OU SCAMS November Meeting Summary

November 3, 2009
At the November 3 officers meeting we discussed the plans for our upcoming meeting. Due to a change in schedules we decided that our November meeting would be a panel of 5 graduate students answering questions about applying for grad schools. We are still trying to secure a speaker for our December Vortex II meeting. Our conference poster ideas are being finalized, and we are discussing the possibility of scholarships for travel to the conference to put in to use next year. We are also still looking at branching further in to the professional community and working with COCAMS, the professional branch of the AMS in the region to do more group activities. We have also begun discussions of becoming a NWA joint organization as well and offering benefits to active members of SCAMS. We have a constitution-editing meeting on Sunday, November 15, and the National Weather Center Festival is November 7.

November 10, 2009
We began our November meeting with a reflection on National Weather Center festival, which many of our members volunteered for. We had a brief announcement about the Alaskan STEP program, a 10 week internship program in one of 3 Alaskan locations. Our meeting offered a panel of 5 graduate students to answer questions about graduate school. The graduate students were chosen from a variety of different undergraduate programs throughout the country and represented several different options. Terra Thompson is a graduate of OU and works on phased array research with Dr. Wicker and Dr. Biggerstaff. Owen Shieh is a graduate of Cornell and currently is working on formation of super cells in hurricanes with Dr. Straka. Kim Klockow graduated from Purdue and is working on economic impacts of severe weather. Emmalee Davis graduated from OU and has decided to take her graduate studies in the direction of leadership and communication. Pat Hyland is a graduate of OU and is working on lightning research with electric field meters. Both Terra and Pat had participated in a form of undergraduate research with OU and were offered positions due to the research they were already working on. Deciding on a graduate program is not an easy task though. All of the students pushed the importance of AMS conferences and internship programs. They also strongly advised visiting the schools and having personal communication with the professors to find a way to stand out in the mass of applications. When asked what classes were required besides the graduation requirements, the general agreement was that Partial Differential Equations, Linear Algebra, programming classes, GIS classes and classes that develop specific skill sets are all strongly recommended. In general, the graduate students feel like they have more free time, but more work to get done in that time. They stressed the importance of planning and setting a schedule. Also, a graduate student is paid, and they can either be working as a research assistant or a teaching assistant, and most students go straight through the programs because it is much more difficult to go back to school.