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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Heritage University Lowers Graduate School Tuition to Boost Teacher and Principal Numbers in Washington

Toppenish, WA – As the state of Washington faces a looming shortage of school teachers, principals and administrators, Heritage University is responding by taking several institution-wide steps to increase enrollment in postgraduate degree programs in teacher education and principal certification. One involves Heritage transforming its entire College of Education and Psychology (COEP) to offer innovative, graduate teacher education programs not available anywhere else in Washington. The other has the University lowering tuition for students enrolling in those graduate programs.

Merrilou Harrison, Dean of the COEP at Heritage, said the Master's in Educational Administration/Program Administration, led by Dr. Dina Blum, recently completed an innovative pilot principal preparation program based on the Association of Washington School Principals Leadership Framework User's Guide. "Our programs continue to be on the cutting edge of principal training, by designing a curriculum based upon nationally recognized guidelines for effective school principal leadership," said Harrison. She also said the College, under Dr. Marisol Rodriguez-Price, offers a Master's in Teacher Leadership, a program designed to prepare teachers for specific leadership positions, and includes a math specialist emphasis available only at Heritage.

In order to increase the number of students pursuing master's degrees in the unique COEP programs at Heritage University, Harold Wingood, Associate VP for Enrollment Management, said Heritage will reduce graduate school tuition from \$870 per credit, to \$770, a savings of \$100 per credit hour, which equates to \$3,200 savings for the overall cost of the program.

"The University wants to make it easier for a student to pursue a graduate degree in education at Heritage," said Wingood. "So, in addition to reducing graduate school tuition, Heritage also offers various levels of institutional aid to help those who want to help meet the demand for more teachers and principals in Washington."

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Dr, John Bassett, President of Heritage University, said the two strategies reinforce Heritage's commitment to fulfill the community and state's needs for more educators and strengthens its leadership role among universities with graduate teacher and principal education programs.

"By transforming the College of Education and Psychology and significantly reducing the cost of a graduate degree, Heritage continues its tradition of responding to needs of the education community as already established through HU105, our innovative teacher preparation program operated in collaboration with Educational Service District (ESD) 105 in Yakima," said Dr. Bassett.

Students will be able to enroll in the new programs at Heritage at the new graduate school tuition rates beginning with the fall term 2015.

For more information, contact Merrilou Harrison at (509) 865-0712 or Harrison_M@heritage.edu

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Heritage University is a non-profit, independent, regionally accredited institution of higher education offering undergraduate and graduate education across the state of Washington.