



Dean, School of Nursing
University of Michigan
Ann Arbor, Michigan

THE SEARCH

The [University of Michigan School of Nursing](#) (UMSN) invites applications and nominations for a bold, visionary, and experienced leader to serve as its next Dean. As part of one of the world's leading public research universities, UMSN is uniquely positioned to shape the future of healthcare and nursing science within one of the most influential academic ecosystems in the country. The [University of Michigan](#) (U-M) is home to 19 nationally recognized schools and colleges, making it one of the most comprehensive and academically diverse institutions in the world, and ranked among the top three public universities nationally, with more than 100 graduate programs ranked in the top ten by *U.S. News & World Report*. There are more than eight health sciences schools that consistently rank in the top 10 in their respective fields. U-M had more than \$2 billion in research expenditures for fiscal year 2024 and ranked fourth in the nation among all institutions of higher education, and second among public universities, based on fiscal year 2023 National Science Foundation research expenditure rankings. [Michigan Medicine](#), the University of Michigan's academic medical center, is one of the country's top-ranked academic health centers; its clinical branch, Michigan Health, includes 11 hospitals and hundreds of clinics statewide that are staffed by more than 30,000 employees. Michigan Health manages over 48,000 hospital discharges and nearly three million outpatient clinic visits annually.

This is a rare opportunity to lead one of the nation's top nursing schools at a world-class public research university, shaping the future of nursing education, science, and clinical practice to advance health for all. UMSN is ranked among the top 10 nursing schools nationally and is recognized for its academic rigor, global engagement, and leadership in health equity. With over 1,200 students enrolled across BSN, MSN, DNP, and PhD programs, and over \$14 million in annual research spending, UMSN drives innovation in areas such as chronic disease management, care delivery models, and data-driven health solutions. The School's values-driven culture is anchored by its EPIC principles: Empowerment, Practice, Inspiration, and Cultivation, which foster respect, integrity, and collaboration across its vibrant academic community.

This leadership transition comes at a time of reflection and momentum for UMSN. Enrollment has grown, and program offerings are evolving. The research enterprise, long a hallmark of UMSN, is also entering a pivotal new chapter to navigate through shifting funding priorities and sources. The UMSN community is

ready to co-create a shared vision that builds on the School's rich history and legacy and expands its leadership locally, nationally, and globally.

The next dean must possess the strategic acumen to foster exceptional academic programs and robust enrollment, cultivate a thriving and inclusive internal community, build the infrastructure and resources necessary to support research excellence, and lead innovative clinical initiatives that bridge education, research, and practice. Experience in leading complex organizations, fostering interdisciplinary partnerships, and advocating for nursing is essential. To fulfill accreditation requirements, the Dean must be a registered nurse (RN) with a graduate degree in nursing and an earned doctorate. The Dean must also have a current or eligible RN license to practice nursing in Michigan and demonstrate scholarly distinction appropriate for a tenured appointment as a full professor at the University of Michigan. Significant experience in nursing leadership, education, practice, and/or research is expected.

The University of Michigan has retained Isaacson, Miller, a national executive search firm, to assist in this recruitment. Please direct all applications, nominations, and inquiries in confidence to Isaacson, Miller, as indicated at the end of this document.

THE ROLE OF DEAN

The Dean of the UMSN serves as the School's chief academic and administrative officer and is a key member of the University's academic leadership. Reporting to the Provost and Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs, [Dr. Laurie McCauley](#), the Dean provides strategic vision and operational leadership across all aspects of the School's mission: education, research, clinical practice, and service. The Dean is a member of the [University of Michigan Health Board](#) and the Health Sciences Council of Deans, which consists of leaders from all health sciences schools and colleges on the Ann Arbor, Flint, and Dearborn Campuses.

The Dean works closely with University leadership, faculty, staff, students, and external partners to advance UMSN's mission and priorities. The role holds broad authority over academic programs, faculty and staff development, budgetary planning, advancement, and external engagement. The Dean plays a central role in fostering a culture of inclusion, innovation, and excellence, and in positioning the School of Nursing as a national and global leader in academic nursing.

