

University of Michigan 2023-2024 Diversity Report Summary

Mark J. Perry, Ph.D.
Professor Emeritus University of Michigan
Scholar Emeritus American Enterprise Institute
Senior Fellow, Do No Harm
January 8, 2024

For *The College Fix*

1. Executive Summary:

a. UM employs at least 241 paid staff members whose main duties are to provide DEI programming and services as either their exclusive or primary job responsibility. In addition, 76 faculty or staff members work part-time as “DEI Unit Leads” advancing diversity efforts in one of UM’s 51 schools, colleges, and units that are a key part of UM’s new 5-year diversity plan called [*The Diversity, Equity & Inclusion \(DEI\) 2.0 Plan*](#). We did not include the salaries of the part-time “DEI Unit Leads” to calculate the annual cost of DEI at UM, but did include them in the list of DEI-related staff members at UM which brings the total DEI headcount to 317 employees. For reasons discussed below, we believe that the actual number of DEI staff at UM is actually significantly higher than 317, and likely exceeds 500 employees.

b. The total annual payroll of UM’s full-time DEI staff is estimated to be \$30.68 million -- \$23.24 million for staff salaries and \$7.44 million for employee fringe benefits. To put that in perspective, \$30.68 million would pay in-state tuition and fees ([\\$17,228](#)) for 1,781 undergraduate students. UM’s DEI staff is well compensated with salaries as high as \$402,800 for UM’s head diversity administrator Tabbye Chavous Sellers, UM’s Vice Provost for Equity and Inclusion & Chief Diversity Officer. In contrast, Michigan’s governor Gretchen Whitmer’s salary is \$159,300, and the average salaries for assistant, associate, and full professors at UM are \$129,500, \$148,300, and \$206,500 respectively. Therefore, UM’s chief diversity officer is paid almost 2X more than the average full professor at UM, 2.5X more than the governor, and about 3X more than the average UM assistant or associate professor.

Thirteen DEI staff members earn more than \$200,000 and 66 earn more than \$100,000. The average DEI salary at UM is \$96,400, which brings total average compensation to more than \$127,000 with fringe benefits added at a rate of 32%. With fringe benefits, 144 DEI employees at UM receive a total compensation of more than \$100,000.

c. A [2021 Heritage Foundation study](#) found that UM had 163 DEI staff members during the 2020-21 academic year, the highest of any of the 65 major universities studied. Using the same methodology as Heritage, the 241 current DEI personnel at UM today represent

an addition of 78 staff members since 2021, and a 48% increase in DIE staffers in just three years. We know of no other school that comes close to UM's DEI headcount and therefore we are confident that UM has the notoriety as the No. 1 Diversity University in the country with no close competitors for that distinction.

2. Methodology and Data. We used the publicly available [UM salary data](#) that were released in December 2023 and we first identified all staff members with the words “diversity,” “equity” or “inclusion” in their job titles (e.g., Diversity/Inclusion Specialist, Diversity, Equity, Inclusion Manager, Assistant Dean for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion) or unit name (Office of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion, National Center for Institutional Diversity).

We also searched the websites of [UM's 51 schools, colleges, and units](#) each having a website titled “Visit here for more information about diversity, equity, and inclusion programs and resources” which allowed us to identify additional diversity-related staff positions throughout the university.

3. Excluded Diversity Staff. Following the Heritage Foundation's 2021 study “[Diversity University: DEI Bloat in the Academy](#)” we excluded certain categories of UM staff members whose job title or unit name included the words “diversity,” “equity” or “inclusion” because their main responsibilities are to monitor and enforce federal regulations including civil rights laws like Title IX that prohibits sexual and gender-based misconduct and sex discrimination, and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and other disability-related laws and regulations that protect people with disabilities from discrimination.

See Heritage's “Excluded Categories” section below.

Excluded Categories. Certain categories of people were excluded from the count. For example, Title IX, equal employment opportunity, or other staff listed as primarily having responsibility for ensuring compliance with legal obligations were not included. The study's count of DEI personnel is meant to capture the effort that these institutions *want to* devote to DEI, rather than what they *must* devote. In contrast, staff tasked with disability accommodations are needed to satisfy the legal requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act and other related legislation.

Therefore, following Heritage, we excluded all 43 staff members in UM's Equity, Civil Rights, and Title IX Office assuming those staff members' main responsibility is to monitor and enforce compliance with federal civil rights laws, and are not employed to advance UM's voluntary diversity efforts. However, we note the following staff

headcount trend over time for UM's Equity, Civil Rights, and Title IX Office (formerly the Office of Institutional Equity)

Office of Institutional Equity Staff Headcount (original name)

2018: 13

2019: 13

2020: 16

2021: 22

In 2021, that office became the [Equity, Civil Rights, and Title IX Office \(ECRT\)](#) in response to the scrutiny UM was receiving for its high-profile and well-publicized mishandling of sexual misconduct cases around that time.

