



UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN TENURE-TRACK FACULTY AY2024 INDICATOR REPORT: FOCUS ON FACULTY RETENTION AND DEPARTURES

**University of Michigan ADVANCE Program
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SUMMARY

The 2024 Annual Indicator Report considers issues related to University of Michigan (U-M) faculty retention and reasons for departure from AY2015 to AY2024, including differences by race-ethnicity and gender. Several key conclusions emerge:

- The numbers of White men faculty have remained largely constant over time.
- U-M appears to be retaining faculty in all groups fairly effectively.
- Data on the departures and experiences of URM faculty suggest that enhanced retention efforts designed for all faculty may address URM faculty retention in particular.

INTRODUCTION

The University of Michigan ADVANCE Program aims to improve our campus environment for tenure-track faculty in four general areas: recruitment, retention, leadership, and climate. We assess the campus climate through a series of campus-wide faculty surveys (reports from these surveys can be found on the ADVANCE [website](#)) as well as individualized assessments of schools and departments. The program also collects and reports on annual indicator data about the state of the faculty at U-M. These data serve as a resource to track the University's progress in the areas of faculty recruitment, retention, and leadership. Beyond this work, we conduct faculty exit interviews and other data collection focused on the faculty experience.

In addition to reporting the demographic composition of tenure-track faculty at U-M each year, we have added specific areas of focus to each year's Annual Indicator report. Last year's indicator report (2023) uniquely focused on faculty composition, contrasting the five years from AY2012 through AY2016, before the Fall 2016 launch of the inaugural U-M five-year campus-wide Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) strategic plan, with AY2017 through AY2021, which comprises the period of time during the DEI 1.0 effort. The 2023 Annual Indicator report analyzed hiring and departure rates by gender, race-ethnicity, and rank, with a special focus on faculty from underrepresented groups.

In this year's (2024) report we consider issues related to faculty retention and reasons for departures from AY2015 to AY2024. We examine the number and rate of faculty departures over time, including differences by gender and race-ethnicity, as well as the reasons why faculty may consider leaving U-M. Similar analyses were included in the AY2015 and AY2019 Annual Indicator reports, and we discuss how our findings compare to the AY2019 Annual Indicator report.

When possible, we examine data separately for six groups of faculty: Asian/Asian American (A/AA) women, Underrepresented Minority (URM)¹ women, White women, A/AA men, URM men, and White men to understand differences in the representation and experiences of each of these groups. When the number of faculty is too small (especially in the case of faculty of color) to allow for such refinement, we examine the data separately by gender and race-ethnicity or by four groups: White women, White men, women of color, and men of color.

The current report includes institutional data that span more than forty years, providing the changing profile of the faculty composition.² We utilize this wealth of information to help University of Michigan policymakers identify areas of progress and areas requiring continued efforts – especially related to ADVANCE’s shared mission with the University to strengthen faculty recruitment, improve faculty retention, and enhance leadership opportunities for faculty.

History of the Indicator Report

In 2001, the U-M ADVANCE Program was in the first cohort of institutions to be awarded funding by the National Science Foundation (NSF) to focus on improving outcomes for science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) women faculty in four areas: recruitment, retention, climate, and leadership. NSF required each funded institution to report annually on these indicators for STEM faculty at their individual institutions and compare each current reporting year with the baseline year data (AY2001 for U-M) as a way to assess change over time. When the NSF funding concluded at the end of AY2007, the ADVANCE Program continued the practice of collecting and reporting on these indicators annually, comparing the current year with the baseline. In addition, the mission of the ADVANCE Program broadened to all faculty, and thus our data collection efforts broadened; not only did we begin collecting institutional data on all U-M faculty across disciplines, but we also worked to retroactively gather the same data for all non-STEM faculty. We now have tenure-track faculty appointment count data for all U-M colleges and schools from AY1979 to present as well as all indicators derived from appointment counts (e.g., sex ratios, race-ethnicity ratios, and cohort outcomes). We have similar appointment count data for research- and clinical-track faculty from AY2014 to present.³ As a result of these efforts, the ADVANCE Program has amassed a large amount of demographic and descriptive data on the faculty of the U-M across many years.

