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SENATE BILL NO. 156—SENATOR LEE

MARCH 2, 2005

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Referred to Committee on Finance

**SUMMARY**—Provides for establishment of program of agronomy, horticulture, landscape ecology, and design and plant sciences within University and Community College System of Nevada. (BDR 34-823)

**FISCAL NOTE:** Effect on Local Government: No.  
Effect on the State: Contains Appropriation not included in Executive Budget.

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EXPLANATION – Matter in *bolded italics* is new; matter between brackets ~~omitted material~~ is material to be omitted.

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**AN ACT** relating to higher education; authorizing the Board of Regents of the University of Nevada to establish a program of agronomy, horticulture, landscape ecology, and design and plant sciences within the College of Agriculture of the University of Nevada, Reno; prescribing the requirements for the program; authorizing courses offered as part of the program to be offered at other campuses and through distance education; making an appropriation; and providing other matters properly relating thereto.

**Legislative Counsel’s Digest:**

1 Existing law authorizes the Board of Regents of the University of Nevada to  
2 prescribe programs of instruction, courses of study and research for the University  
3 and Community College System of Nevada. (NRS 396.440)  
4 This bill authorizes the Board of Regents to establish a program of agronomy,  
5 horticulture, landscape ecology, and design and plant sciences within the College of  
6 Agriculture of the University of Nevada, Reno. The program must offer a bachelor  
7 of science degree in those areas and must include at least five faculty members.  
8 Courses offered as part of the program also may be offered at other campuses and  
9 through distance education. This bill also makes an appropriation of \$1.2 million  
10 for distribution to the University of Nevada, Reno, and the Nevada Agricultural  
11 Experiment Station for the establishment and support of the program.

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1 WHEREAS, In Nevada, the provision of services that include  
2 lawncare, landscaping, groundskeeping, the restoration of lands  
3 through the control of invasive weeds and revegetation with native  
4 plants and grasses, supports approximately 15,000 jobs and  
5 generates approximately \$750 million annually in direct sales; and

6 WHEREAS, The provision of these vital services requires a well-  
7 educated and trained workforce; and

8 WHEREAS, Nevada's crop industry, including, without  
9 limitation, alfalfa and other hays, potatoes, onions, garlic, melons,  
10 barley, wheat, corn and oats, generates approximately \$250 million  
11 annually; and

12 WHEREAS, Organizations in the State of Nevada that represent  
13 the horticultural and commodity industries in the State have  
14 expressed a critical need for outreach and research services and  
15 support in many areas relating to agronomy and horticulture,  
16 including, without limitation, the management of weeds, pests and  
17 plant diseases, plant breeding and xeriscaping; and

18 WHEREAS, Despite the need for a well-educated and trained  
19 workforce in Nevada in the areas of agronomy, horticulture,  
20 landscaping ecology, and design and plant sciences, there is no  
21 baccalaureate program offered within the University and  
22 Community College System of Nevada that is specific to those  
23 industries in this State; now, therefore,  
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25 THE PEOPLE OF THE STATE OF NEVADA, REPRESENTED IN  
26 SENATE AND ASSEMBLY, DO ENACT AS FOLLOWS:  
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28 **Section 1.** Chapter 396 of NRS is hereby amended by adding  
29 thereto the provisions set forth as sections 2, 3 and 4 of this act.

30 **Sec. 2.** *The Board of Regents may establish within the*  
31 *College of Agriculture of the University of Nevada, Reno, a*  
32 *program of agronomy, horticulture, landscape ecology, and design*  
33 *and plant sciences.*

34 **Sec. 3. 1.** *The Board of Regents shall ensure that the*  
35 *program of agronomy, horticulture, landscape ecology, and design*  
36 *and plant sciences:*

37 (a) *Offers a bachelor of science degree in the areas of*  
38 *agronomy, horticulture, landscape ecology, and design and plant*  
39 *sciences;*

40 (b) *In accordance with NRS 396.568, allows a student to apply*  
41 *all credits earned toward an associate of applied science degree at*  
42 *a community college within the System toward the course work*  
43 *required for a major offered by the program; and*



1 (c) Sets forth the course work necessary to earn a bachelor of  
2 science degree in the areas of agronomy, horticulture, landscape  
3 ecology, and design and plant sciences.

4 2. In addition to offering courses to students at the University  
5 of Nevada, Reno, courses offered as part of the program of  
6 agronomy, horticulture, landscape ecology, and design and plant  
7 sciences may be offered at the Community College of Southern  
8 Nevada, at other campuses within the System as determined  
9 appropriate by the Board of Regents and through distance  
10 education.

11 **Sec. 4.** 1. The program of agronomy, horticulture,  
12 landscape ecology, and design and plant sciences must include at  
13 least five faculty teaching and research positions and such other  
14 personnel as determined appropriate by the Board of Regents.

15 2. The faculty appointed pursuant to subsection 1 must be  
16 assigned to positions within the College of Agriculture of the  
17 University of Nevada, the Community College of Southern Nevada  
18 and the Nevada Agricultural Experiment Station, as determined  
19 appropriate by the Board of Regents.

20 3. The faculty appointed to positions in the Nevada  
21 Agricultural Experiment Station pursuant to subsection 2, in  
22 cooperation with the State Department of Agriculture, Nevada  
23 Cooperative Extension and agencies of the Federal Government,  
24 including, without limitation, the Natural Resources Conservation  
25 Service, the Forest Service, the Agricultural Research Service of  
26 the United States Department of Agriculture and the Bureau  
27 of Land Management, shall conduct research in the areas of  
28 horticultural and plant sciences.

29 4. As used in this section, "distance education" means  
30 instruction which is delivered by means of video, computer,  
31 television, correspondence, or the Internet or other electronic  
32 means of communication, or any combination thereof, in such a  
33 manner that the person supervising or providing the instruction  
34 and the person receiving the instruction are separated  
35 geographically during the time in which the instruction is  
36 delivered.

37 **Sec. 5.** 1. There is hereby appropriated from the State  
38 General Fund to the Board of Regents of the University of Nevada  
39 the following sums for the establishment and support of the program  
40 of agronomy, horticulture, landscape ecology, and design and plant  
41 sciences:

42	For the Fiscal Year 2005-2006.....	\$600,000
43	For the Fiscal Year 2006-2007.....	\$600,000

44 2. If the Board of Regents establishes the program of  
45 agronomy, horticulture, landscape ecology, and design and plant



1 sciences pursuant to section 2 of this act, the Board of Regents shall,  
2 in each fiscal year, distribute \$300,000 to the University of Nevada,  
3 Reno, and \$300,000 to the Nevada Agricultural Experiment Station  
4 from the appropriation made by subsection 1 for the establishment  
5 and support of the program in accordance with sections 3 and 4 of  
6 this act.

7 3. Any remaining balance of the appropriation made by  
8 subsection 1 must not be committed for expenditure after June 30,  
9 2007, and must be reverted to the State General Fund on or before  
10 September 21, 2007.

11 **Sec. 6.** Of the five faculty positions appointed pursuant to  
12 section 4 of this act, two faculty members must be initially assigned  
13 to the Community College of Southern Nevada to provide  
14 information necessary for the development of the degree program in  
15 agronomy, horticulture, landscape ecology, and design and plant  
16 sciences and to provide service to the horticulture industry in  
17 southern Nevada.

18 **Sec. 7.** This act becomes effective on July 1, 2005.

