

# Assessing the Academic Work Environment for Tenure-Track Faculty at the University Of Michigan in 2023: University-Related Climate Across Gender, Race, And Rank

# **DATA-BASED RECOMMENDATIONS AND RESOURCES**

#### **EXPERIENCES IN U-M ENVIRONMENT**

- Recognize, validate, and respond to junior faculty and women's, particularly BIPOC+ women's, heightened discriminatory experiences. Leaders can do so by:
  - Shedding light on women faculty's lived experiences (without singling out individuals) by initiating difficult conversations within their unit. Leadership can cultivate an anti-racist workplace by scheduling workshops during department faculty meetings that strengthen facilitation skills for anti-racist discussions. Examples of these workshops include those facilitated by the <u>U-M-Antiracism Oversight Committee (AROC) at Michigan Medicine</u>.
  - Offering faculty <u>professional development resources</u> that promote bystander intervention skills such as the <u>Change It Up!</u> Sessions held by <u>Organizational Learning</u>.
  - Implementing <u>Universal Design</u> into new and existing policies. This is the idea that creating a design to benefit the most marginalized populations ultimately benefits everyone.
  - Educating faculty on the differences between <u>academic freedom</u>, <u>freedom of speech</u>, and <u>disparaging comments</u>.
  - Recognizing and addressing disparaging comments and microaggressions via approaches highlighted in <u>climate case studies</u> offered by <u>U-M ADVANCE RISE Committee</u>.
  - According to the National Academies recommendations on Sexual Harassment of Women, we must do more than training sessions and have written policies & procedures to change the culture. They recommend (video):
    - Integrate values into the system
    - Change the power dynamics
    - Support targets of sexual harassment
    - Improve transparency and accountability
- Take active efforts to combat harassment based on sex and gender. Leadership can implement strong antiharassment programs that include:
  - Clearly written anti-harassment policies
  - Accessible and flexible complaint procedures
  - Investigative procedures by the department and by Equity, Civil Rights and Title IX (ECRT) Office
  - Actions leaders can take to hold faculty accountable
- Seek out innovative actions that other organizations and institutions have taken to address sexual harassment. The National Academies of Science, Engineering, and Medicine has a repository containing self-reported information to help higher education organizations address and prevent all forms of sexual harassment on campus.

- Offer mandatory training, workshops, and other resources that provide sexual and gender-based misconduct prevention. Leadership should also understand and distribute resources that <u>clarify who is obligated to report sexual misconduct or discrimination</u> within their department or academic unit.
  - Leadership can encourage attendance at workshops held by the <u>U-M Prevention Education</u>, <u>Assistance and Resources (PEAR)</u> team in the Equity, Civil Rights and Title IX (<u>ECRT</u>) Office.
  - Center for Research on Learning and Teaching (CRLT) annually offers a series Moving the Needle on Sexual Harassment workshop series, as well as Creating Climates Resistant to Sexual Harassment: Defining the Problem workshops for academic leadership teams.
- Expect respect from all members of the academic community. Take actions to ensure that your department promotes and maintains a <u>climate of respect</u> to discourage sexual harassment.
- Hold faculty accountable; communicate meaningful consequences. The National Academies' convened the "Action Collaborative on Preventing Sexual Harassment in Higher Education" resulting in multiple resources such as Exploring Sanctions and Early Interventions for Faculty Sexual Harassment in Higher Education. Rather than allowing excuses and granting exceptions or excuses to a subset of faculty or to more senior or "star" faculty, leaders of academic units should uniformly interpret and communicate the existing policies and guidelines with respect to diversity, equity, and inclusion. If our core values, including DEI, really matter, academic leaders must ensure that consequences are meaningful and must be willing to make the right but sometimes difficult or unpopular decision. This ensures that all faculty share common expectations and are treated equitably. Per the National Academies of Science, Engineering, and Medicine, potential accountability actions can include:
  - A sanction letter or warning
  - Temporary salary reduction
  - Forced administrative leave
  - Separation from the college or university
  - Monetary restitution to targets
  - Reporting to current funding agency about the violation of sexual harassment policy
  - Restrictions on conditions of teaching and/or mentoring
  - Denial of tenure or emeritus status
  - Public disclosure of actions taken
- Take a more exploratory approach to implement accountability. Department leaders can take a more exploratory approach to solutions, such as piloting various approaches to holding faculty accountable such as establishing community norms within their departments.
- Create clear and concise language across the University. Leaders should establish cultural norms and clear, concise language that emphasizes individual responsibility and accountability for actions or inactions across the entire faculty community. Additionally, they should have resources they can point to as a reference for faculty members who question climate practices.
- Share updated language and policies at department meetings. Department chairs, with the support of the Associate deans, should provide any updates and reminders when it comes to DEI practices and policies.
- Educate faculty and leadership about <u>code-switching</u> and discuss how minority faculty may feel pressured to assimilate to their white peers to increase their chances of being legitimized in the academic community.