The Dean leads a collaborative and matrixed leadership team composed of associate deans responsible for research, global affairs, professional graduate studies, professional practice, undergraduate studies, and faculty affairs and development. The team also includes the chairs of the School's two academic departments—Health Behavior and Biological Sciences, and Systems, Populations and Leadership, as well as the Chief Operating Officer and Chief Development Officer. Together, this group supports the Dean in advancing the School's academic, research, clinical, and operational priorities.

OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES

Set a Bold Course for UMSN's Future

Like other leaders at the University of Michigan, this dean will be granted significant autonomy and will be empowered to drive strategic growth. In planning out this growth, the Dean will lead a collaborative strategic planning process that brings together faculty, staff, students, and partners to define a clear and ambitious path for UMSN. The Dean will skillfully unite the School's community around shared priorities and set goals that build on UMSN's longstanding excellence in nursing education, research, and clinical practice. With a foundation that includes top-ranked academic programs, a strong commitment to health equity, deep interdisciplinary connections across campus, and a global reach, the School is well-positioned to address the most pressing challenges in healthcare. The Dean must be a skilled and inspiring leader who can foster trust, engage diverse perspectives, and translate collective vision into a strategic roadmap that advances innovation, impact, and leadership in nursing.

Advance Research and Doctoral Education to Elevate Scientific Impact

The next Dean will grow the School's research enterprise and graduate programs. UMSN faculty lead high-impact, interdisciplinary research in areas such as symptom science, big data analytics, and health systems effectiveness, unified by a strong commitment to health equity and supported by initiatives like the Center for the Study of Drugs, Alcohol, Smoking, and Health (DASH) and the Healthcare Innovation Impact Program (HiIP). As federal funding priorities shift, the Dean must strategically support faculty through resource alignment, development opportunities, and entrepreneurial pathways. Expanding the PhD program and building infrastructure for interdisciplinary collaboration will be essential to increasing research output and preparing future nurse scientists. With access to the resources of a top-tier R1 university and an exceptional faculty committed to excellence in research and graduate education, the Dean will be well-positioned to achieve these goals.

Foster Educational Innovation and Academic Excellence

The University of Michigan is known for innovation, and UMSN's strong academic programs reflect that spirit. The next Dean will have the opportunity to reimagine how students learn and how faculty teach, strengthening connections across undergraduate, graduate, and research domains. This includes accelerating innovation in curriculum design, instructional technology, and simulation-based learning, while embracing tools such as AI and immersive technologies. The Dean will support faculty creativity and experimentation, preparing students for a rapidly evolving healthcare environment. As enrollment grows and delivery models diversify, the Dean will ensure educational quality remains high, grounded in inclusive pedagogy and a commitment to equitable outcomes. UMSN also benefits from robust interprofessional education offerings through the [Michigan Center for Interprofessional Education](#), and the Dean will play a key role in expanding these efforts.

Expand Partnerships Across Campus and Beyond

Strategic engagement with local, national, and global partners will also be essential to advance UMSN's reach and impact. Nursing is increasingly recognized as a key contributor to health equity, student well-being, and public trust. The next Dean has an opportunity to further elevate UMSN's visibility within the University and beyond by positioning nursing as a leader in interdisciplinary innovation, especially in areas like behavioral health, community engagement, and policy advocacy.

UMSN faculty are active in the [Institute for Healthcare Policy and Innovation](#), a network of more than 700 health experts, and collaborate with the School's Pivot Hub to drive equity, policy, and practice innovation. The School also partners closely with Michigan Medicine, the University Health System, and a wide range of global initiatives. The next Dean will strengthen these connections to expand experiential learning, collaborative research, and integrated care models, while aligning with University-wide efforts such as public engagement and the North Campus Innovation Hub.

