

UMRA Membership Survey Findings – Overview

The survey was sent to UMRA members via e-mail in May 2017. A total of 303 members responded. These data are for your information and work in conjunction with UMRA objectives. Please do not transmit data to others or otherwise share without the permission of the UMRA Board. The survey was managed by Vi Barkauskas, Albert Hermsen, James Middlemas, and Norel Tullier.

Demographics

Age	Less than 65, 17.6% 65 to 75, 49.8% 76 and older, 32.6%
Gender	Female, 64.4% Male, 35.5%
Residence	Washtenaw County, 72.3% Flint area, 2.3% , Dearborn area 1.3% Other Michigan location, 18.8%; Out-of-State, 5.3%
Annual months outside MI	None, 73.5% 1-3, 13.6% 4-6, 6.0% more than 6, 7.0%
UMRA status	Retiree, 98.7% Spouse of retiree, 1.3%
Previous UM position	Faculty 27.8% Staff 72.2%

Monthly Programs/Meetings

Satisfaction with program quality	Very satisfied, 32.7% Satisfied, 18.7% Neutral 3.5% Generally unsatisfied, 0.8% Very unsatisfied, 0% NA, 44%
Interest in videos of programs:	Yes, 69.1% No, 30.9%.
Other comments	(86 responses, See Appendix A.)

Health Day

Health Day Beneficial?	Very beneficial, 16.9% Beneficial, 20.3% Neutral, 3.4% Not Beneficial, 1.7% NA, 57.8%
Recommendations for future Health Day topics	(40 responses. See Appendix B.)

Travel Offerings

Interest in future trips	
Day trip in lower Michigan	Yes, 35.2% No, 17.6% Maybe, 47.2%
Overnight trip in MI or neighboring state?	Yes, 20.5% No, 35.0% Maybe, 44.4%
Longer trip in the U.S. or another country?	Yes, 18.8% No, 38.5% Maybe, 43.1%
Suggestions for future trip venues	(33 responses, See Appendix C.)

Advocacy

Awareness of UMRA's advocacy	Did not realize those activities were going on, 25.9% I assumed this was happening, but did not know for sure, 27.9% I knew that advocacy was an ongoing UMRA role, 46.2%
Importance of UMRA's advocacy role	Extremely important, 74.9% Somewhat important, 15.4% Neutral, 8.7% Somewhat important, 0.3% Not important at all, 0.7%
Issues/benefits for which UMRA should advocate	(109 responses, See Appendix D for university-focused recommendations.) (77 responses, See Appendix E for externally focused recommendations.)

Newsletter - Communication

Mailed newsletter	I don't recall receiving it, 12.6% I receive it but don't really read it, 1.3% I scan it quickly, 26.8% I read it carefully looking for specific information of interest to me, 59.3%
Frequency	Monthly; 23.9% quarterly, 68.0% two times a year, 8.1%
Electronic newsletter?	Good idea, 44.4% Either paper or electronic, 36.4% OK for electronic, but not preference, 15.2% Negative on electronic only, 4.0%.
Recommendations for newsletter contents	(101 responses, See Appendix F.)
Email communications	Very Useful, 66.4% Somewhat Useful, 23.6% Neutral, 14.4% Not Useful, 0.7% Do Not Read Them, 0.7%
Suggestions for improving communication	(53 responses, See Appendix G.)

New Programs

Interest in new initiatives	
Golf outings	Yes, 11.9% No, 88.1%
A book club	Yes, 41.1% No, 58.9%
Monthly social lunches/dinners	Yes, 41.4% No, 55.9%
An annual "Financial Health" seminar	Yes, 64.1% No, 35.9%
More participation in UM sponsored programs, e.g. M-Healthy	Yes, 58.9% No, 41.1%
Tours of specific places on the UM campuses	AA, Yes, 72.3% Dearborn, Yes, 18.7% Flint; Yes, 13.5% No interest at all, 26.3%
Volunteer service with UM and/or community agencies	Yes, 61.8% No, 38.2%
A scholarship program for UM students.	Yes, 38.6% No, 61.4%
New initiatives you would like the Board to consider?	(65 responses, See Appendix H.)