¹ URM includes individuals who self-identify as African American/Black, Native American/Alaskan Native, Hispanic/Latino/a/e/x, and Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander. URM also includes multiethnic individuals who self-identify with at least one of the URM categories.

² Aligning with broader campus reporting practices, ADVANCE extracted, cleaned, and counted faculty data from the U-M Human Resource Snapshot (HR02) data warehouse. HR02 includes sex (female, male) which we report as gender (women, men).

³ Research faculty and clinical faculty composition are available on <https://advance.umich.edu/dashboards>.

Previous Findings on Faculty Retention

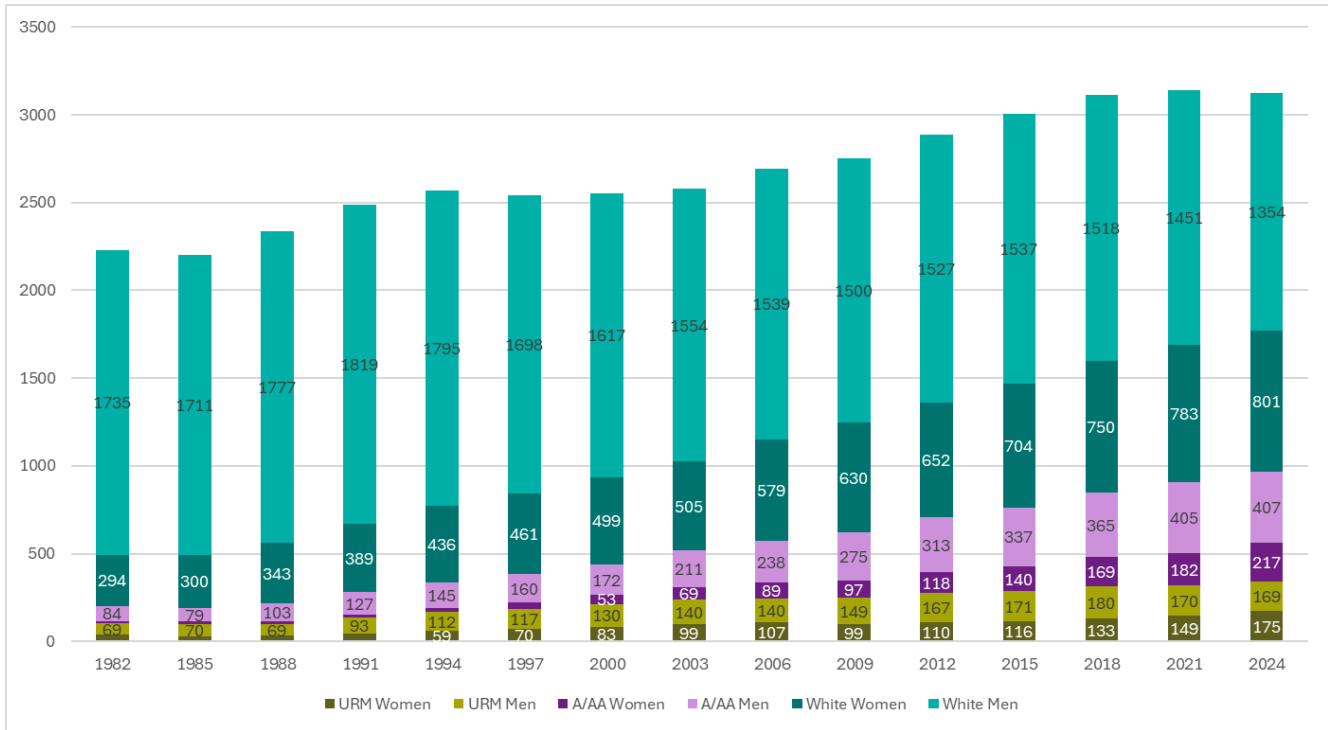
This report builds upon the findings of the [2019 Annual Indicator report](#), which also focused on retention. Key findings in the 2019 report examined composition, departure rates, and retention data using HR institutional data, the ADVANCE Campus-Wide Climate survey in 2017, and exit interview data from 2011-2019.