Cultivate Philanthropic Support and Deftly Steward Resources

The next Dean will serve as a vital ambassador for UMSN, inspiring donors, alumni, and external partners with a compelling vision for the future of nursing. UMSN is currently in the public phase of a \$38 million campaign and has already secured nearly two-thirds of its goal. Building on a strong foundation of support, the next Dean will strengthen relationships with existing alumni and donors while expanding the School's reach to engage new audiences drawn to nursing's essential role in promoting health equity and improving outcomes for all. They will collaborate closely with University leadership, health system partners, foundations, and community stakeholders to secure resources that advance student success, faculty excellence, research innovation, and infrastructure development. Operational acumen and responsible financial stewardship will be essential to translating these resources into sustainable, long-term growth.

Champion Inclusive Excellence and a Values-Driven Culture

The next Dean will continue to foster a culture of belonging and inclusive excellence within the School, ensuring that all students, faculty, and staff feel supported and empowered. By strengthening this foundation, the Dean will position UMSN to advance health equity more broadly, working to eliminate disparities, expand access to care, and serve Michigan's diverse rural and urban communities. UMSN has embraced a values-based framework centered on Empowerment, Practice, Inspiration, and Cultivation (EPIC). The next dean will be tasked with sustaining this cultural momentum while adapting it to future needs. As the School continues to grow in diversity and complexity, leadership must ensure that EPIC values remain embedded in daily practice, governance, and community engagement. This includes fostering psychological safety, inclusive decision-making, and a sense of belonging across faculty, staff, and students.

QUALIFICATIONS AND CHARACTERISTICS

This position requires a collaborative leader with strategic vision, emotional intelligence, and political savvy; who deeply understands nursing education, research, and practice; who thinks creatively and strategically; who can connect to a wide array of constituents; values interprofessional collaboration, and who defaults to transparency and inclusion. They will uphold the University of Michigan's values: integrity, equity, respect, diversity, inclusion, and innovation.

Minimum Requirements

- A registered nurse (RN) with a graduate degree in nursing and an earned doctorate;
- Qualified for appointment as a tenured full professor at the University of Michigan's School of Nursing;
- Current or eligible RN licensure to practice nursing in the state of Michigan.

Preferred Qualifications and Characteristics

- Distinguished record of academic achievement, research, practice, and service;
- Significant administrative and leadership experience;
- A record of accomplishment in recruiting, developing, and retaining outstanding faculty, staff, and students;
- Exceptional oral and written communication skills;
- Strong interpersonal skills, including collegiality and collaboration;
- Demonstrated experience and success in developing external sources of support;
- A firm understanding of higher education and the dynamic and ever-evolving healthcare landscape;
- Proven ability to build effective partnerships within a college and university, with clinical partners, and with external groups;
- High standards of professional integrity and a strong sense of professional ethics;
- Demonstrated commitment to inclusive excellence, sustainability, and social responsibility in academic and operational practices;
- Proven ability to engage meaningfully with diverse communities and foster community partnerships;
- Visionary leadership in integrating emerging technologies, including artificial intelligence, into curriculum, research, and service aligned with the institution's mission.

APPLICATIONS, INQUIRIES, AND NOMINATIONS

The University of Michigan has engaged the executive search firm Isaacson, Miller to assist in the search. Inquiries, nominations, and applications (including a CV and cover letter) should be sent in confidence via this link: <https://www.imsearch.com/open-searches/university-michigan-school-nursing/dean>

Stephanie Fidel, Partner
Amy Segal, Partner
Erin Schwass, Senior Associate
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The University of Michigan, including the Ann Arbor, Dearborn, and Flint campuses as well as Michigan Medicine, is an equal opportunity employer that complies with all applicable federal and state laws regarding nondiscrimination. The University is committed to providing an inclusive and respectful environment for faculty, staff, and students, and does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, marital status, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, disability, religion, height, weight, or veteran status in employment, educational programs and activities, and admissions.

Inquiries or complaints may be addressed to the Equity, Civil Rights and Title IX Office (ECRT) at 734-763-0235 and ecrtoffice@umich.edu, and as follows:

Sex/Gender Identity/Gender Expression/Sexual Orientation, including sexual misconduct: ECRT Sexual and Gender-Based Misconduct Director and Title IX Coordinator.