Appendix - A – Summary of COMMENTS ABOUT MONTHLY PROGRAMS – 86 RESPONSES

POSITIVE COMMENTS
Program topics & speakers have been excellent – 16 responses
Support for earlier meeting time – 10 responses
"Good jobs" & thanks for the hard work – 4 responses
The new table arrangement positive – 1 response
RECOMMENDATIONS
Request for videos of programs - 4 responses
Offer transitional "help" programs once/year for new retirees – 3 responses
History of UM/what is new at UM – 3 responses
Meet in other locations – more central – 2 responses
"Meatier" topics
Programs related to older folks
Would most enjoy scientific/medical presentations
How about a repeat of the Golden Apple awards lecture?
Sessions on Supreme Court landmark cases, the Constitution and Bill of Rights
More socialization at meetings

Hoping to see some UM history this year with its 200th being celebrated
Author and UM lecturer, John U. Bacon
Please do not shy away from current health, environmental or social issues which MAY be construed as 'political'. These are the most important topics of our time.
Psychological issues such as stress reduction, etc.
Uncertainty of stability of world, USA and other countries in this era
Be nice to have a program where state legislators are slated to talk about needs of residents. Same for Mayor of Ann Arbor
World travel, political organizing, tips on aging
Health and exercise programs
NEGATIVE COMMENTS
Too much emphasis on sports and Wayne County things
Parking is very limited
Hotel has abysmal sound system
ATTENDANCE FACTORS
Too far from where I live/out-of-state – 12 responses
I'm too busy with other things to attend these programs – 11 responses
Traffic issues – 2 responses
Plan to attend in the future – 2 responses
Location too difficult/ expensive – 2 responses

Appendix B – Summary of COMMENTS ABOUT HEALTH DAY – 40 RESPONSES

Positive and General Responses
Good variety of topics. Keep having them – 12 responses
Will attend in the future – 3 responses
Video tape
Option to attend seminar without lunch
Recommendations for Topics
Financial matters relevant to retirement – 2 responses
Physical and occupational therapists/ other healthcare providers have much to offer; dealing with potential for falls for example – 2 responses
Memory and cognitive enrichment
Cannabis oil use, is it healthy?
We should continue to bring experts on blood pressure, heart disease, diabetes, arthritis

Appendix C – Summary of COMMENTS ABOUT TRAVEL PROGRAM – 33 RESPONSES

General Comments
Maybe in future – 3 responses
Can't afford – 2 responses
Get motion sickness
Recommendations
Toledo Museum of Art – 2 responses
Tulip Festival in Holland MI- 2 responses
Grand Rapids, Fred Meijer Gardens; Battle Creek, cereal companies - 2 responses
Stratford, Ontario, Toronto – 2 responses
Campus places of interest e.g. Michigan Stadium, M-City, tours of various buildings like the Hatcher Library, Clements, Bentley, Ford – 2 responses
Wineries in northern Michigan – 2 responses
Agawam Canyon, Grand Hotel, Mackinac Island
Tigers baseball trip
Festivals within Michigan
South Africa, Europe
Chicago, Columbus IN, Toronto, Cleveland, Detroit

Detroit salt mines
Educational sites - famous houses - Ford estate, Biological Station, the Ingles House (before it passes from UM hands), any historical site linked to the history of UM or Ann Arbor.
Planetarium, art institute, etc.
US virgin islands
Auto factories
European river trips.
Scotland, Canada
Tours of Lansing, Detroit, Windsor
New York, Washington DC, Chicago
Fox theaters
Positive Comments
Keep the travel program, it offers a good variety of trips appealing to all.
I think you are doing a great job here, I just haven't been able to participate

Appendix D – Summary of COMMENTS ABUT UNIVERSITY-FOCUSED ADVOCACY RECOMMENDATIONS – 109 RESPONSES

Recommended General External Issues for Advocacy
Health costs containment
Importance of democracy and responsible political dissent
End of life care
Voter education and community engagement.
Recommended Foci for Advocacy
Health-care benefits/insurance/prescriptions – 50 responses
Discounted prices for cultural, sporting events, computers and computer repair – 18 responses
Library access and benefits - 5 responses
Parking on campus – 4 responses
Managing retirement funds – 2 responses
Audit courses – 2 responses
Long term care
Free exercise programs
Greater inclusion
General Comments
Positive comments – 6 responses
More information about UMRA advocacy – 5 responses
Maintain current activities – 3 responses
Greater inclusion as part of the UM family – 2 responses

Appendix E – EXTERNALLY - FOCUSED ADVOCACY RECOMMENDATIONS – 77 RESPONSES

Health care/insurance/prescription benefits, Medicare preservation – 34 responses
Protection of Social Security benefits – 11 responses
Senior housing/transportation/property taxes – 8 response
Environmental stewardship – 6 responses.
Taxes/keep benefits tax-free – 4 responses
Quality/affordable public education – 4 responses
Research funding – 3 responses
End of life care/Long term care – 3 responses
Increased support for exercise programs for the elderly - 3 responses