- Acknowledge that professionalism, particularly within academia, is rooted in white, patriarchal norms, behaviors, and values. Understanding and acknowledging the white, patriarchal norms and values that academic culture is rooted in is essential (McCluney et al., 2021). Leadership should recognize that BIPOC+ and more junior faculty may feel pressured to code switch, and reflect on whether their units allow for expressions of professionalism that stray from white, patriarchal notions of professionalism.
- Reflect on and address implicit biases in the workplace. Units should reflect on and address implicit biases that may impact how they perceive and interact with colleagues within their unit. To facilitate discussions on bias, leadership can look to implement workshops such as those offered by the <a href="STRIDE">STRIDE</a> committee or U-M College of Literature, Science and the Arts.
- Welcome and center underrepresented voices and experiences. Leadership should not only welcome but center underrepresented voices and experiences to promote inclusivity and psychological safety within their units. Third-party climate consulting or having the university hire in-house climate consultants should be considered by leadership to shed light on whose voices and experiences are being represented, and may bolster DEI efforts on campus. DEI leads within schools, colleges, and campus units should have the authority to recommend changes to senior leadership in the unit while serving as a first line of support regarding DEI matters. For guidance, leadership can look to the Office of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (ODEI).
- Identify and quantify faculty engagement with DEI-centered programming and training. Leadership can incorporate a standalone DEI category (separate from research, teaching and service) on Faculty Activity Reports that indicates whether faculty attended DEI programs or training, or whether they engage in DEI-related service. This category would not only provide visibility to faculty's DEI efforts; it could also be used to evaluate faculty for tenure or promotion.

## **SATISFACTION**

- Identify sources of negative climate. Leadership should be strategic about identifying where and/or who (e.g., specific unit, person) inequity and dissatisfaction is stemming from before creating change via policy and interventions. Resources should be used to determine where neglectful behavior may be occurring within units. Identifying pockets of positive climates within the university (e.g., specific units or colleges where climate is warm, diverse, and inclusive) can also provide insight for climate-related initiatives.
  Departmental Climate Assessments conducted by ADVANCE can be leveraged as an intervention tool to identify what climate issues are present within a specific unit and provide their leadership with a starting point in addressing climate concerns.
- Acknowledge and address associate professors' unmet needs and inequitable workloads. Over the past 12 years, associate professors represented 25% of the voluntary faculty departures at U-M. In the most recent seven years, the percentage of associate professors who voluntarily terminate from the university has been gradually increasing to 31% in AY 2022-23. It is critical that we find ways to improve the experiences of our associate professors, since they have the institutional knowledge and experiences that are lost when they voluntarily leave the university. Leadership should be wary of overburdening associate professors with service loads, particularly amidst what can be a disorienting phase of associate professors' careers. Department leadership should be intentional about attending to associate professors by identifying and addressing their climate and scholarly engagement needs. Per an LSA report, this can be done by holding annual information sessions, providing events and programming for associate professors

early in rank, and/or by adding questions to faculty annual report templates that ask about mentoring needs, understanding of promotion guidelines, or the opportunity to indicate other needs not currently being met. Leadership should also consider exploring how much support a cohort structure provides, particularly for associate professors who are often lacking in support at the departmental-level.

