May 18, 2005

Dear Funded Graduate or Professional Student:

We are pleased to call your attention to the next phase of Ohio State's long-term plan to improve compensation and benefits for graduate and professional students on 50% or greater associateship, fellowship, or traineeship appointments paid through the Ohio State payroll system ("funded graduate students"). This long-term plan responds to recommendations appearing in the Graduate Quality of University Experience (G-QUE) report, which was released in 2001 by the Council of Graduate Students (CGS) and the Graduate School. The improvements outlined below will affect approximately 5,000 graduate students.

1. The university's subsidy for health insurance for eligible funded graduate and professional students enrolled in single coverage is increasing to 75% of the Student Health Insurance Plan (SHIP) premium in Academic Year (AY) 2005-06 from 64% this year.

2. The university's subsidy for health insurance for enrolled dependents of funded graduate students will increase to 50% in AY 2005-06 from 25% this year, the first year it was offered.

3. Campus guidelines providing stipend protection for short-term and extended absences from appointment duties will support funded graduate students during instances of personal and/or family illness, bereavement, childbirth, and adoption.

4. Appointing units will use a standard template for GA appointments to provide students with clear, complete, written information about the terms and conditions of their appointments.

5. The Graduate Associate Compensation and Benefits Committee (GCBC), previously an ad hoc committee, has become a permanent University Senate committee to research and address ongoing concerns. The committee's work will complement that of the Council on Research and Graduate Studies and other university bodies.

6. Additional savings through implementation of pre-tax healthcare premium deductions, introduced this year, will continue.

In the coming year, priority will be given to working with the GCBC to identify and address additional enhancements, including any that might be recommended by the Beck and Freeman committees, which are currently meeting. In addition, discussion will continue about how to integrate graduate student satisfaction surveys into the university's ongoing institutional research timetable.

Earlier improvements resulting from the G-QUE included increases in the minimum graduate associate stipend in AY 2001-02 and AY 2004-05, the introduction of a
university subsidy for individual funded graduate student health insurance, enhancing bereavement leave, and expanding services to allow adult family members of GAs, trainees, and fellows to fill their prescriptions at the Student Health Center.

Graduate students make critical teaching, research, and administrative contributions to Ohio State. We remain committed to improving compensation and benefits as part of our ongoing efforts to create a supportive environment for graduate study. We appreciate our partnership with the Council of Graduate Students, and we will continue to work with the Graduate Associate Compensation and Benefits Committee and the colleges in our ongoing effort to implement the recommendations of the G-QUE report.

Additional details about these improvements will be forwarded to you by U.S. mail soon. If you have questions in the interim, please consult the information posted on the Graduate School Web site at http://www.gradsch.ohio-state.edu/.

Sincerely,

Barbara R. Snyder
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Vice Provost and Interim Dean of the Graduate School

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Associate Vice President for Human Resources