The 2019 Annual Indicator report identified several key findings about composition, departures, and retention. In terms of composition, the report found that the recruitment and hiring of women and faculty of color had been offset by turnover among these groups. Related to voluntary departure rates, the report found that women had higher departure rates compared to men, and the rates of departure for URM and Asian/American American faculty were higher compared to White faculty; however, between AY2011-AY2019, the gap disappeared for Asian/Asian American faculty but increased for URM faculty. Findings from both the 2017 Campus-Wide Climate survey and exit interviews highlight the importance of climate concerns as a reason for faculty departure. In addition, results from exit interviews examining climate-related reasons for leaving U-M found that negative workplace climate as well as dissatisfaction with one's current university/unit leadership were frequently cited as reasons that faculty chose to leave U-M. These findings underscore the importance of examining different factors related to retention, including climate, as well as patterns that emerge differentially by gender and race/ethnicity.

TENURE-TRACK FACULTY COMPOSITION

The focus of the current report is tenure-track faculty retention and departure from the University of Michigan. We begin, however, with a review of the composition of the faculty, specifically the percentage of all tenure-track faculty by six gender and race-ethnicity intersectional groups from AY1982 through AY2024 (see Figure 1). The total number of tenure-track faculty grew by 40%, from 2,230 in AY1982 to 3,123 in AY2024. As it has grown, the faculty has become more diverse on the indicated measures of race/ethnicity and gender. The numbers of URM and Asian/Asian American faculty and White women have generally increased during this time. The number of White men has remained fairly constant, particularly since the early 2000s.

Figure 1. Tenure-track Faculty Composition by Gender and Race-Ethnicity (Counts - All Ranks), AY1982-AY2024



The faculty composition data suggest there has been a moderate increase in overall faculty diversity (by historically studied demographic categories) over the last four decades. Since 2003, the number of White women faculty has increased over 50%, and the number of URM women has increased over 75%. The increase in overall faculty diversity is likely the result of many factors, including the retirement of senior faculty from the University (who are predominantly White men) and initiatives undertaken at U-M throughout the 1980s and 1990s directed at increasing the recruitment and retention of broadly diverse faculty.

Informed by these trends in the faculty composition, the remainder of this report will address this year’s focal theme: faculty retention and departures from U-M.

TENURE-TRACK FACULTY RETENTION AND DEPARTURES

In this section we discuss data related to tenure-track faculty retention and departure. We consider changes in the number and rate of faculty departures over time, as well as differences by gender and race-ethnicity. These metrics provide important information for policymakers as U-M continues to work toward recruiting and retaining a broadly diverse and excellent faculty.

