



Chancellor Search Prospectus



Opportunity Overview

The University of Michigan invites nominations and applications for the position of chancellor of the University of Michigan-Dearborn. The chancellor exercises broad responsibilities for all aspects of the academic, student, financial, and administrative dimensions of the institution. The University of Michigan-Dearborn seeks an energetic, dynamic, and visionary individual to lead and to engage its faculty, staff, and students in an exciting era for the university and the greater Michigan community.

The University of Michigan

The University of Michigan was originally founded in Detroit in 1817, moving to Ann Arbor in 1837. Two additional regional campuses were subsequently created, the University of Michigan-Flint in 1956 and UM-Dearborn in 1959. All three campuses are governed by the University of Michigan Board of Regents and are overseen by the University President. Chancellors of the regional campuses serve as executive officers of the university and report directly to the President. The three U-M campuses work together in a synergistic, mutually beneficial fashion.

The University of Michigan-Dearborn

UM-Dearborn was founded in 1959 through a gift of land from the Ford Motor Company and Ford Motor Company Fund. Situated on 200 beautiful acres of Henry Ford's original estate alongside the Rouge River, the campus features 70 acres of nature preserve, a peaceful escape within the urban landscape just ten miles from downtown Detroit. The scenic Rouge Gateway Trail weaves through campus, connecting to the larger Hines Park Trail and providing opportunities for walking, biking, and running through woods, past Fair Lane Lake, and near Ford's historic estate. The location of UM-Dearborn's campus also allows easy access to downtown Dearborn and beyond. Dearborn, part of the greater Detroit metropolitan area, is best known for its automotive history and is recognized today for its rich cultural and ethnic diversity.

Recent capital projects at UM-Dearborn include the completion of transformational renovations to the Engineering Lab Building and Science Building, a new Welcome Center for student services, and ongoing upgrades to the College of Arts, Sciences, and Letters and athletics facilities. These investments, alongside campus-wide sustainability initiatives, demonstrate a strong commitment to advancing academic excellence, student experience, and environmental stewardship.

Detroit is undergoing an inspiring period of growth and revitalization, building on its rich history as a center of industry, innovation, and culture in the Midwest. The city's investments in education, research, and technology are exemplified by new collaborations between major universities, research institutes, and local businesses—fostering opportunities for students and faculty alike. Detroit's vibrant cultural landscape includes renowned museums such as the Detroit Institute of Arts, dynamic music and arts festivals, and a diverse culinary scene that reflects the community's global heritage. The expansion of the Detroit Greenways network and innovative districts like Michigan Central highlight the city's commitment to sustainability and economic development. Accessible and welcoming, Detroit serves as a dynamic setting where academic excellence, research, and community engagement thrive, offering a multitude of opportunities for collaboration and growth for UM-Dearborn and its partners.



Organizational Profile

As part of the University of Michigan, UM-Dearborn enjoys the resources of a large research university while maintaining the advantages of a moderate-sized institution. It has approximately 8,000 students (approximately 6,200 undergraduates, 1,670 master's, and 130 doctoral).

UM-Dearborn is fiscally strong, with a modest level of institutional debt, growing reserves, and responsible financial stewardship that supports both current operations and future strategic priorities. The University of Michigan is in the midst of a \$7 billion fundraising campaign, with UM-Dearborn ambitiously aiming to raise \$60 million to further advance its mission and support students, faculty, and community engagement.

UM-Dearborn serves as a vital talent pipeline for Southeast Michigan. 94% of students being Michigan residents, and more than 90% choose to build their careers in the state after graduation. UM-Dearborn is distinguished for its transformative educational approach and exceptional commitment to upward mobility. Over 44% of undergraduates are first-generation college students, and more than 50% qualify for Pell grants. The student body includes both high-achieving first-time freshmen with an average admitted high school GPA of 3.7, and transfer students, who comprise 40% of the university's undergraduate population. We are dedicated to access and affordability, with 35% of undergraduate students receiving full tuition and fee coverage through scholarships and grants.

More than 45% of UM-Dearborn's courses are offered in online or hybrid modalities, and the campus supports several fully online graduate programs to meet the evolving needs of students and professionals.



Average GPA of incoming first-year class



Are Michigan residents representing 47 counties



Birth countries represented

The campus is home to over 175 student organizations covering a wide range of activities. The UM-Dearborn campus demonstrated its commitment to fostering a supportive environment by incorporating "At least one faculty or staff member cares about me as a person" as a KPI in our strategic plan. Annual surveys administered since the start of the strategic plan in 2022 have demonstrated measurable growth in this KPI. Additionally, 77% of students who responded to the 2025 NSSE survey rated their experience at UM-Dearborn as "Excellent" or "Good".

