

# Demographic Trends in Diversity at Law Schools in Michigan

The Law School Workgroup of the  
Diversity and Inclusion Advisory Committee

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In September 2013, the Diversity and Inclusion Advisory Committee of the State Bar of Michigan (“DIAC”) issued a report analyzing the demographic trends at Michigan’s five law schools (the “Report”) based on data collected from the Law Schools Admissions Council.<sup>1</sup> Since that report was released, the Law School Admissions Council has issued data for three additional years. The data show that the number of law school applicants and number of students admitted to law schools nationwide has continued to decline. Nationwide, the number of law school applicants declined by 37 percent from the fall of 2010, when 87,900 applicants sought admission to law school, to the fall of 2015, when applicants numbered only 53,548.<sup>2</sup> In the same time period, the number of students admitted to the entering classes at the nation’s law schools fell 28 percent from 60,400 to 43,500 students.<sup>3</sup>

Michigan’s law schools have not been immune from this trend. In light of the decline in the number of law students around the country, the DIAC has reviewed data from Michigan law schools for the three most recent years to provide the following update to its 2013 Report.

## I. The Diminishing Number of Law Students at Michigan Law Schools

In 2011, the total enrollment in Michigan’s law schools was 6,931 students. (Table 6 in the Report.) As shown in the following table, by 2014, that number had fallen by 34.9 percent to 4,513 students.

<b>Total Enrollment</b>					
	<b>2011</b>	<b>2012</b>	<b>2013</b>	<b>2014</b>	<b>% Change From 2011</b>
WMU Cooley	3628	3095	2334	1742	-52.0%
Detroit	669	615	540	523	-21.8%
Michigan	1149	1124	1055	1001	-12.9%
Michigan State	915	941	907	828	-9.5%
Wayne State	570	538	488	419	-26.5%
Private	5212	4651	3781	3093	-40.7%
Public	1719	1662	1543	1420	-17.4%
Combined	6931	6313	5324	4513	-34.9%

<sup>1</sup> The 2013 Report is available online at <http://www.michbar.org/file/diversity/pdfs/lawschoolreport.pdf>. The Appendix to the 2013 report is at [http://www.michbar.org/file/diversity/pdfs/appendix\\_lawsch\\_report.pdf](http://www.michbar.org/file/diversity/pdfs/appendix_lawsch_report.pdf).

<sup>2</sup> Law School Admissions Council, Admitted Applicants by Ethnic & Gender Group, available at <http://www.lsac.org/lscresources/data/ethnic-gender-applicants>.

<sup>3</sup> Law School Admissions Council, Applications by Ethnic & Gender Group, available at <http://www.lsac.org/lscresources/data/ethnic-gender-admits>.

The drop in enrollment was most significant at the Western Michigan University Thomas M. Cooley Law School, where total enrollment dropped by 52 percent. But all schools in Michigan experienced a considerable decline over the three-year period.

During the same three year period, first-year enrollment fell even more significantly, declining by 1,204 students or 44.4% from 2011. Total first-year enrollment in 2014 at all Michigan law schools was 1,508.

<b>First-Year Enrollment</b>					
	<b>2011</b>	<b>2012</b>	<b>2013</b>	<b>2014</b>	<b>% Change from 2011</b>
WMU Cooley	1647	1254	907	625	-62.1%
Detroit	219	191	181	200	-8.7%
Michigan	357	344	314	318	-10.9%
Michigan State	308	295	270	248	-19.5%
Wayne State	181	148	138	117	-35.4%
Private	2174	1740	1358	1073	-50.6%
Public	538	492	452	435	-19.1%
Combined	2712	2232	1810	1508	-44.4%

Not surprisingly, the number of juris doctor degrees awarded in 2014 declined by only 12.8 percent since 2011. One would expect that the number of degrees awarded would trail the first-year enrollment, since students receiving their degrees were already in the pipeline. Because of the declining sizes of first-year classes, however, the number of degrees awarded should be expected to continue to decline.

<b>JDs Awarded</b>					
	<b>2011</b>	<b>2012</b>	<b>2013</b>	<b>2014</b>	<b>% Change from 2011</b>
WMU Cooley	999	1090	1121	805	-19.4%
Detroit	210	212	211	182	-13.3%
Michigan	378	388	399	319	-15.6%
Michigan State	282	290	301	332	17.7%
Wayne State	203	168	174	169	-16.7%
Private	1491	1592	1633	1319	-11.5%
Public	581	556	573	488	-16.0%
Combined	2072	2148	2206	1807	-12.8%

## **II. Minority Student Enrollment**

Just as overall student enrollment declined at Michigan's law schools over the past three years, total enrollment of minority students also declined. As the following table shows, total enrollment of minorities at Michigan law schools declined by 31.3 percent over the three-year period. Notably, however, the percentage of minority students enrolled in Michigan's law schools showed a slight increase, from 24.0 percent in 2011 to 25.3 percent in 2014.