Retention Rate

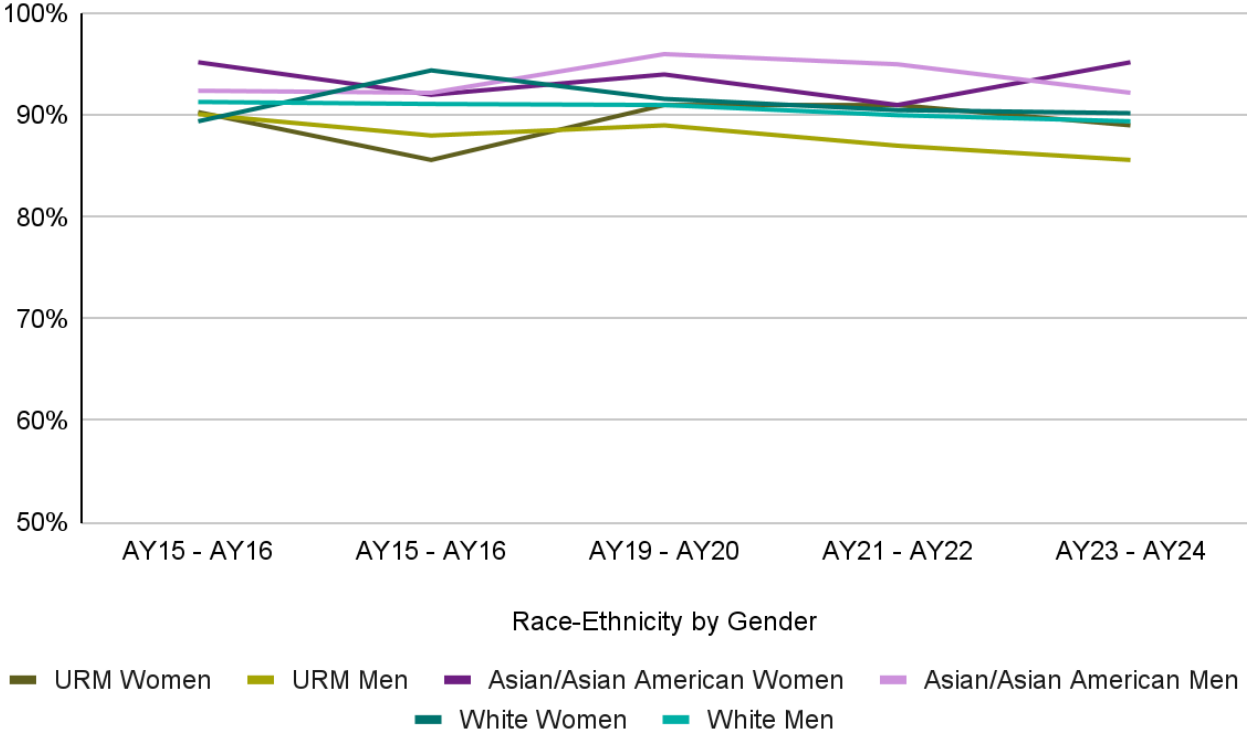
Through our review of employee turnover literature, we determined the importance of measuring the “retention rate”⁴ of tenure-track faculty by gender and race-ethnicity over the last ten years (AY2015 through AY2024) using two-year cohorts. Retention of faculty including tenure-track faculty is critical to the success of U-M. These faculty create networks, relationships, and oftentimes programming and institutional knowledge that are often lost when they leave or retire. We calculated the number of tenure-track faculty in Year 2⁵ who were at the university for at least 2 years divided by the number of tenure-track faculty in Year 1, within each two-year cohort. Note that this definition of retention does not refer to a faculty member receiving an external offer and then being persuaded to stay by a U-M counter-offer. Instead, retention here simply describes the continued presence of a tenure-track faculty member at U-M in the designated two-year period. Across the last ten years, the average retention rate of all tenure-track faculty at the University of Michigan is 91%.

Figure 2 depicts the retention rate for each indicated intersectional group (race-ethnicity by gender) using two-year cohorts. Over this ten-year period, most groups have fluctuated within 5%. Some groups start and end at the same rate of retention, with slight fluctuations up (i.e., White women, A/AA men), or small dips (i.e., A/AA women, URM women). Analyses indicate that within three of the five two-year cohorts (AY15-AY16, AY21-AY22, and AY23-AY24), the six indicated intersectional groups do not differ significantly in their retention rate. In AY17-AY18 the retention rate of URM women was significantly lower than the retention rate of both Asian/Asian American women and White women; in AY19-AY20 the retention rate of URM men was significantly lower than the retention rate of Asian/Asian American men.

⁴ Society for Human Resource Management. [How do I calculate retention? Is retention related to turnover?](#)

⁵ This analysis excludes faculty in their first year with U-M, since they have not been a faculty member for at least 2 years.

