

WESTERN MICHIGAN UNIVERSITY



Office of the Provost
and Vice President for Academic Affairs

July 19, 2005

Dear Colleagues:

Today we begin the comprehensive task to determine which graduate programs at the University are the highest strategic priorities in academic affairs and, as such, should become investment centers for faculty positions and operating funds during the next several years. The policy statement about that rationale and the process for a critical review of graduate programs is available at <http://www.wmich.edu/provost/GraduateProgramReview>

Your participation is crucial to this review of graduate programs, which...next to enrollment growth...is the highest academic affairs priority for the 2005-2006 academic year. The need for this task stems from our mission as a student-centered research university, the president's and my commitment to support graduate education so that our programs become even more competitive, and the need for the most careful and intentional stewardship of scarce resources.

This document represents over four months of discussion and consideration within the University, and thus reflects the insight and counsel of many colleagues. I want to express my deep appreciation to those who provided critical comments and better ideas, and thus measurably improved this policy statement. I am also gratified to note that this comprehensive policy and detailed process has been unanimously endorsed by every academic dean and by the Faculty Senate Executive Board. This will be a complex undertaking and I expect we all will learn a great deal about our graduate programs and their strength at Western Michigan University.

If you have questions or concerns after reading the entire document, please send me a note. Thank you for your continuing support and cooperation.

Linda M. Delene
Provost and Vice President
for Academic Affairs