<b>Total Enrollment of Minorities</b>									
	2011		2012		2013		2014		% Change from 2011
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	
WMU Cooley	1026	28.3%	922	29.8%	728	31.2%	585	33.6%	-43.0%
Detroit	109	16.3%	112	18.2%	79	14.6%	81	15.5%	-25.7%
Michigan	242	21.1%	248	22.1%	236	22.4%	228	22.8%	-5.8%
Michigan State	192	21.0%	207	22.0%	209	23.0%	190	22.9%	-1.0%
Wayne State	97	16.1%	95	17.7%	76	15.6%	60	14.3%	-38.1%
Private	1327	25.5%	1241	26.7%	1016	26.9%	856	27.7%	-35.5%
Public	339	19.4%	343	20.6%	312	20.2%	288	20.3%	-15.0%
Combined	1666	24.0%	1584	25.1%	1328	24.9%	1144	25.3%	-31.3%

The number of first-year minority students at Michigan’s law schools declined by 43.8 percent between 2011 and 2014. The number of first-year minority students at Michigan’s private law schools declined by 48.7 percent compared to 15.0 percent at Michigan’s public law schools. While the number of first-year minority students declined, the percentage of first-year students from minority groups remained steady at 27.3 percent.

<b>First-Year Enrollment of Minorities</b>									
	2011		2012		2013		2014		% Change from 2011
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	
WMU Cooley	527	32.0%	436	34.8%	323	35.6%	233	37.3%	-55.8%
Detroit	23	10.5%	38	19.9%	23	12.7%	26	13.0%	13.0%
Michigan	81	22.7%	88	25.6%	64	20.4%	78	24.5%	-3.7%
Michigan State	74	24.0%	65	22.0%	61	22.6%	61	24.6%	-17.6%
Wayne State	26	14.4%	23	15.5%	23	16.7%	13	11.1%	-50.0%
Private	624	28.7%	539	31.0%	407	30.0%	320	29.8%	-48.7%
Public	107	19.9%	111	22.6%	87	19.2%	91	20.9%	-15.0%
Combined	731	27.0%	650	29.1%	494	27.3%	411	27.3%	-43.8%

As the following table shows, the number of degrees awarded was actually up slightly since 2011. Results varied significantly by school with University of Detroit Mercy showing a decline of 48.6 percent since 2011, while Michigan State reported an increase of 110.8 percent.

<b>JDs Awarded to Minorities</b>									
	<b>2011</b>		<b>2012</b>		<b>2013</b>		<b>2014</b>		<b>% Change from 2011</b>
	<b>#</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>#</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>#</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>#</b>	<b>%</b>	
WMU Cooley	240	24.0%	282	25.9%	304	27.1%	213	26.5%	-11.3%
Detroit	37	17.6%	31	14.6%	47	22.3%	19	10.4%	-48.6%
Michigan	84	22.2%	88	22.7%	74	18.5%	88	27.6%	4.8%
Michigan State	37	13.1%	53	18.3%	55	18.3%	78	23.5%	110.8%
Wayne State	31	15.3%	19	11.3%	18	10.3%	26	15.4%	-16.1%
Private	314	21.1%	366	23.0%	406	24.9%	310	23.5%	-1.3%
Public	115	19.8%	107	19.2%	92	16.1%	114	23.4%	-0.9%
Combined	429	20.7%	473	22.0%	498	22.6%	424	23.5%	-1.2%

Details regarding the enrollment of African Americans, Hispanic Americans, Asian Americans and Native Americans are reported in the Appendix to this update.

### III. Changes in the Faculty

As law school enrollment has declined, so have the law school faculties. In 2014, there were 61 fewer law school professors at Michigan's law schools than in 2011, a decrease of 8.5 percent. Two schools, Michigan and Michigan State, actually saw a growth in faculty during this period, but the faculty shrank at the other three schools.

<b>All Faculty</b>					
	<b>2011</b>	<b>2012</b>	<b>2013</b>	<b>2014</b>	<b>% Change from 2011</b>
WMU Cooley	311	308	303	273	-12.2%
Detroit	87	83	81	57	-34.5%
Michigan	129	129	155	140	8.5%
Michigan State	124	129	133	134	8.1%
Wayne State	70	63	55	56	-20.0%
Private	522	520	517	464	-11.1%
Public	199	192	210	196	-1.5%
Combined	721	712	727	660	-8.5%

Interestingly, the number of full-time tenured and tenure-track law professors at Michigan schools increased during this period, growing by 42 professors or 15 percent.

<b>Full-time Faculty: Tenured or Tenure Track</b>					
	<b>2011</b>	<b>2012</b>	<b>2013</b>	<b>2014</b>	<b>% Change from 2011</b>
WMU Cooley	97	103	117	119	22.7%
Detroit	31	31	27	25	-19.4%
Michigan	72	71	74	89	23.6%
Michigan State	46	54	52	54	17.4%
Wayne State	34	31	30	35	2.9%
Private	174	188	196	198	13.8%
Public	106	102	104	124	17.0%
Combined	280	290	300	322	15.0%

### **A. Changes in Minority Faculty**

As shown in the next table, the number of minority faculty at Michigan law schools declined by 23.2 percent between 2011 and 2014. This was nearly three times the rate of decrease among the law school faculties as a whole. The decrease occurred at each school except for Michigan State.