Figure 2. Retention rate of race-ethnicity by gender intersectional groups (AY2015-AY2024)



Net Change in Tenure-Track Faculty

As the retention rate relies on the total count of faculty, it does not capture the movement of individual faculty into and out of the tenure-track. The net change in the faculty (Table 1) highlights not only how each of the indicated intersectional groups has changed over the years, it also provides insights into faculty movement that enables differentiation between tenure-track faculty who retired separately from those faculty who left voluntarily. And it opens up questions about U-M’s losses when the role of an exiting faculty member is backfilled by a faculty member with less institutional knowledge, programmatic history, and social connections at Michigan.

Table 1. Net Change in Tenure-Track Faculty (AY2015-AY2024)

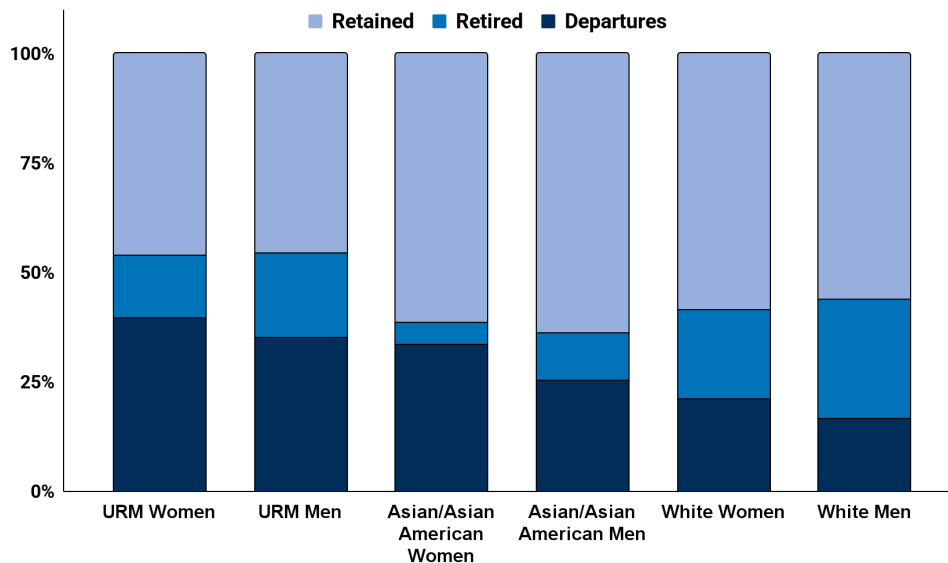
Race-Ethnicity by Gender Intersectional Group	AY2015 Headcount	Hired	Retired*	Departures**	AY2024 Headcount	Net Change	Percent Change
URM Women	114	133	19 (14%)	53 (40%)	175	61	54%
URM Men	174	100	37 (19%)	68 (35%)	169	-5	-3%
Asian/Asian American Women	130	143	7 (5%)	49 (33%)	217	87	67%
Asian/Asian American Men	332	205	39 (11%)	91 (26%)	407	75	23%
White Women	704	413	153 (20%)	163 (21%)	801	97	14%
White Men	1561	508	441 (27%)	274 (17%)	1354	-207	-13%
Total	3015	1502	696	698	3123	108	4%

* Retired also includes tenure-track faculty on Long Term Disability and deaths.

** Departures include track-switches, involuntary departures (including tenure denial), and voluntary departures.

Table 1 displays the diversification of the tenure-track faculty by indicated factors in the last ten years. The percent change of faculty was calculated by dividing the net change for each group by the headcount in AY2015. Examining net change, there was an increase in the total number of faculty who were White women (14%), A/AA men (23%), URM women (54%), and A/AA women (67%); but the number of URM men has remained relatively constant, and the number of White men decreased (although they remained the clear majority of faculty). Overall, about half of the faculty who left the university during this ten-year time period were voluntary and involuntary departures (698 faculty), and about half retired (696 faculty).