2022: 30

2023: 43

Even though we excluded ECRT staff members from our DEI analysis, it should be noted that the headcount for that office more than tripled in just four years, from 13 in 2019 to 43 in 2023.

4. Our Analysis vs. Heritage Foundation. In 2021, the Heritage Foundation found that the University of Michigan had 163 DEI personnel. According to Heritage “Nineteen work in the DEI central office, headed by a Vice Provost for Equity and Inclusion & Chief Diversity Officer, who is subsequently supported by three people with the title Assistant Vice Provost for Equity, Inclusion & Academic Affairs.”

Heritage also identified DEI staff members in UM's Multicultural Center (5), the Center for the Education of Women (24), the LGBTQ Spectrum Center (12), the Multiethnic Student Affairs (18), and the Office of Academic Multicultural Initiatives (14). Moreover, Heritage found that colleges, schools, and other units at the University of Michigan have their own DEI staff. Following Heritage, we also identified the current DEI staff in those units.

In our 2023 study, we found that at least 70 DEI employees work under UM's central DEI unit – the [Office for Diversity, Equity and Inclusion \(ODEI\)](#) – in the main DEI office (22) and four sub-units (48).

ODEI is currently headed by Tabbye Chavous Sellers, the Vice Provost for Equity and Inclusion & Chief Diversity Officer, who is supported by four associate and assistant Vice Provosts for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion and 17 other DEI employees, bringing the total staff in UM's central DEI office to 22, an increase of three over the last three years since Heritage identified a staff headcount of 19 in that office in 2021.

In addition to the 22 ODEI employees including the Vice Provost, four Associate/Assistant Vice Provosts, and 17 other full-time DEI employees, there are at

least four units whose directors report to Vice-Provost Sellers with the following staff headcounts in their OEDI units totaling 48:

- a. The National Center for Institutional Diversity (12)
- b. The Center for Educational Outreach (15)
- c. Wolverine Pathways (8)
- d. Office of Academic Multicultural Initiatives (13)

Therefore, the central ODEI and its 4 reporting units employ a total of 70 diversity staff members (22 in OEDI's main office and 48 in units that report to ODEI) at an average salary of \$101,400 and a total annual payroll cost of \$7.1 million in salaries. With additional fringe benefits of \$2.3 million at a rate of 32%, that brings the total compensation of UM's core, centralized diversity staff of 70 full-time employees to \$9.4 million. In addition to ODEI and its reporting units, there are an additional 171 DEI employees elsewhere throughout the universities in its 51 schools, colleges, and units.

5. Overall Results. Based on our review of 2023 salary records and various unit websites, the University of Michigan currently employs at least 241 full-time staff members whose responsibility is to provide DEI programming and services and advance UM's diversity efforts as either their exclusive or primary job responsibility – 70 in ODEI and 171 elsewhere throughout the university in its 51 schools, colleges units.

a. The salary range for UM's diversity staff ranges from \$41,420 to \$402,800 with an average salary of \$96,443 and those salaries are ranked and displayed in the attached Excel table.

b. Total salaries for UM's DEI staff this year is \$23.23 million. Fringe benefits at a rate of 32% of base salaries equals \$7.44 million, bringing the total compensation for UM's DEI employees to \$30.68 million. At the current cost of tuition and fees for [in-state undergraduate students of \\$17,228](#), the amount UM spends annually on diversity (\$30.68 million) would cover the full cost of tuition and fees for 1,781 Michigan students.

c. In contrast, our recent analysis of Ohio State University found that it currently employs 189 DEI personnel at an annual cost of \$20.4 million with fringe benefits. Therefore, UM employs nearly 57 more DEI employees than OSU, at a cost that is \$10.3 million higher. The main reason for UM's higher cost of DEI staff is that the average DEI salary at UM of \$96,443 is more than 20% (and \$16,552) higher than OSU's average salary of \$79,891.

6. Unit DEI Headcounts. The UM units with the greatest number of DEI employees:

Office of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (70)

- a. Core staff (22)

- b. The National Center for Institutional Diversity (12)
- d. The Center for Educational Outreach (15)
- d. Wolverine Pathways (8)
- e. Office of Academic Multicultural Initiatives (13)

In addition to the main centralized DEI Office staffed by 70 employees, there are 171 additional DEI employees at UM employed throughout the university in at least 36 of UM's schools, colleges, and units including:

College of Engineering DEI and Culture, Community and Equity (21)
Michigan Medicine for Health, Equity, and Inclusion (21)
ADVANCE Program (17)
Center for the Education of Women (15)
Office of Academic Multicultural Initiatives (13)
Michigan Medicine Center for Global Health Equity (11)
School of Nursing DEI (9)
Office of Multi-Ethnic Student Affairs (7)
LGBTQ Spectrum Center (6)
Trotter Multicultural Center (5)
LSA National Center for Institutional Diversity (5)

7. Unit-Specific Diversity Plans/Efforts for [Diversity 2.0](#)

Page 8: “The DEI 2.0 Plan provides an opportunity where the 51 units across campus are able to refine their strategic approach to diversity, equity, and inclusion work for their students, faculty, and staff. This unit-level approach allows for each of the units to implement plans with goals and outcomes that can be assessed and evaluated to understand the effectiveness of their planned strategies. Regular evaluation and continued guidance will help shape how DEI 2.0 is implemented over the next five years. The full report provides Unit Plan Spotlights that represent a sample of the actions that many unit plans will implement during DEI 2.0.”