Disability: ECRT Disability Director and ADA Coordinator

Race/Color/National Origin/Age/Marital Status/Religion/Height/Weight/Veteran Status: ECRT Civil Rights Director

APPENDIX

UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

Founded in 1817, the [University of Michigan](#) (U-M) is one of the nation's first public universities and has long been recognized for its commitment to academic excellence, research, and public service. With over 67,000 undergraduate, graduate, and professional students across its Ann Arbor, Dearborn, and Flint campuses, U-M combines broad accessibility with world-class scholarship.

Leadership

President Domenico Grasso began his tenure on May 8, 2025. President Grasso is an accomplished environmental engineer; his research focuses on molecular-scale processes that govern the ultimate fate of contaminants in the environment and the development of new techniques to reduce risks to human health and natural resources. Prior to stepping into the presidency at U-M, Dr. Grasso served as chancellor at the University of Michigan-Dearborn and prior to this appointment served as provost of the University of Delaware, vice president for research and dean of the Graduate College at the University of Vermont, was the Rosemary Bradford Hewlett Professor and founding director of the Picker Engineering Program at Smith College. He holds engineering degrees from Worcester Polytechnic Institute (B.Sc.), Purdue University (M.S.) and the University of Michigan (Ph.D.).

Laurie McCauley, Provost and Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs, oversees U-M's 19 schools and colleges. In partnership with the other executive vice presidents, Provost McCauley leads U-M's Campus Planning 2025 initiative, as well as the university's Strategic Visioning process. Before her appointment as provost, in May of 2022, Dr. McCauley served as dean of the U-M School of Dentistry. She is an active researcher supported by the National Institutes of Health and a member of the National Academy of Medicine. She is also a recipient of the Ida Gray Award in recognition of her outstanding efforts in promoting multicultural ideals. Since taking on the role of provost, she has committed to creating a more accessible and inclusive environment for people with disabilities at the university, as well as integrating disability awareness into more educational contexts across campus. Additionally, she serves as a leader in the university's Well-Being Collective.

Strategic Vision

The University of Michigan's strategic vision, [Look to Michigan](#), charts an ambitious course for the decade ahead. Anchored by a \$7 billion fundraising campaign, the largest in U-M's history and the most ambitious ever by a public university, it advances a unified plan for impact across education, research, service, and health care. *Look to Michigan* builds on the goals of *Vision 2034*, now fully integrated, with a focus on life-changing education, health and well-being, democracy and civic engagement, global impact, and sustainability. Complementing this effort, [Campus Plan 2050](#) provides a long-term framework for physical spaces that support innovation, connectivity, and carbon neutrality.

MICHIGAN MEDICINE AND UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN HEALTH

[Michigan Medicine](#) is the University of Michigan's fully integrated academic medical center and one of the state's largest and most comprehensive health systems. It encompasses the University of Michigan Health (U-M Health), the University of Michigan Medical School (UMMS), the University of Michigan Medical Group (UMMG), and the Michigan Health Corporation, which supports strategic partnerships and affiliations. Together, these entities advance a shared mission of excellence in patient care, education, and research.

[University of Michigan Health](#)

U-M Health is consistently ranked among the nation's top hospitals by [U.S. News and World Report](#), with national recognition across a wide range of adult and pediatric specialties. The health system's clinical operations are anchored by a number of world-class facilities, including University Hospital, C.S. Mott Children's Hospital, Von Voigtlander Women's Hospital, the Frankel Cardiovascular Center, Kellogg Eye Center, Rogel Cancer Center, Chelsea Hospital, U-M Health West, and U-M Health Sparrow. In FY 2023, the system included more than 2,200 licensed beds, with over 90,000 hospital discharges, 96,000 surgical cases, 328,000 emergency and urgent care visits, and 4.1 million outpatient visits. Its clinical reach extends statewide, serving patients from every county in Michigan through an expansive network of hospitals and health centers.