Figure 3. Retention and Attrition of Faculty of Race-Ethnicity by Gender Intersectional Groups (AY2015-AY2024)



Note. Definition of retired and departures match definitions in net change table (Table 1 above).

Figure 3 depicts the retention and attrition of faculty by indicated intersectional group (race-ethnicity by gender). When examining faculty who were retained, retired, and departed between AY2015 and AY2024 (see Table 1), we see that URM women (40%) had the highest rates of departures, followed by URM men (35%) and Asian/Asian American women (34%), and then Asian/Asian American men (26%). Given the composition of faculty in the 1990s, it was not surprising that White men had the highest rates of retirement (27%) compared to all other groups. Asian/Asian American faculty have the highest retention rates (61% for Asian/Asian American women and 64% for Asian/Asian American men) and lowest retirement rates (5% for Asian/Asian American women and 11% for Asian/Asian American men).

Net Change in Tenure-Track Faculty: Comparing 2019 Annual Indicator Findings with Current Findings

Examining net change in the numbers of faculty over a ten-year period in the [2019 Annual Indicator report](#) (Figures 4-5) compared to the 2023 analysis (Table 1), we found different patterns by race-ethnicity and gender. Related to patterns by gender, in the 2019 Annual Indicator report examining AY2010-AY2019, women faculty increased by 206 and men faculty increased by 59. In our most recent analysis examining AY2015-AY2024, women faculty increased by 245 and men faculty decreased by 137. As expected with the increasing demographic diversity of the faculty, we observed a higher number of women faculty in the most recent ten-year analysis. Given the retirement rates for White men in particular, this decrease for White men faculty in our current 2023 analysis is also not surprising.

Related to patterns by race-ethnicity, in the 2019 Annual Indicator report Asian/Asian American faculty increased by 143, URM faculty increased by 54, and White faculty increased by 57. In our most recent analysis examining AY2015-AY2024, Asian/Asian American faculty increased by 162, URM faculty increased by 56, and White faculty decreased by 110. As referenced earlier, given the retirement rates for White men, this decrease for White faculty is not surprising. In addition, with the increasing demographic diversity of faculty, the larger increase in the number of Asian/Asian American faculty in the more recent ten-year period is also not surprising. However, the similar net change numbers for URM faculty compared across the two Annual Indicator reports (+54 in 2019 and +56 in 2024) suggest that we are not making as much progress in retaining URM faculty.

Outside Offers, Intentions to Stay at U-M, Considered Leaving Due to Perceptions of Isolation

In this section, we examine variables related to faculty retention collected in the 2023 Campus-Wide Climate survey.⁶ The 2023 Campus-Wide Climate survey was the fifth wave of campus climate surveys of faculty since 2001 and was administered in winter 2023 to all tenure-track faculty, clinical-track faculty, research-track faculty, and lecturer faculty on the Ann Arbor campus, including Michigan Medicine. As we focus on the composition and retention of tenure-track faculty, we present results from the 2023 Campus-Wide Climate survey for tenure-track faculty only. Data collected included likelihood of staying at U-M for the next two years and whether the faculty member has considered leaving their department/unit because they felt isolated or unwelcomed. In addition, we examined whether the faculty member reported receiving an outside offer.

We used factorial ANOVAs and logistic regression to examine differences by gender, race-ethnicity, and the combination of gender and race-ethnicity. We used self-reported demographics for both race-ethnicity and gender as they were reported by respondents in the survey. Due to smaller numbers of URM and A/AA faculty respondents, we identified faculty who self-reported as any other race-ethnicity besides White as a BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, People of Color) faculty group. In the following analyses, BIPOC faculty were compared to monoracial White faculty. In terms of gender, we compared faculty who identified as women to faculty who identified as men. Due to small numbers, faculty who identified as not solely a man or woman were excluded from these analyses. We recognize the need for future research that is inclusive of all gender identities.