The following recommendations received one response each: coordinate travel opportunities, refugee rights, kindness, free or cheap deals for seniors, collaboration with AARP where applicable, women's reproductive rights, greater control over drug prices, social justice, Improve bike safety and pedestrian safety for all of Ann Arbor, full access to the Ann Arbor Library system as a retiree, mentoring inner city youth in Wayne and Washtenaw counties, TIAA/CREF.
 As elders, seniors, retirees, we have experience and perspective. We, as a group, ought to have a voice in national issues. Not about arguing politics, could be a voice for how well our country and culture is doing and how to think about such things with experience.

Appendix F – RECOMMENDATIONS FOR NEWSLETTER – 101 RESPONSES

Meeting/Event/Program information – 47 responses
Advocacy for retirees’ benefits/initiatives – 17 responses
News/University/ National/state happenings/issues that impact retirees – 17 responses
Trips/Travel – 9 responses
Personal stories/ features on members – 9 responses
Volunteer opportunities – 8 responses
Retiree resources - 6 responses
Educational offerings – 6 responses
Little need for change, newsletters presently informative – 5 responses.
University information – 5 responses
Recap of program presentations – 4 responses
Health information - 4 responses
Obituaries/death notices- 3 responses
Activities of similar retiree groups – 2 responses
Networking opportunities – 2 responses
Campus buildings: new and renovations – 2 responses
Regent voting – 2 responses
The following recommendations had one response each: Q&A column where members send in questions; More background information on upcoming speakers at monthly meetings; Legislation/updates from the DC office; Board member contact information

Appendix G – COMMUNICATION RECOMMENDATIONS – 53 RESPONSES

Good job; OK; fine as is – 17 responses
Electronic and social media are most effective – 12 responses
Record too late – 7 responses
Do not get the Record – 5 responses
Like the Record – 4 responses
The following recommendations received one response each: coordinated efforts so that various messages complement each other; pass on info from sponsors better. We've had them at the last few meetings but they weren't introduced 'till after social hour was over therefore missing time when they could have been approached etc. Give them more coverage or they won't be back next year!; Post a list of possible activities and let us vote; The UMRA website needs a complete over haul to include modern features, like, calendar of events, media (on-demand events), contacts, networking, etc. Very important!; Could some of this be combined/coordinated with staff involvement from the UM Office of Communications?; Consider a Twitter feed; Consider a Facebook page so that retirees could socially interact and share information among themselves; Communicate only meaningful information; A letter in the mail if it's something important.

Appendix H – NEW INITIATIVE RECOMMENDATIONS – 65 RESPONSES

Nature hikes/walks - 4 responses
Blocks of theater/concert tickets at UM/and/or athletic events - 4 responses
Part-time employment opportunities atU-M for retirees - 2 responses
Socialization opportunities - 2 responses
Focus on intellectual base of the university

Auditing classes in the arts and sciences
Travel films with narratives
Tours of Dearborn and Flint campuses if transportation from Ann Arbor was provided
Connections/collaborations with Alumni Association activities sports leagues, Fitness classes oriented to retirees
Informative talks: historical, cultural, health
Happy hour
Volunteer projects
Art/movie exhibits
Provide activities for young people on campus
Craft groups
Connections with the existing work force at UM - like Voices of the Staff
Library resources for seniors-electronic books et al
Maybe have a show (1/year) of retirees personal accomplishments
Holiday dinner around Christmas time
A club to discuss stories in substantive publications such as The Atlantic, The New York Times Magazine
Learn about other peer institutions new initiatives to support their retirees
Programs for those interested in aging in place alternatives to assisted-living settings
Have a "state of the university" talk every year from a high-level administrative officer
Continue meetings and activities in summer, since snowbirds miss the winter ones
A visitation program for members who are ill or may need help
Dino Valle talk on opera
More discussion/presentation on the UM helping-hand partners (group website) which allows UM employees and retirees to offer or request services, such as house or yard work, pet or child care.
Gadabouts group that enjoys attends shows/performances on campus or lectures on campus.
Gordon L. Flynn
Provide options for each of the 3 campuses (e.g., scholarship programs).
Engagement using the expertise of the retirees for mentoring
Engagement with faculty on current research
Engagement with administrative/academic areas
An annual picnic (social)
Home-away-from-home/mentoring for international students/ first-of-family students
Writing club
Personal fitness program