
**ASSESSING THE ACADEMIC WORK ENVIRONMENT FOR
TENURED/TENURE-TRACK FACULTY
AT THE UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN
IN 2012 AND 2017:
GENDER, RACE, & DISCIPLINE IN DEPARTMENT- AND
UNIVERSITY-RELATED CLIMATE**

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

UM ADVANCE PROGRAM

OCTOBER, 2018

INTRODUCTION

This report marks the fourth study of campus climate at The University of Michigan that the ADVANCE Program has conducted since 2001. It provides an opportunity for us to understand how the climate at the university is experienced by different groups of faculty and allows us to consider changes over time. These studies are an important corollary to ADVANCE's focus on the success of a diverse and excellent faculty.

In 2001 and 2006 ADVANCE administered faculty climate surveys to assess the climate for STEM (science, technology, engineering, mathematics) faculty as part of the program's initial funding which focused on tenure track women in STEM fields. The findings from these studies were used to make policy recommendations and identify practices that might improve the work environment for women and minority science and engineering faculty. In particular, the findings have informed the design and implementation of ADVANCE initiatives at UM.

In the fall of 2012, ADVANCE conducted a third survey. As before, this study was a cross-sectional data collection similar to the previous two studies; however, this was the first study to survey all faculty (on all three tracks) on campus as ADVANCE's focus has broadened to include faculty in all fields and from all underrepresented groups, especially faculty of color. The overall findings from this survey were consistent with the previous two surveys and indicated that the climate is relatively positive for white male faculty in all disciplinary groups (sciences and engineering, social sciences, and arts and humanities), but less so for white women and faculty of color. Nevertheless, it also revealed many areas of improvement for science and engineering faculty for whom over time data were available. Despite the positive changes noted, the data also suggested that there continue to be clear and consistent gender and race-ethnicity differences indicating a more negative climate for women and faculty of color in science and engineering.

In fall 2017 ADVANCE conducted a fourth survey, replicating the 2012 cross-sectional campus-wide faculty survey. This allowed us to examine the work-related environment for faculty campus-wide and assess change over time (from 2012 to 2017) for faculty in all three disciplinary areas. Our goal for this most recent climate study was again to observe how faculty experience their working environments at UM. This report focuses on the assessment of the work environment for faculty at two points in time: 2012 (Time 1) and 2017 (Time 2) and is limited to the experiences of tenure-track faculty campus-wide within three broad disciplinary groups with a particular emphasis on the work environment for women and faculty of color.

All tenure-track, research, and clinical faculty with paid appointments at the University of Michigan-Ann Arbor were surveyed. For this analysis our focus is tenure-track faculty (N=3080); the response rate was 40%. All analyses were conducted using appropriate weights and controls. In addition, a measure of experience was used as a control in all analyses; this means that any statistical finding reported below cannot be explained by simple differences in age, years at UM, year of degree, or rank.

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

CLIMATE INDICATORS

SCIENCE AND ENGINEERING FACULTY

One-third of all women reported experiences of *gender discrimination* in 2017 (slightly higher than 2012 rates) and reported more gender discrimination than male faculty. Moreover, faculty across groups reported more experiences of *overhearing disparaging comments about women* in 2017 than in 2012. By contrast, rates of reported experiences of *unwanted sexual attention* were low and constant over time.

Reports of *racial-ethnic discrimination* were relatively low and fairly stable over time but were significantly higher for faculty of color compared to white faculty at both times. Reports of *overhearing disparaging comments about racial-ethnic minorities and/or religious groups* were also generally low but showed an increase over time for all groups and increases that approached or obtained statistical significance for women faculty.

Ratings of the *general department climate* did not improve for any group in science and engineering. Moreover, there was a significant decrement in *climate for diversity* scores for all but men of color. In addition, women continued to report a more negative general climate and climate for diversity compared to men. Men of color also reported a more negative climate for diversity compared to white men.

SOCIAL SCIENCE FACULTY

One-third of women reported experiences of *gender discrimination* in 2017 and these rates were higher than in 2012 (but not significantly higher). Women also reported more experiences of gender discrimination compared to men. Reports about *overhearing disparaging comments about women* in 2017 were generally low. Reported rates of *unwanted sexual attention* were also low across groups.

Approximately one-quarter of faculty of color reported experiences of *racial-ethnic discrimination* in 2017; the 2012 rate was similar for women of color but increased by 12 percentage points for male faculty of color from 2012 to 2017. Reported rates of *overhearing disparaging comments about racial-ethnic minorities and/or religious groups* were low both years but increased slightly over time for all but white men; this difference approached or obtained statistical significance for men of color and white women. Rates were higher for faculty of color compared to white faculty but these differences were only statistically significant in 2017.

Ratings of the *general department climate* also did not improve for any group in the social sciences. All but white men also reported a less positive *climate for diversity* in 2017. Faculty of color also reported less positively than white faculty about both the general climate and climate for diversity.