Receiving outside offers

Using a yes/no response format, 28% of faculty respondents reported that they had received an outside offer while at U-M in the last two years. A logistic regression analysis revealed that there were no significant differences by either gender or race-ethnicity nor a significant combined effect (i.e., an interaction) of gender and race-ethnicity on whether or not faculty received an offer while at U-M in the last two years. This suggests that the percentage of faculty that received an outside offer did not differ among the indicated faculty groups.

⁶ ADVANCE Program (2024). [Assessing the Academic Work Environment for Tenure-Track Faculty at the University of Michigan in 2023: University-related Climate across Gender, Race, and Rank](#).

Intentions to Stay at U-M

A factorial ANOVA revealed that there were no significant differences by either gender or race-ethnicity nor a significant interaction of gender and race-ethnicity on the likelihood of staying at U-M for the next two years. This suggests that all groups reported equal intentions to remain at U-M in the next two years. The average likelihood of staying at U-M for the next two years across all tenure-track faculty was 4.1 on a scale of 1 (*very unlikely*) to 5 (*very likely*).⁷

Considered leaving due to perceptions of isolation

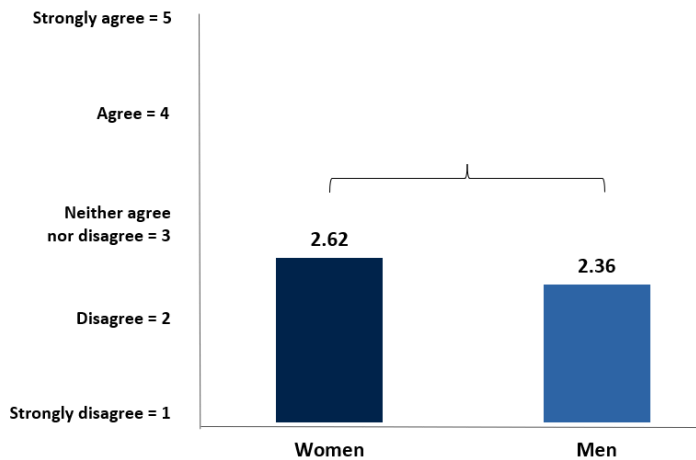
A factorial ANOVA showed that women reported stronger agreement than men that they have considered leaving their department/unit because they felt isolated or unwelcomed (see Table 2 and Figure 4). There were no significant differences by race-ethnicity nor a significant interaction of gender and race-ethnicity. The average level of consideration of leaving due to perceptions of isolation across all tenure-track faculty was 2.5 on a scale of 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 5 (*strongly agree*).

Table 2. Factorial ANOVA Results for “Considered Leaving due to Perceptions of Isolation”

Source	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	p	Partial η^2
Corrected Model	29.947	3	9.982	5.177	.001	.014
Intercept	5333.855	1	5333.855	2766.127	<.001	.722
Gender	15.849	1	15.849	8.219	.004	.008
Race-ethnicity	4.353	1	4.353	2.257	.133	.002
Gender X Race-ethnicity	0.799	1	0.799	.415	.520	.000
Error	2053.613	1065	1.928			
Total	8554	1069				
Corrected Total	2083.560	1068				

⁷ A recent [institutional report](#) focusing on gender equity in salary found that women were more likely than men to leave U-M between the 2019-2020 school year through the 2022-2023 school year. Possible reasons for different patterns of findings include the Campus-Wide Climate survey response rate and the different time points examined in both studies.

Figure 4. Gender Differences for “Considered Leaving due to Perceptions of Isolation”



Correlations between key variables

We examined relationships between key variables in the campus-wide dataset related to retention. There was a moderate, negative correlation between intentions to stay at U-M for the next two years and consideration for leaving their department/unit because they felt isolated or unwelcomed (see Table 3). In other words, as reported levels of consideration for leaving their department/unit because they felt isolated or unwelcomed increased, reported intentions to stay at U-M decreased. We also found a weaker, negative correlation between whether faculty have received an outside offer while at U-M in the last two years and intentions to stay at U-M for the next two years and a weaker, positive correlation between whether faculty have received an outside offer while at U-M in the last two years and consideration for leaving the department/unit because they felt isolated or unwelcomed. This means faculty who reported receiving an outside offer at U-M also tended to report lower intentions to stay at U-M for the next two years as well as higher levels of consideration for leaving their department/unit because they felt isolated or unwelcomed.

