

Dear Colleagues,

Based on recent conversations with external experts and leadership, along with consultation with peer institutions, compliance experts and internal constituents, MU will defer implementation of its decision regarding graduate student health insurance. As a result, the university will pay for health insurance for eligible graduate students.

MU, like other universities, continues to navigate a complex health insurance regulatory environment. Continuing the previous practice will allow time for a clearer understanding of federal guidelines and consideration of options and incorporation of input from the Task Force led by Dean Kris Hagglund, as well as students, faculty, administration, staff and external experts.

As a research university, MU places extraordinary value on graduate student contributions to our scholarly and campus community. We are committed to being a place where graduate students thrive as they earn their degrees.

We have received and discussed the letter of August 18 from the Forum on Graduate Rights. In addition to health insurance, this letter addresses a number of issues that are closely linked to the university's budget. MU's budget priorities are addressed through shared governance, primarily through the Budget Allocation and Advisory Committee, in which graduate students have ongoing representation.

Given the complexity of these issues, MU's leadership is committed to ongoing dialogue with elected representatives of the Graduate and Professional Council and other interested parties to discuss each of the issues raised in detail and seek graduate student input on these priorities. Last spring, the Office of Graduate Studies formed a task force on the graduate student experience. We will expand the charge and membership of this group as a means of addressing graduate student concerns.

R. Bowen Loftin
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