- Create/ensure mechanisms for faculty recognition that do not rely exclusively on their scholarship. Departmental leaders can ensure faculty are nominated and recognized for their commitments to and innovations in teaching, service, and DEI, in addition to their scholarship.
- Ensure faculty have opportunities and time to do meaningful work. Scholarly engagement may be evidenced in publications, but often involves time that cannot be quantified and documented on annual reviews, or in tenure/promotion portfolios. Leadership should recognize that time spent collaborating, presenting on panels, brainstorming, and engaging in intellectually stimulating conversations with colleagues, community engagement, and/or public outreach is time well spent, and essential to some faculty's satisfaction and scholarly success.
- Recognize that faculty who hold marginalized identities or do work with marginalized communities are more at risk of experiencing harassment, threats, and attacks. Leadership should recognize that U-M is not a microcosm, and that national social issues as well as current events occurring off-campus have repercussions for faculty well-being, safety, and climate experiences on-campus. Moreover, the divisive sociopolitical context and ongoing racist rhetoric leaves these scholars more susceptible to harm and targeted attacks. The safety of faculty who conduct research and implement curriculum centered around anti-racism, systemic inequities, and DEI is also at risk and should be of concern to leadership. Resources about institutional responses to scholar safety like those provided below U-M National Center for Institutional Diversity should be leveraged by administrative leadership:
  - Envisioning Institutional Responses to Scholar Safety panel
  - Environment, Health, and Safety (EHS) offers resources related to workplace safety, work-related incident reporting, and workplace hazard assessments
  - <u>Sexual and Gender-Based Misconduct Reporting & Resources</u> offers reporting tools as well as sexual assault awareness and prevention education.
  - Center for Research on Learning and Teaching (CRLT) offers services related to teaching and mentoring including consultations, orientations, funding and climate-related theater-based learning experiences.
  - <u>Council for Disability Concerns</u> provides connection opportunities, resources, and programs related to disability, honoring individual needs, and accessibility.
  - Faculty and Staff Counseling and Consultation Office (FASCCO) provides resources specific for caregivers, pre-tenure support, grief/loss, and return to work.
- Be intentional about shifting the climate towards respect and inclusion. Leadership can refer to the ADVANCE Respect in Striving for Excellence (RISE) Committee's framework for ways to intentionally cultivate respect and inclusion at the unit level.
- Facilitate faculty's search for resources within the university's decentralized campus. Given the decentralized nature of the university, it is difficult to be aware of resources on campus. All resources should be readily accessible and straightforward to access. Navigating the various offices, programs, and committees on campus can be challenging and overwhelming for faculty who are already facing challenges on campus. Creating a central location both online and in-person (e.g., on-campus consultant center)

where all resources and initiatives across campus are stored can facilitate cross-unit communication and collaboration.

## **PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCES**

- Demystify the criteria for promotion to full professor. There are structural policies and guidelines at the university, school/college and/or department level to set norms and expectations for tenure, but not for promotion to full professor. Articulate the criteria for promotion to full and communicate these expectations using transparent guidelines.
- Be an ally of equitable faculty workloads. Follow KerryAnn O'Meara's advice:
  - Encourage transparency. Provide faculty with accessible, basic data about workload and promote policies that allow all faculty to know how to obtain certain service positions.
  - Be a vigilant bystander in your department. Intervene if you see someone trying to shift less desirable work to others.
  - Encourage accountability. If it is clear someone in the department is not doing their share of department work, ask them to do so.
  - Acknowledge differences in contexts and promote flexibility. It is important to recognize that faculty members have different responsibilities and therefore create flexibility approaches and policies.
  - Ask. Ask colleagues, especially women and underrepresented minority faculty members, how their work is going and if they are challenged in particular areas.
- Be mindful of the mid-career challenges experienced by associate professors. Leadership should be mindful of the challenges faced by associate professors, and the implications these challenges have for associate professors' resources, time, and energy. Associate professors are less protected timewise when compared to assistant professors and they have more service tasks, while simultaneously having more external demands as their prominence is increasing in the field. Leadership should seek out training on how to mentor associate professors through the mid-career stage.
- Revisit faculty activities that are credited during tenure and promotion reviews. There are core activities that faculty are needed to maintain the university's excellence but often are outside of their official responsibilities (e.g., meeting with a prospective faculty member, recruiting while giving a talk at another institution). Advising a graduate student is no longer exclusively about their scholarship, but often includes providing emotional support and more mentoring than ever before. These contributions need to be acknowledged, appreciated, and recognized as official faculty work that contributes to tenure and promotion.
- Create multiple pathways to promotion. Valuing and crediting all aspects of the promotion portfolio would
  increase promotion rates and underscore that a successful unit is not only composed of faculty's research
  and scholarship.
- Recognize service as a valid path towards promotion. Often, the primary focus of tenure and promotion is academic research, with little to no credit provided to teaching and service. Since this work is required for an academic department's success, it should all be recognized.