Table 3. Correlations Among Key Variables Across Survey Population

Variable	1	2	3
1. How likely is it that you will stay at U-M for the next 2 years?			
2. Have you received an outside offer while at U-M in the last 2 years?			
3. I have considered leaving my department/unit because I felt isolated or unwelcomed.			

Note. For outside offer 1 = yes, 0 = no; ** $p < .01$, * $p < .05$.

We also examined the strongest correlation (i.e., the correlation between intentions to stay at U-M for the next two years and consideration for leaving their department/unit because they felt isolated or welcomed) for each of the four indicated intersectional identity groups (BIPOC women, BIPOC men, White women, White men). Though correlations were moderate for all groups, BIPOC men descriptively had the strongest negative correlation between these variables compared to all other indicated intersectional identity groups (see Table 4). However, when we used Fisher’s *r* to *Z* transformation⁸ to test whether the magnitude of the correlation for BIPOC men was significantly different from that of the other indicated intersectional identity groups, we found it was not (see Table 5). In sum, all faculty groups who reported weaker intentions to stay at U-M tended to equally report stronger considerations for leaving their department because they felt isolated or unwelcomed, suggesting that perceptions of climate may be part of the reasons for faculty departures.

Table 4. Correlations Among Intentions to Stay at U-M and Considered Leaving due to Perceptions of Isolation by Indicated Intersectional Identity Group

Intersectional identity group	
BIPOC Men	-.53**
BIPOC Women	-.40**
White Men	-.44**
White Women	-.40**

Note. ***p* < .01, **p* < .05

Table 5. Fisher's *r*-to-*Z* Transformation to Compare BIPOC Men Correlation Coefficients to BIPOC Women, White Women, and White Men

	BIPOC Men compared to BIPOC Women	BIPOC Men compared to White Women	BIPOC Men compared to White Men
<i>z</i> test statistic	1.435	1.683	1.383
<i>p</i> -value	0.151	0.092	0.167
Cohen's <i>q</i>	0.172	0.165	0.123

Note. alpha = .05; two-tailed

⁸ Weiss, B.A. (2011). [Fisher’s *r*-to-*Z* transformation calculator to compare two independent samples](#) [Computer software].

CONCLUSIONS

Amidst increased faculty diversification, the numbers of White male faculty on the tenure track have remained largely constant over time. Until 1999-2000, two-thirds or higher of the tenure-track faculty composition was White men. As the number of faculty overall has increased, numbers of White men have remained relatively constant, particularly since the early 2000s. White men also have the highest retirement rates compared to all other indicated intersectional groups.

Overall, U-M appears to be retaining tenure-track faculty in all groups fairly effectively. Across the ten-year period, the average retention rate of all tenure-track faculty was 91%. The retention rate for each indicated intersectional group (race-ethnicity by gender) showed that over this ten-year period, most indicated intersectional groups fluctuated within 5%. However, compared to at least one other indicated intersectional group, both URM men and URM women had significantly lower retention rates within one of the two-year cohorts.

Data on the departures and experiences of URM faculty suggest that enhanced retention efforts designed for all faculty may address URM faculty retention in particular. URM women and URM men had the highest rates of departure compared to the other indicated intersectional groups, and the numbers of URM faculty over ten years (net change) remained relatively constant when examined in 2019 and 2023. In addition, findings from the campus-wide climate data underscore the importance of perceptions of climate for intentions to stay at U-M for all groups. Taken together, these findings suggest the importance of enhanced retention efforts for all faculty, including URM faculty, to support positive climate and feelings of inclusion.