CONSTITUTION
Graduate Research Assistants at Desert Research Institute

This constitution was authorized on __October 21, 2008___, by a ¾ majority vote at the GRAD organizational meeting.

ARTICLE I NAME

The name of this organization shall be the Graduate Research Assistants at DRI (GRAD).

ARTICLE II OBJECTIVES

The objectives of this chapter are:

1. To represent and define the rights and expectations of students at DRI.
2. To provide representation for student concerns to DRI Divisions, DRI Administration, and Nevada System of Higher Education Regents.
3. To foster an academic, professional, and social synergy between DRI divisions.
4. To assist with new student orientation and mentoring.
5. To assist in the recruiting and promotion of DRI graduate programs.

ARTICLE III MEMBERSHIP

All currently enrolled graduate students at UNR or UNLV under the direct advisement of DRI faculty.

ARTICLE IV DUES

There are no dues required to be a part of GRAD.

ARTICLE V FACULTY ADVISOR(S)

GRAD will have three faculty advisors, one from each of the divisions at DRI (Atmospheric Science, Earth and Ecosystems Science, and Hydrologic Science).

ARTICLE VI ELECTION OF OFFICERS

The GRAD counsel will consist of a President and 3 Vice Presidents. The President will be elected by a simple majority vote of all GRAD members. For election of the Vice presidents, the GRAD member body will be divided into their divisions. Each division, Hydrologic Science, Atmospheric Science, and Earth & Ecosystem Sciences, will elect one vice president to
represent their interests. Elections for the GRAD counsel will be held in the beginning of the Spring Semester. If for some reason a counsel member leaves, a new representative will be chosen by vote at the next meeting.

Offices shall consist of, but not be limited to, the following:

**President:**

The President is responsible for organizing and presiding at all GRAD meetings and activities. This includes the creation and distribution of meeting agendas. They also act as the liaison to DRI Faculty, to the UNR/UNLV GSA, to the DRI Administration, and to the NSHE Regents. The president is ultimately responsible for relaying GRAD ideas, concerns, and desires to the DRI governing bodies.

**Vice-Presidents (3):**

Each vice president acts as a liaison to their division, providing an accessible outlet for students to voice their concerns, and presenting GRAD concerns to division faculty. They are responsible for updating the GRAD secretary with relevant division activities and functions. Finally, at the time of election, each Vice President must accept the assigned role of Secretary, Treasurer, or Coordinator. The assigned roles will be initially determined by random assignment, but can be renegotiated by the VP’s.

**Secretary:**

The secretary is responsible for recording the historical documents of the chapter. (S)he takes minutes at chapter meetings and forwards them to AMS Headquarters. The secretary also is responsible for providing abridged minutes of meetings, updating the GRAD calendar, and organizing and maintaining documents.

**Treasurer:**

The treasurer is responsible for the financial records of the group. The treasurer is also responsible for all financial transactions of the group. The names of the treasurer and the president are normally both included on the chapter's bank account to assure fluidity of funds. The treasurer and/or president are restricted to writing checks on the chapter's bank account to $300 or less. To write a check for more than this requires the approval of a majority of those in attendance at the chapter meeting where this expenditure is discussed.
Coordinator:

The Coordinator is responsible for organizing events, including the scheduling of activities and the procurement of equipment and facilities. They are also responsible for the GRAD email account, which includes updating and maintaining the email list of GRAD members, as well as reading and responding/forwarding email to/from GRAD members.

Faculty Representatives:

There will be three faculty representatives to GRAD, one from each division. The faculty representatives will serve as the liaison between the DRI GSA, the faculty body, and the DRI administration. We request that each faculty representative attend at least one meeting per semester.

Other officers as required may be elected to serve the needs of the chapter.