- Work toward eliminating the <u>cultural tax</u> placed on BIPOC+ faculty. Leadership should acknowledge the disproportionate burden placed on BIPOC+ faculty of resolving DEI issues within their institutions. Recognizing that a) these service tasks are in addition to their current workload; b) BIPOC+ faculty may feel pressured and obliged to say yes; and c) their service must be visible and rewarded are all steps towards eliminating this cultural tax.
- Provide greater recognition, formal and informal, of faculty's teaching, scholarship, service and DEI contributions. University leaders should acknowledge the various types of visible and invisible activities that faculty engage in, as well as the inequitable workloads that BIPOC+, women, and early/mid-career faculty are often burdened with, and how this hinders their work satisfaction. Address the disproportionate responsibility placed on URM faculty for diversity work and mentoring, as well as women faculty for teaching and service (O'Meara, et al., 2021). Some specialized initiatives that support the university (e.g., recruiting diverse faculty, mentoring URM students) require faculty with the same identity as members of a community to maximize the impact of the university's efforts. These interactions are vital to the functioning of the university, yet this service is often invisible and unrewarded. Leadership can:
  - Create value statements for teaching, service contributions, and participation in DEI activities to increase the importance of these activities in the faculty review process.
  - Recast "service" as "leadership" or "governance" at the local level as well as in tenure and promotion documents and materials.
  - Differentiate service loads created by both invisible and visible service. Recognize and compensate service through but not limited to: summer salary, course releases, and administrative differentials.
- Address underrepresentation in department leadership. The demographic makeup of faculty administrators should be periodically examined within units. Identifying which voices and identities are underrepresented amongst leadership is necessary to ensure those who are historically underrepresented also have a seat at the table.
- Empower faculty who have expressed interest in leadership roles. Faculty who hold minoritized identities (e.g., BIPOC, women) have less access to leadership opportunities and when granted access, have reduced support in navigating leadership roles. Campus leaders should encourage underrepresented faculty To seek positions of leadership. To ensure administrators have the resources and support to thrive in these roles, campus leaders should support faculty in positions of leadership.
- Be intentional about avoiding faculty burnout due to high workloads. University leaders should remain cognizant of the visible and invisible work faculty of color are often tasked with, and how this takes a toll on their lives outside of work. To remedy these workload inequities, leadership can implement strategies highlighted in equity reports, such as:
  - Reducing service loads.
  - Recognizing both visible and invisible service, redistribute workloads accordingly.
  - Increasing teaching support.
  - Providing supportive funding opportunities.
  - Addressing salary inequities.
- Show a commitment to faculty well-being by modeling work-life balance. Unit leaders can set an example of work-life balance by setting work boundaries, prioritizing self-care, and encouraging faculty to follow

suit. One effective example includes <u>LSA's policy about not sending email after business hours or on the weekends</u>. Other resources that can help promote faculty well-being include:

