

UM ADVANCE Program
Preliminary Study of Named Lectureships
Fall, 2017

In February of 2017, the UM ADVANCE Program collected information on speakers who were invited to deliver named lectures¹ that are regularly held across the UM Ann Arbor campus. Because individuals of considerable significance within a disciplinary area are typically invited to deliver these types of talks, named lectures are prestigious. Thus, we were interested assessing potential differences by gender among the many speakers who are invited to present these high-status lectures.

Information on who delivers named lectures is not readily available; thus, we consulted with our contacts in each unit on campus; these are people who regularly assist us with unit-level information. Some units were at the macro school/college level (e.g., Kinesiology), and other units were at the more micro level of a department or division (e.g., the division of General Medicine, within the department of Internal Medicine, within the Medical School). These contacts were asked to provide the titles of the named lectureships within their unit, the years the lectures were given, and the names (and affiliations) of those who delivered the lectures for each of the years listed. Information on lectures given over the past ten years was requested, although not all of the named lectureships have been in existence that long. Many, but not all, of the contacts provided information about the named lectureships that take place in their units. When data contacts did not respond, we also searched online, as some units post historical records of their named lectures on their websites (e.g., year, name of lecturer, topic).

Through this process we gained information from approximately 80% of the units across campus. Information about named lectureships was never acquired for some units; these were cases in which data contacts did not reply, data contacts replied and indicated that there were no records of past named lectureships, and/or information was not posted publicly online.

It was possible to determine the gender of those individuals invited to give named lectures in most cases. When the individuals were affiliated with UM, gender was determined through the UM human resources database. When the individuals were not affiliated with UM, it was usually possible to determine gender by investigating the gendered pronouns used to refer to them online. Although of interest, it was not possible to get accurate information about the race/ethnicity of most of the individuals who were invited to deliver named lectureships over the past decade; thus, that information was not compiled.

While incomplete, the figure on the following page summarizes the data we were able to obtain. It provides the percentage of those who delivered named lectures by gender over the past 10 years, organized by school (for large schools) or school groups (for smaller units).

¹ When we use the phrase 'named lecture,' we refer to a discrete lecture event given in a unit (e.g., department, school, college) typically on a regular basis (e.g., annually) that has been named for a significant person in the field or discipline in which the lecture is being given. As an example: the *Zora Neale Hurston Lecture* that is delivered annually in the UM Department of Afroamerican and African Studies.

