



## **The Importance of Coaching for Full Professors: Insights from ADVANCE Leadership Coaching Program's 14-year Duration (2008-2024) Executive Summary**

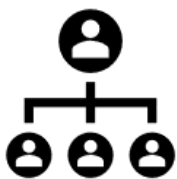
Since 2008, the University of Michigan (U-M) ADVANCE Program has offered Leadership Coaching to newly promoted full professors. Data were collected via surveys from 146 participating faculty members<sup>1</sup>. These data, paired with ADVANCE-maintained datasets and findings from previous ADVANCE reports—including exit interviews on U-M faculty members—were used to discover the insights detailed in the current report.



**Coaching clarifies pathways to leadership for faculty.** When formal leadership pathways are seen as unclear or absent, [faculty members may seek opportunities at other institutions](#). Sixty-five percent of leadership coaching participants migrated into formal leadership roles within the University, compared to 54% of faculty members who did not receive coaching, suggesting that coaching may help clarify pathways to leadership.



**Coaching strengthens management of energy and priorities for faculty.** Competing priorities, time restraints, and hectic schedules were reported as major barriers to faculty productivity and leadership effectiveness ( $n = 33$ ). Participating faculty members noted their coaches helped them with goal setting, decision making, and planning ( $n = 44$ ).



**Coaching develops necessary leadership skills among faculty.** In previous [faculty exit interviews](#), faculty who voluntarily left U-M named the quality of unit leadership styles and skills as important features of their units. Many coaching participants shared that coaching helped them develop leadership skills, including: interpersonal skills ( $n = 76$ ), strategic skills ( $n = 126$ ), cognitive skills ( $n = 53$ ), and business skills ( $n = 13$ ). These skills could improve retention among the faculty they go on to lead.



**Faculty still require support beyond coaching.** Obstacles to effective faculty leadership are multi-layered and exist at individual, structural, and systemic levels. The U-M ADVANCE Program proudly serves U-M faculty through a wide variety of activities and eagerly partners with other units.

<sup>1</sup> The number of responses ( $n$ ) to open-ended survey items were included to demonstrate the prevalence of a theme. These frequencies do not inherently indicate importance; given the variation in responses, even a small  $n$  can be considered meaningful and a larger  $n$  is not always more meaningful.