With a 2025-2026 operating budget of \$183 million, UM-Dearborn is comprised of four major academic units:

1. College of Arts, Sciences, and Letters;
2. College of Engineering and Computer Science;
3. College of Business; and
4. College of Education, Health and Human Services.

The university is supported by approximately 233 tenure-track faculty, 240 lecturers, and 501 staff members. Over 90 percent of full-time faculty hold a doctorate or other appropriate terminal degree. UM-Dearborn faculty consistently earn honors, awards, and funding for excellence in teaching and research.

UM-Dearborn has experienced significant research growth over the past decade, with expenditures reaching \$14 million last year. This growth earned the university its R2 Carnegie designation in 2025. Through Innovation Partnerships, the University of Michigan's nexus for research commercialization, researchers receive support to develop and commercialize their innovations.

UM-Dearborn distinguishes itself through practice-based learning (PBL), the hallmark of its educational offerings. Through the Henry Patton Entrepreneurship, Practice and Innovation Center, students can transform their PBL innovations into tangible outcomes. The Center advances student-owned patents and supports entrepreneurial ventures across campus.

In addition to a full suite of undergraduate programs, with 97 major programs and 70 minors, UM-Dearborn's curriculum includes 68 graduate programs and certificates and 7 doctoral programs (all Ph.D programs are sanctioned by the University of Michigan Rackham Graduate School). The average class size is 27, almost 62 percent of classes have fewer than 30 students, and the student:faculty ratio is 16:1. In addition to providing excellent and accessible undergraduate, graduate, and professional training, UM-Dearborn offers continuing education programs to a diverse and talented student body, primarily from greater metropolitan Detroit.

UM-Dearborn has earned accreditation through The Higher Learning Commission (HLC) since 1970. In 2023, the university received positive ratings in all assessment areas, resulting in the university receiving accreditation through the academic year 2033-2034. Accreditation has also been awarded to various UM-Dearborn programs by, among others, ABET (formerly the Accreditation Board for Engineering and Technology), the Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business (AACSB), and the Teacher Education Accreditation Council. UM-Dearborn is also a member of the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools.



UM-Dearborn Rankings and Honors include:



U.S. News & World Report has consistently named UM-Dearborn one of the best regional universities in the Midwest. This year the university was ranked the number one regional public university in Michigan and 3rd in the Midwest.



College of Business programs are among the nation's best, according to *U.S. News & World Report*, *Poets & Quants* and *Princeton Review*.



Ranked #1 regional university in Michigan for Social Mobility and for Veterans by *U.S. News & World Report*.



Our undergraduate engineering programs and our computer science program in the College of Engineering and Computer Science both rank among the top for public universities in Michigan.



Our undergraduate psychology program in the College of Arts, Sciences, and Letters has been named a top program in Michigan.



Washington Monthly recognized UM-Dearborn as a top master's degree university based on the university's contribution to the public good, as well as a "Best Bang for the Buck" school.



UM-Dearborn is one of only three public universities in Michigan to be named to WalletHub's Top 300 schools in the U.S., based on factors including performance, career outcomes and cost.



UM-Dearborn was just one of four Michigan public universities to be named an Opportunity University by the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching and the American Council on Education.

The university's mission statement reads "UM-Dearborn is a caring, inclusive, student-focused institution. We are committed to excellence in teaching, learning, research and scholarship, as well as access, affordability and community impact".

UM-Dearborn was forged in a community of working people with the global economy in mind. The university offers a transformative education reflective of the University of Michigan name, rooted in an ongoing commitment to Detroit. Since its very beginnings, the university has set itself apart in higher education through intentional, mutually beneficial partnerships with local industry, governments, and community organizations that have real impact.



UM-Dearborn is rich in opportunities for creative collaborative research, practice-based learning, and direct engagement with local communities. As an institution, UM-Dearborn is always learning, and strives to be responsive to the changing needs of our diverse students, the world in which they live and work and the communities we serve.

