Title: Support for Health Insurance for Graduate Teaching Assistants

Initiative Description, including statement of purpose and anticipated outcomes:
Providing health insurance to teaching assistants is widely accepted as common practice across Graduate Schools, and Western Washington University has historically offered paid health insurance to our Teaching Assistants as a benefit for their service. Rising cost due to a combination of increasing premiums and an increase in the participation rate has negatively impacted our budget. We seek ongoing funding for Graduate TA health insurance commensurate with the actual cost.

By providing ongoing health insurance we will be able to recruit and retain quality Graduate Students at a rate similar to our current practice. Graduate Students will continue to feel valued, and they will not incur additional debt by having to pay for their own health insurance premiums.

What University units (depts., colleges, etc.) will be involved?
Providing health insurance coverage to Graduate Assistants will affect students across the entire University: Accounting, Anthropology, Biology, Business Administration, Chemistry, Communication Sciences and Disorders, Computer Science, Educational Leadership, Elementary Education, English, Environmental Science, Environmental Studies, Geology, History, Human Services and Rehabilitation, Kinesiology, Mathematics, Music, Psychology, and Secondary Education.

How does the initiative support the University Mission and Strategic Plan?
Build upon Western's strengths to address critical needs in the State of Washington; serve as a model for institutional effectiveness, innovation, diversity, and sustainability.

Are there potential partnerships with external organizations/institutions?
Premiums are paid to an external provider as negotiated by Western.

Anticipated new positions needed to implement the initiative:
   Faculty: NA
   Staff: NA
   Graduate Students (supported): NA

Space needs (boldface one; attach note from Space Administration):
- Existing space is sufficient
- Existing space will be sufficient after modification
- New space may be required
New equipment or other one-time costs: TBD – would need to cover gaps outside our current $80,000 base allocation. We have an emergent request to fund for FY 16.

Recurring operating costs: Sufficient to keep pace with actual cost.

Estimated timeline for implementation: FY 16

Potential funding sources (boldface all that apply; attach notes from University Advancement and University Relations)

- State operating budget (decision package)
- New enrollments (tuition-based)
- External Education (fee-based)
- **Reallocation**
- Federal Support (agency: _______)
- Grants
- Partnerships (organizations/institutions: _______)
- Private Funds
- Other (please specify)