<b>Minority Faculty Members</b>									
	<b>2011</b>		<b>2012</b>		<b>2013</b>		<b>2014</b>		<b>% Change From 2011</b>
	<b>#</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>#</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>#</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>#</b>	<b>%</b>	
WMU Cooley	44	14.1%	36	11.7%	34	11.2%	30	11.0%	-31.8%
Detroit	7	8.0%	8	9.6%	7	8.6%	2	3.5%	-71.4%
Michigan	14	10.9%	11	8.5%	15	9.7%	12	8.6%	-14.3%
Michigan State	11	8.9%	12	9.3%	13	9.8%	14	10.4%	27.3%
Wayne State	6	8.6%	5	7.9%	6	10.9%	5	8.9%	-16.7%
Private	62	11.9%	56	10.8%	54	10.4%	46	9.9%	-25.8%
Public	20	10.1%	16	8.3%	21	10.0%	17	8.7%	-15.0%
Combined	82	11.4%	72	10.1%	75	10.3%	63	9.5%	-23.2%

The total number of full-time, tenured and tenure-track minority law professors increased by just one. A small decline at the private law schools was offset by a small increase at the public law schools. While the total number of full-time, tenured and tenure-track minority law professors remains virtually unchanged, the number of minority professors decreased as a percentage of professors who are full-time tenured and tenure-track. This resulted since their number did not keep pace with the overall growth in full-time tenured and tenure-track professors.

Full-time Minority Faculty: Tenured or Tenure Track									
	2011		2012		2013		2014		% Change from 2011
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	
WMU Cooley	13	13.4%	13	12.6%	14	12.0%	14	11.8%	7.7%
Detroit	3	9.7%	4	12.9%	3	11.1%	1	4.0%	-66.7%
Michigan	10	13.9%	8	11.3%	7	9.5%	9	10.1%	-10.0%
Michigan State	7	15.2%	8	14.8%	10	19.2%	9	16.7%	28.6%
Wayne State	3	8.8%	3	9.7%	4	13.3%	4	11.4%	33.3%
Private	23	13.2%	25	13.3%	27	13.8%	24	12.1%	4.3%
Public	13	12.3%	11	10.8%	11	10.6%	13	10.5%	0.0%
Combined	36	12.9%	36	12.4%	38	12.7%	37	11.5%	2.8%

## B. Changes in Female Faculty

As the following two tables show, the past three years have seen a decline in the number of female faculty members at Michigan's law schools. The decrease in female faculty (-12.0 percent) was greater than the decrease in law school faculties as a whole (-8.5 percent). The percentage of full-time tenured and tenure-track female professors increased by 10.9 percent during the three-year period, but that was slower than the overall growth in full-time tenured and tenure-track professors.

Female Faculty Members									
	2011		2012		2013		2014		% Change from 2011
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	
WMU Cooley	123	39.5%	118	38.3%	112	37.0%	101	37.0%	-17.9%
Detroit	34	39.1%	30	36.1%	27	33.3%	17	29.8%	-50.0%
Michigan	45	34.9%	38	29.5%	56	36.1%	52	37.1%	15.6%
Michigan State	48	38.7%	54	41.9%	53	39.8%	53	39.6%	10.4%
Wayne State	24	34.3%	21	33.3%	19	34.5%	18	32.1%	-25.0%
Private	205	39.3%	202	38.8%	192	37.1%	171	36.9%	-16.6%
Public	69	34.7%	59	30.7%	75	35.7%	70	35.7%	1.4%
Combined	274	38.0%	261	36.7%	267	36.7%	241	36.5%	-12.0%

<b>Full-time Faculty: Tenured or Tenure Track</b>									
	<b>2011</b>		<b>2012</b>		<b>2013</b>		<b>2014</b>		<b>% Change from 2011</b>
	<b>#</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>#</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>#</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>#</b>	<b>%</b>	
WMU Cooley	40	41.2%	42	40.8%	50	42.7%	52	43.7%	30.0%
Detroit	17	54.8%	17	54.8%	16	59.3%	8	32.0%	-52.9%
Michigan	27	37.5%	21	29.6%	24	32.4%	34	38.2%	25.9%
Michigan State	23	50.0%	25	46.3%	25	48.1%	25	46.3%	8.7%
Wayne State	12	35.3%	9	29.0%	10	33.3%	13	37.1%	8.3%
Private	80	46.0%	84	44.7%	91	46.4%	85	42.9%	6.3%
Public	39	36.8%	30	29.4%	34	32.7%	47	37.9%	20.5%
Combined	119	42.5%	114	39.3%	125	41.7%	132	41.0%	10.9%

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