- MHealthy also offers resources that focus on nutrition, physical activity, mental and emotional well-being, financial well-being, and chronic health conditions.
- Faculty and Staff Counseling and Consultation Services (FASSCO) helps university faculty and staff resolve personal and work-related issues via: professional counseling, coaching, training, and consultation services. FASSCO also provides support groups for new moms returning to work, faculty who are experiencing grief, sexual harassment, are parenting teens, dealing with a break-up or divorce, and managing their anger issues.
- <u>Child and Family Care</u> provides resources to support a balance between personal and professional life, including child care resources, elder care resources, a family helpers posting board, and resources for adults and children with disabilities.
- The <u>Well-being Collective</u> at the University of Michigan is a collaborative effort focused on making U-M a better place to live, work and learn for our students, faculty and staff by implementing a system-wide approach to supporting well-being across our campus. In addition, Human Resources offers a <u>curated collection of programs and resources for faculty and staff</u> that cater to physical, mental, environmental, financial, occupational, social, intellectual, and spiritual well-being.
- Consider expanding <u>Faculty Leadership Development programs</u> so that faculty interested in a future administrative role can attend. Create a clear path for faculty who are interested in potential administration to network with university leaders.
- Share resources that promote professional development and faculty success, such as those offered by the <u>National Center for Faculty Development and Diversity (NCFDD)</u>.
- Seek out and share climate-related resources that cater to faculty's identities and needs. Since BIPOC+ women are the most disenfranchised, addressing their needs will help all faculty. Taking an intersectional approach is not simply about "multiple identities", but it could help to address power and interlocking structural inequality experienced by BIPOC+ women faculty (Bowleg, 2021). Leadership should make efforts to cultivate a positive climate by periodically sharing resources with faculty within their unit, such as:
  - Respect in Striving for Excellence (RISE) ADVANCE committee offers resources such as Climate Case Studies, programming, and community-building opportunities that focus on building respect and inclusion in academic workplace climates.
  - <u>ADVANCE's Networks for faculty</u> offer opportunities for women+ scientists and engineers, faculty of color, single faculty, and LGBT+ faculty to find community.
  - Center for Education of Women (CEW+) offers career counseling, funding opportunities, support communities, events, and advocacy initiatives that cater to women as well as underrepresented and underserved communities. This includes:
    - Women of Color in Academy Project (WOCAP) is a campus-wide faculty network that supports women of color in the academy via scholarship, community, and advocacy work.
    - <u>Women of Color Task Force (WCTF)</u> provides professional development, networking, and training opportunities that cater to women of color staff and faculty.

## **FACULTY RETENTION**

- Prioritize recruiting and retaining faculty. Leadership should be intentional, systematic, and strategic when it comes to recruiting and retaining faculty. The <u>ADVANCE Program</u> focuses on recruitment, retention, climate, and leadership development and has various committees and resources committed to supporting faculty at different stages of their careers, including:
  - Research highlighted by the <u>Committee on Strategies and Tactics for Recruiting to Improve Diversity and Excellence</u> (STRIDE) shows that often leadership has intent, but lacks the tools to recruit and retain these faculty. STRIDE resources include:
    - <u>STRIDE Committee</u> provides information and advice about practices that promote the recruitment, retention, and promotion of diverse, well-qualified candidates for faculty positions. Recent <u>data</u> shows that recruitment for faculty who identify as women has increased from 33% in 2015 to 37% in 2022.
    - A <u>handbook for faculty searches and hiring</u> as well as <u>applicant and interview evaluation</u> tools contain best practices and are designed for faculty and administrators involved in hiring and retention processes.
    - Search committees for department chairs, deans, provost, and president should be required to participate in full STRIDE training sessions.
  - LAUNCH Committees provide resources for new tenure-track assistant professors, offering support and guidance throughout their first year. Committees include the department chair as well as senior faculty members. Topics include teaching and working with students, research and publication plans, resources for scholarship and funding, starting collaborations, as well as integration into the university.
  - The <u>Respect in Striving for Excellence</u> (RISE) committee works to support climates of respect and inclusion within academic units. Rather than waiting until a faculty member secures an external job offer, leadership should proactively support a positive climate every day.
  - <u>Post-Promotion Academic Career Exploration (PACE)</u> is a pilot coaching program designed to support faculty who have been newly promoted to associate professor with tenure, and do not already have coaching resources in their home academic units.
- Critically examine departure factors and retention strategies. A recent ADVANCE report revealed that associate and assistant professors left U-M from 2019-2022 due to concerns about: departmental climate and culture, department leadership styles and skills, unequal treatment compared to peers, as well as the level of recognition/appreciation received. Data-informed recommendations for practice include:
  - regularly measuring department climate and culture
  - performing salary equity analyses
  - cultivating local community-building
  - amplifying faculty recognition efforts
  - encouraging faculty to use available career resources
- Do not promote the practice of current faculty needing to secure an outside job offer as a means to increase their salary at the University of Michigan. Rather than requiring faculty to secure an outside job offer and receive a counter-offer, departments could explore different approaches to faculty retention (e.g., systematic review and identification of salary inequities; providing opportunities for faculty to initiate