ARTICLE VII EXECUTIVE BOARD

The Executive Board is responsible for ensuring that GRAD adheres to the terms in the groups' Constitution and By-Laws. The Executive Board of the chapter shall consist of the following members:

President
Vice-president, Division of Hydrologic Sciences
Vice-president, Division of Earth and Ecosystem Sciences
Vice-president, Division of Atmospheric Sciences
GRAD faculty advisors (ex officio)

Members of the Executive Board who are officers shall be replaced each year by the successors in their respective chapter offices.

All decisions requiring a vote will occur in formal meetings that comply with the open meeting law.

ARTICLE VIII COMMITTEE(S)

Committees can provide opportunities for chapter members to contribute to the successful functioning of the chapter, and to gain valuable leadership and teamwork experience. Committees can be formed at the discretion of the chapter with a majority vote of members at a chapter meeting. Some possible committees include:

Ad hoc constitution committee:

As the phrase ad hoc implies, this committee is formed for a specific
purpose. It was formed at the initial meeting of the chapter in order to provide a draft constitution for the chapter.

Nominations committee:

This committee will be formed by a majority vote of members present at the meeting where it is discussed. The purpose of the nominations committee will be to encourage members to run for chapter offices during the Spring elections. This committee may be formed at any time. It may be formed as a permanent committee, or it may be formed during the Fall semester to prepare for the upcoming Spring elections. The faculty advisors are ex officio members of this committee. Current chapter officers are not allowed to serve on this committee during their terms of office. Volunteers should be sought among the membership (both active and associate) to serve on the committee.

Other possible committees might include a program committee, outreach committee, etc. Additional committees can be created with a vote of a majority of those present at the meeting where the proposal is discussed.

ARTICLE IX MEETINGS

Meetings of GRAD will take place regularly, at times and places to be determined by the elected officers and announced to all members of GRAD. The GRAD meetings are subject to Nevada’s open meeting law.

The president shall chair Council meetings.

Procedures during meetings of GRAD shall conform to those listed in Robert's Rules of Order (modified).

On voting matters, all officers or their proxies must be present to constitute a quorum. Only graduate students will have a vote.

If an officer is absent from a meeting, the Representative must designate a proxy. Reasonable efforts will be made to ensure that each officer of the voting counsel can attend each meeting.

ARTICLE X PARLIAMENTARY AUTHORITY

Procedures during meetings of GRAD shall conform to those listed in Robert's Rules of Order (modified).

ARTICLE XI VOTING PROCEDURES
Elections for officers shall be conducted during the second group meeting of the Fall semester, or at a meeting as soon thereafter as possible. All members will have the right to vote for officers. Voting for officers will be by secret paper ballot in order to ensure the confidentiality of votes.

Nominations for officer positions can be made during the meeting at which the elections will be held. Self-nominations are also encouraged in order to increase the number of candidates. A nominations committee may be formed in order to help encourage active (voting) members to run for office. Members may be nominated for more than one office, but a member may only hold one chapter office during a yearlong term. If elected to more than one office, the member must choose which office (s)he will serve in during the upcoming term. The second-place vote-getters in the other offices will then be named to those offices. A counsel member may not simultaneously hold an elected position with GRAD and the UNR or UNLV Graduate Student Association.

ARTICLE XII AMENDMENTS

This constitution can only be amended by a vote of two-thirds (2/3rds) of those active (voting) members present at the meeting where this amendment is proposed and by 2/3 of the voting GRAD executive counsel. Amendments must be approved under the NSHE Board of Regents policy.

ARTICLE XIII DISSOLUTION OF CHAPTER

The group shall formally be dissolved by the vote of three-quarters (3/4) of present group members. At the dissolution of the chapter, the funds left in the chapter's bank account will be given to an appropriate charity. A majority of those active (voting) chapter members present at the meeting where it is discussed will decide which charity to distribute the excess funds to.

This constitution was prepared by the members of the Graduate Student Assistants at DRI ad hoc constitution committee: K.C. King, Nick Nauslar, Lise Comartin, and Jamie Trammell.