ARTS AND HUMANITIES FACULTY

Approximately one-third of female faculty in arts and humanities reported experiences of *gender discrimination* in 2017; the rates were slightly lower compared to those in 2012 but over time differences did not approach statistical significance. By contrast, rates of gender discrimination increased over time for both groups of male faculty, but, again, the differences were not statistically significant. White women reported higher levels of gender discrimination compared to white men both years; women of color

reported higher levels than men of color in 2012 only. Rates of *overhearing disparaging comments about women* were generally low across groups, but in all cases increased from 2012 to 2017 (these over time differences were not statistically significant except in the case of men of color). Reported experiences of *unwanted sexual attention* were also generally low, but higher for women than for men (this difference was statistically significant in the case of white faculty); that rate for women of color increased over time to a rate comparable to white women in 2017.

While relatively low, reported rates of *overhearing disparaging comments about racial-ethnic minorities and/or religious groups* increased over time for all groups; the differences were statistically significant for the faculty of color. *Racial-ethnic discrimination* also increased over time for all groups, but were higher for faculty of color. Women of color reported more experiences of racial-ethnic discrimination compared to white women and men of color.

There was no improvement in faculty ratings of the *general department climate* in arts and humanities. Similarly, the climate for diversity ratings were less positive over time for both groups of men faculty. Nevertheless, white men reported a more positive climate for diversity compared to men of color and white women in 2017.

CAREER SATISFACTION

SCIENCE AND ENGINEERING FACULTY

Rates of *work satisfaction* were high and showed some improvement over time; in particular satisfaction levels were higher in 2017 for men of color; by contrast, rates for women of color were lower (a trend). Rates of *overall career satisfaction* were also generally high and showed some improvement over time. Similarly, reported *interest in leaving UM* decreased over time for all groups; in the case of men of color that difference was statistically significant. Moreover, in 2012 mean scores for white men reflected higher satisfaction compared to white women and men of color; however, those comparisons were not statistically different in 2017.

SOCIAL SCIENCE FACULTY

Mean scores for *work satisfaction* were generally high both years. Ratings of *overall career satisfaction* were also generally high both years--slightly higher than overall work satisfaction. Similarly, *interest in leaving UM* was, on average, moderately low and fairly stable. Overall career satisfaction decreased for women of color and interest in leaving UM increased for both men and women of color; the reverse pattern was observed for white faculty (these differences were not statistically significant). Moreover, in 2017 faculty of color were more likely to express an interest in leaving UM than white faculty.

ARTS AND HUMANITIES FACULTY

Work satisfaction scores were moderately high and fairly consistent for arts and humanities faculty from 2012 to 2017; moreover, rates were similar by gender and race-ethnicity. *Overall career satisfaction* scores were slightly higher on average but only increased significantly over time for white male faculty. Moreover, white men reported higher overall career satisfaction compared to white women (their mean score was also quite a bit higher than that for men of color but the difference was not significant). *Interest in leaving UM* mean scores were below the midpoint across years.

CONCLUSIONS

The findings suggest some aspects of the *broader University climate* continue to be less welcoming for women and faculty of color. Across disciplinary groups, one-third of women faculty reported experiences of gender discrimination within the previous five years and they were more likely than their male colleagues to report gender discrimination. Moreover, faculty reports of overhearing insensitive and disparaging comments about women, although generally low, increased from 2012 to 2017 (in some cases the difference was statistically significant).

Rates of racial-ethnic discrimination were generally low, except for some women of color, and consistent over time, except for some men of color for whom rates increased. Reports of overhearing insensitive and disparaging comments about racial-ethnic minorities and/or religious groups were also generally low, but, again, demonstrated an increasing trend over time, particularly for faculty of color for whom, perhaps with larger numbers, these differences might be statistically significant.

Department general climate ratings were generally high and consistent with 2012 mean scores; however, there was also evidence of a decline over time in ratings for faculty of color that did not obtain statistical significance (again, perhaps due to low numbers). *Climate for diversity* scale scores were also high as in 2012; however, again, there was evidence of an overtime decline in scores.

The lack of much over time improvement (and in some cases a decrement) in experiences of the climate for faculty, especially women and faculty of color is disappointing, particularly when we found a significant improvement in 2012 for science and engineering faculty for whom we had over time data. Moreover, we continue to see instances of more negative climate ratings for women and faculty of color, coupled with their higher experiences of discrimination compared with men and white faculty. The lack of clear disciplinary differences in aggregated faculty experiences of the climate suggests that some aspects of the climate related to gender and race/ethnicity may well be quite pervasive across disciplines and supports ADVANCE's expanded focus beyond the science and engineering fields.

Assessment of *career satisfaction* revealed fairly stable reporting over time. Science and engineering women faculty and faculty of color showed significantly higher overall career satisfaction in 2017 compared to 2012. However, these differences were not in evidence for faculty in the other disciplinary areas and only white men in arts and humanities reported significantly higher career satisfaction in 2017 compared to 2012.

Our cumulative data suggest that many of the same factors influence different groups of faculty members' overall career satisfaction and intention to leave. Thus, addressing these different climate factors are likely to benefit all faculty, rather than benefiting some at the expense of others. Given the clear relationship between faculty members' ratings of the climate and work satisfaction with their overall satisfaction and intention to leave UM, it is important to continue our efforts to improve the campus climate for all faculty.