The mission is accomplished by:

- Preparing our graduates to become thoughtful citizens and creative leaders who are ready to offer practical solutions to society's challenges, particularly those impacting urban environments
- Integrating the liberal arts and sciences, professional studies and research opportunities to nurture holistic thinking and problem-solving skills
- Organizing classroom experiences around the latest pedagogies and teaching methods
- Cultivating faculty who are leaders in their disciplines and our communities, inspire their students, and care for their students' needs
- Helping our students achieve both personal growth and professional success
- Creating and sharing pioneering interdisciplinary research that supports diverse sectors of our economy and society, with an emphasis on work that serves the common good

- Making lasting impacts on the greater Michigan community by valuing the experiences, knowledge, needs and voices of our business and other partners
- Fostering an intellectual and social environment that is caring, dynamic, and welcoming of new ideas
- Forging mutually beneficial partnerships with businesses, community-based organizations, educational institutions and government agencies
- Constantly finding new ways to honor our commitments to accessibility, diversity, flexibility, affordability and inclusivity.

Governance and Reporting Relationships

The chancellor reports directly to the President of the University of Michigan, serves as an executive officer of the University of Michigan, and meets regularly with the Regents of the University of Michigan.

Reporting directly to the chancellor are the provost and executive vice chancellor for academic affairs, vice chancellor for business affairs, vice chancellor for external relations, vice chancellor for information technology and chief strategy officer, vice chancellor for institutional advancement, director of equity, civil rights and title IX, director of athletics, senior human resources director and senior advisor to the chancellor.



The chancellor has a high level of autonomy with respect to leadership and oversight of the Dearborn campus and serves as a member of the President's cabinet.

The President is strongly committed to the academic mission of the University of Michigan system, and has a collaborative approach to institutional leadership that includes the UM-Dearborn and UM-Flint chancellors in deliberations and decisions on matters of common interest and university-wide concern.

The Board of Regents of the University of Michigan oversees and has fiduciary responsibility for each of the three campuses (Ann Arbor, Dearborn, and Flint). The State of Michigan does not have a state board of higher education. Instead, campus budget plans are approved by the Regents, and the chancellor works directly with the legislature and receives its budget allocation directly from the state.

The State's 15 public universities – including each of the three University of Michigan campuses – coordinate efforts on a range of policy matters through the Michigan Association of State Universities (MASU). The chancellor of UM-Dearborn is a member of the Board of this Association.

Key Priorities

Recognizing the challenges facing universities in the 21st century, the next chancellor of UM-Dearborn will focus on the following key priorities:

- **The strategic plan.** The next chancellor will play a critical role in ensuring the successful implementation of UM-Dearborn's 10-year strategic plan, [GO BLUEprint for Success](#), now in its fourth year. The plan is framed around four institutional priorities: student experience and success; holistic excellence; faculty and staff excellence; and economic sustainability.
- **Raise the profile of the campus.** The chancellor will leverage the campus' relationship with the University of Michigan and the surrounding southeastern Michigan community to further its position as a top regional university that transforms students' lives and impacts economic development. Helping

the university to clarify and solidify its brand identity will be of the utmost importance, with emphasis placed on widely promoting the many accomplishments of faculty, students, staff, and alumni. This important work can begin only after extensive listening to all key constituencies in order to learn about UM-Dearborn's unique attributes and culture.

- **Enhance academic excellence and build research capacity.** In 2025, UM-Dearborn was classified as an Emerging Research University with a Carnegie classification of Doctoral University: High Research Activity (R2). The next chancellor will strive to enhance staffing and research infrastructure to support the university's R2 status and will broaden the university's ability to develop visionary and purposeful pedagogical initiatives that prepare students and faculty for the next decade of technological and sociocultural shifts as well as emerging fields and opportunities. Toward that end, the next chancellor will initiate a review of programs and curricula across all four colleges to ensure efficiencies in delivery as well as continued expansion of practice-based learning.
- **Secure financial resources, grow endowment, and ensure long-term financial sustainability.** The next chancellor will work to grow enrollment and net tuition revenue despite the significant decline in the number of college-going students in the state of Michigan by exploring different student markets, expanding online offerings, and showcasing the university more broadly. The [strategic enrollment plan](#) guides UM-Dearborn's efforts to attract, retain, and graduate diverse, high-achieving students. In addition, raising funds from private donors, industry, and foundations will be critical to reach or exceed the current campaign goal and to grow the university's \$90 million endowment. Connecting with and building relationships with alumni will be critically important.
- **Promote student success.** UM-Dearborn greatly values the success of its students and prides itself on the extent to which students are supported. Fifty-three percent of students are Pell eligible, and 44% of new students are first-generation college students. Students benefit tremendously from an on-campus clothing closet and food pantry; indeed, the food pantry distributed as much as 25,000 pounds of food over the course of a single semester. The impact that UM-Dearborn has on the social mobility of its students cannot be overstated, so the university continues to strive to increase retention, graduation, and career placement rates. Since 2022, **four-year graduation rates have increased from 32% to 35%, and six-year graduation rates have increased from 56 to 60%.** The next chancellor will prioritize further investment in academic student success and career readiness as well as student mental health and well-being. Toward that end, the new leader must maintain a regular campus presence and seek to connect with both undergraduates and graduate students on a personal level.
- **Strengthen UM-Dearborn's relationship with the broader region.** While relationships in the Dearborn community are strong, there is a significant opportunity for UM-Dearborn to enhance collaborations and industry partnerships in Ann Arbor, Flint, Detroit and the state of Michigan. Given the importance of preparing students to thrive in their careers post-graduation, the next chancellor will partner with local industry, non-profit organizations, government agencies, community groups, and other organizations and institutions to ensure students are developing the aptitudes and skillsets most in demand by employers of today and tomorrow. In addition, the next chancellor will connect with elected and non-elected officials in both Dearborn and Lansing. Advocating for resources at the state level and with Regents will be critical, which will require telling the UM-Dearborn story to these audiences in a compelling way and promoting the university's many successes.
- **Promote an inclusive community where all stakeholders feel a sense of belonging.** The next chancellor will prioritize a strategic commitment to recruiting, developing, retaining, and promoting talented faculty, staff, and campus leaders from all backgrounds, and will foster a campus culture and climate dedicated to inclusive thought and action in support of its community.