DEI Leads

Page 17: “A critical component to this approach was the development of the DEI Implementation Leads Group, better known as “DEI Leads.” These individuals are charged with ensuring that the 51 school, college, and unit plans are executed within their respective areas. With at least one designated faculty or staff member for each of the 51 plans, they are responsible for augmenting and tracking the DEI work occurring within their unit. The leads shepherd the work forward, track its efficacy, and work closely with one another.”

Comment: There are [121 designated DEI leads in UM's 51 colleges, schools, and units](#). Of those 121 “DEI Leads” 45 are employed as full-time DEI employees who are also DEI Leads for their units, and the other 76 “DEI Leads” are staff or faculty members whose main job responsibilities are not necessarily DEI-related. Because those 76 Unit Leads are not full-time DEI staff, we have not included their salaries in the total cost of employing DEI staff at UM. However, we have included them as non-paid diversity staff members who work on UM’s DEI efforts on a part-time basis. With 241 paid DEI employees who work exclusively or primarily on DEI programming and services and the 76 Unit Leads whose DEI responsibilities are part-time, we conclude that there are at least 317 UM employees who focus on advancing UM’s diversity efforts, on either a full-time or part-time basis, including implementing and advancing the Diversity 2.0 Plan.

8. Undercounting. Our headcount of 317 DEI employees at UM (70 in ODEI, 171 in other units, and 76 “Unit Leads”) significantly undercounts the actual number of staff devoted to advancing diversity and the Diversity 2.0 Plan at UM. For example, the ODEI’s [Leadership and Staff](#) website shows more than 100 additional positions without names assigned that are either open positions or positions that do not currently have names assigned and therefore have not been included in OEDI’s headcount of 70 DEI employees:

Open Positions in ODEI (9)

Temporary Advisers (16)

Students Ambassadors (12)

Front Desk Students (6)

Tutors (25)

Interns (9)

Student Program Coordinators (5)

Student Academic Success Partners (16)

Student Graduate Success Partners (16)

Student Research Assistants (5)

Curriculum Designers and Leads

Instructional Assistants

U-M Graduate and Undergraduate Student Interns

Temporary Program Coordinator Assistants

Teachers, Coaches and Advisors

Instructional Student Assistants (Temp College Prep)

U-M Graduate and Undergraduate Interns (College Prep)

Total = 119 staff or students, not including the seven categories of DEI staff above that don’t list a specific headcount but are all plural, and would likely include 14 or more additional DEI positions in ODEI (two per category). Those additional 133 DEI positions

could bring the ODEI headcount to more than 200 and the total number of DEI positions at UM to well above 400.

In addition, UM has dozens of diversity-related committees throughout the university in various departments, schools, colleges, and units including various Diversity Committees, DEI Committees, a Gender Diversity Committee, and a Committee for Fairness, Equity, and Inclusion. Each of those committees has between 8 and 20 or more faculty, staff, and students, meaning that there are at least 100 UM employees (and students) and as many as 200 who spend part of their time advancing UM's diversity efforts. Taking into account all of the UM employees who either work full-time or part-time on DEI (235) or unpaid employees who serve as DEI Unit Leads (76), DEI positions that are currently open or unassigned (more than 130), and employees serving on Diversity/DEI/Equity committees in various departments, schools, colleges, and units (150 or more), that brings the total number UM employees who advance DEI on either a paid or unpaid basis to well more than 500 and possibly as high as 600.

Further, UM's \$30.7 million payroll for its 241 DEI employees is an underestimate of UM's total outlays for its diversity staff. In addition to direct costs for salaries and generous fringe benefits, UM has many indirect costs to support its 241 DEI employees including personal computers and IT support, personal and office printers, phones and monthly wireless plans, physical office space, office furniture and equipment, travel expenses to DEI conferences and meetings, website design expenses, mileage reimbursements for travel by personal car, university-supplied vehicles, printing costs, conference expenses, overtime payments for hourly DEI staff, summer teaching or research stipends, advertising expenses, administrative bonuses, etc. While it is difficult to accurately estimate those indirect costs for UM's diversity staff, it would likely be in the hundreds of thousands of dollars annually if not more.