- review of their salary). This approach could also create equity for faculty who do not seek outside offers, because they do not intend to leave the University of Michigan.
- Acknowledge epistemic exclusion as a challenge during recruitment and retention. Epistemic exclusion refers to the ways in which disciplinary traditions as well as individual faculty biases result in faculty of color's scholarship being devalued and deemed illegitimate (Settles, 2001). Acknowledging epistemic exclusion is a necessary first step for effective recruitment and retention of faculty of color.
- Implement strategies to retain faculty of color. Strategies unit leadership can implement include:
  - Making efforts to understand the type of challenges that may lead to BIPOC faculty leaving Michigan such as the BIPOC faculty retention report.
  - Considering preemptive retention, or making retention efforts that begin at the start of faculty's employment.
  - Appreciating the full range of scholarly work by embracing all scholarship including: interdisciplinary, public engagement, and community-based work.
  - Broadening assessments of teaching quality and being aware of potential bias in student evaluations that can differentially impact faculty of color.
  - Increasing service equity.
  - Working to change the narrative that excellence can only be produced by scholars who hold certain identities, or that considering diversity in one's work undermines scholarly rigor.
- Communicate clear and transparent timetables and guidelines for promotion to full professor. Per a 2018 LSA report, departmental guidelines should be revised to emphasize the criteria of achievement for various domains (e.g., research, teaching, engaged scholarship, both visible and invisible service, leadership/governance and notable/outstanding achievement) resulting in multiple paths to promotion. Providing annual information sessions, FAQ resources about the promotion to professor, and mentoring programs for associate professors can help provide clarity around timeline and guidelines for promotion.
- Create systematic and uniform ways of discussing tenure and promotion guidelines across units. The conversations about the requirements for tenure and multiple pathways to promotion that are discussed at the university level should be mirrored within schools and colleges. Moreover, expectations at the school/college level should be replicated within their departments and programs. This would enable clear communication about the institution's priorities amongst leadership and creates an opportunity for holding leadership at all levels accountable.
- Revise reward structure for promotion. Per an LSA report, making a portion of the promotion salary increase available after a certain period of time in rank (e.g., 5 years), provided faculty responsibilities have been met could: a) decrease the number of professors stuck in associate rank; b) provide needed recognition of associates' efforts; and c) improve morale and incentivize associate professors to work towards receiving the final portion of salary upon promotion to full.
- Recognize service contributions as noteworthy achievements. To address inequitable service expectations and lack of departmental recognition, department leadership can create awards with compensation focused on service, governance, and leadership for newly promoted associate professors.
- Create more flexible pathways to retirement. Easing senior faculty into retirement may help faculty members "view retirement as an opportunity, not a threat" as described in the <u>special issue of The Chronicle of Higher Education</u>. Supporting faculty members as they plan out the end of their employment

can also make personnel planning easier for the university. Ways to ease the transition to retirement could include:

- A program to incentivize retirement can eliminate a faculty bottleneck, and speed up the diversification of faculty as new faculty are hired.
- Intentional succession planning (e.g., junior faculty shadow senior faculty) can be a more flexible pathway to retirement and can also leave more availability and flexibility to hire assistant professors within the unit.
- Phased retirement enables faculty to gradually decrease their responsibilities over time by working less to reduce the shock of leaving academia. In some cases, faculty may receive the same or reduced pay.
- Hiring faculty-retirement-liaisons to serve as advocates for senior faculty members by helping them navigate the challenges of retirement and transitioning their identity from being an active faculty member to emeritus faculty or a retiree.
- Post-retirement programming that arranges things like book clubs, lectures, and short courses for retirees in an effort to keep retired scholars intellectually engaged on campus and in the community such as the Osher Lifelong Learning Institute (OLLI).
- Review time in the associate professor rank, and dialogue with any departments that are not promoting faculty at a comparable rate. A comprehensive and regular analysis across the schools, colleges and departments, such as the <u>Associate Professor Time in Rank</u> report, is necessary to pinpoint academic units with higher time in the rank or lower rates of promotion of associates to full professors. Once these units are identified, actionable strategies to support leadership should be adopted to address any problems and provide more opportunities for faculty promotion.

## **Suggested Citation:**

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