June 1, 2012

Dear Graduate Students,

Congratulations on being selected to receive financial aid in the form of a graduate assistantship or fellowship. This is an honor that is reserved for only the very best graduate students, and it speaks well for your academic preparation and the confidence with which your faculty view your ability to succeed.

As you know, the financial aid package includes the option for health insurance. This is a significant benefit that we have been able to offer for the past three years, and is one that we feel is important to our graduate students.

Each year the premiums for this insurance plan have gone up significantly, and we have worked very hard to minimize the premium increases while still offering a good health insurance plan. This year, for the 2012-2013 academic year, the insurance industry has experienced unprecedented issues and the premiums for our graduate student plan have more than doubled from 2011-2012. Unfortunately, we find that we simply can’t afford to pay 100% of the plan as we have in the past, or the full 50% of the premium for those of you who are on a half-assistantship.

The contribution that the Graduate School will make to your plan has actually increased by 27% over last year, but in spite of that, we must ask you to pay a modest portion of the premium. This is not a mandatory plan, and you do have the option to opt out. But for those of you who choose to participate in the plan, the attached letter will explain the amount of the co-pay that you will have to assume. The amount that you will have to pay will vary depending on whether you have a full or half-assistantship and whether you have a fall-only, spring-only, or full-year award.

Please read the attached letter carefully, and then let us know if you intend to participate in the health insurance plan or not. It is imperative that we have your decisions by July 1.

I regret that we must take this course of action, but it is a reflection of the reality in which we live. Please know that we greatly value your contribution to the Marquette community, and I wish you every success as you pursue your graduate degree.

Sincerely,

Jeanne M. Hossenlopp
Vice Provost for Research and Dean of the Graduate School