new member shall be identified 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 and announced to the RGSA membership.
3. Elections will be online and anonymous.
4. 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

- (maximum) 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 will then will assume the office.

Constitution completed on April 21, 2017 DRAFT.