Desired Attributes

The ideal candidate will be a visionary, ethical, and empathetic leader with deep higher education experience and a passion for the mission of a regional public university. Of the utmost importance is an understanding of UM-Dearborn's mission and a genuine desire to be part of the tightly-knit UM-Dearborn community. The strongest candidates will demonstrate most of the following:

Strategic vision and leadership. Visionary, strategic and inspirational leadership of organizations with multiple stakeholders and competing goals, and an entrepreneurial mindset that encourages innovation, creativity, strategic risk taking and big thinking; experience with strategic planning and implementation;

Faculty and Staff Support, Talent Development, and Excellence. Demonstrated experience identifying talent and building highly productive teams, with a strong commitment to supporting both faculty and staff through professional growth, skill development, and career advancement. The ideal candidate will foster a collaborative environment that encourages scholarly innovation, interdisciplinary collaboration, wellness, and leadership opportunities across all roles;

Passion for higher education. Familiarity with regional public universities and their distinctive role and impact in the communities they serve; deep grounding in teaching and research experience with firm belief in and appreciation for the transformative power of higher education;



Community engagement. A record of deep and impactful community engagement, including connecting with local employers and advancing economic development;

Resource development. Demonstrated success in fundraising, revenue generation, and building state support and resources; experience with strategic enrollment management;

Holistic excellence. A record of fostering holistic excellence; open-minded with the ability to advocate for students, faculty and staff from all backgrounds, where everyone is welcome; must be able to work effectively across a range of personal and political views.

Financial management. Financial acumen and proven record of responsible and strategic stewardship of institutional resources. Skilled in planning and strategically investing to achieve desired results; a business mindset regarding operational decisions, ensuring efficiency, sustainability, and alignment with institutional goals;

Communication and community building. Exceptional interpersonal and relationship-building skills, including excellent public speaking ability, a high degree of emotional intelligence, authenticity, and accessibility, with a warm and engaging personality; natural ability to build community among campus stakeholders and the surrounding area;

Student-centered approach. Strong, genuine commitment to student support and student success; approachable and interested in establishing meaningful connections with students;

Change management. Courage and confidence to make difficult, data-informed decisions with transparency and integrity; effectively manage and lead change, engaging stakeholders throughout the process; skilled at addressing interpersonal conflict with professionalism and empathy.

Integrity and academic values. Unquestioned, unassailable personal and professional integrity and deep commitment to academic values including excellence in teaching and learning, research and creative expression, collaborative engagement, and commitment to shared governance; and

Academic credentials. Passion for academic excellence with a preference for an earned doctorate or terminal degree.

The Search Process

Inquiries, nominations and applications are invited. Interested candidates should submit confidentially, in electronic form (Microsoft Word or Adobe PDF files preferred), a curriculum vitae and letter of interest to UMDearborn.Chancellor@russellreynolds.com. This will be a confidential search, with no public announcement of candidate names. Selected individuals outside the search advisory committee who meet with candidates will have signed a non-disclosure agreement.

Though all materials received will be reviewed, please submit materials by January 15, 2026 for priority consideration.

UM-Dearborn is being assisted by Russell Reynolds Associates. Confidential discussions may be arranged by contacting any of the individuals below:

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