Academic Integration and Nursing Collaboration

Michigan Medicine fosters a rich environment for interprofessional education, clinical training, and translational research. Its longstanding partnership with UMSN supports:

- Collaborative care and research across disciplines
- Innovative models of clinical practice
- Leadership development in nursing and health care

UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN SCHOOL OF NURSING

UMSN is a nationally recognized leader in nursing education, research, and clinical practice, preparing nurses to lead in complex care environments through rigorous academics, immersive clinical training, and interdisciplinary collaboration. At the forefront of nursing science, UMSN advances health equity, chronic disease management, care delivery innovation, and global health through its robust research enterprise. Guided by its mission to advance health for all through education, knowledge generation, and service to individuals, communities, and populations, UMSN continues to shape the future of nursing with purpose and impact.

Academics

With nationally ranked programs at all levels, UMSN combines academic rigor with flexible, specialized pathways that reflect the complexity and diversity of today's healthcare environment. Students have the opportunity to build deep clinical expertise, pursue interdisciplinary interests, and earn credentials that align with their professional goals.

Degree Programs

- [Bachelor of Science in Nursing \(BSN\)](#)
 - Traditional BSN
- [Master of Science in Nursing \(MSN\)](#)
 - Advanced Clinical Practice and Leadership tracks
 - Adult-Gerontology Primary Care Nurse Practitioner
 - Adult-Gerontology Acute Care Nurse Practitioner
 - Primary Care Family Nurse Practitioner
 - Primary Care Pediatric Nurse Practitioner
 - Nurse-Midwifery
 - Nurse-Midwifery/Primary Care Family Nurse Practitioner
 - Leadership, Analytics, and Innovation
- [Doctor of Nursing Practice \(DNP\)](#)
 - Practice-focused leadership and specialty preparation
- [Doctor of Philosophy in Nursing \(Ph.D.\)](#)
 - Research-intensive, designed to advance nursing science

Nurse Practitioner and Specialty Concentrations (MSN/DNP)

- Adult-Gerontology Primary Care Nurse Practitioner
- Family Nurse Practitioner
- Adult-Gerontology Acute Care Nurse Practitioner
- Pediatric Primary Care Nurse Practitioner
- Nurse-Midwifery
- Nurse-Midwifery/Primary Care Family Nurse Practitioner

Certificates and Additional Opportunities

- Certificate in Health Informatics
- Certificate in Nursing Education
- Interprofessional Mini-Certificate in Trauma-Informed Practice (TIP)
- Post Master's Advanced Practice Certificates
 - Adult-Gerontology Acute Care Nurse Practitioner

- Adult Gerontology Primary Care Nurse Practitioner
- Primary Care Family Nurse Practitioner
- Nurse-Midwifery
- Global Health Concentration
- Occupational Health Nursing Concentration

This structure supports the School's mission to advance health for all through the development of highly skilled, adaptive, and forward-thinking nursing professionals.

Research and Centers

UMSN's research portfolio spans critical areas including:

- Symptom science across acute and chronic conditions (e.g., diabetes, cancer fatigue, post-childbearing recovery)
- Health systems effectiveness and care delivery models
- Health equity and inclusive care frameworks
- Big data, analytics, informatics, and visualization

Faculty are supported by the [Grants and Research Office](#) (GRO) and robust university-wide research infrastructure, including the [Michigan Institute for Clinical & Health Research](#).

A cornerstone of UMSN's research impact is its network of faculty-led centers and initiatives:

- **Health Analytics Collaborative (HAC):** A transdisciplinary hub accelerating team-based analytics, visualization, and informatics research.
- **Pivot Hub:** Focused on preventing health care–associated harm through collaborative research and system-level training.
- **Center for the Study of Drugs, Alcohol, Smoking and Health (DASH):** Dedicated to research on substance use and related health impacts.
- **Center for Advancing Research in Identity, Sexuality and Equity (ARISE):** Advocates for sexual and reproductive health equity through community-engaged research at the intersections of gender, identity, and marginalization.
- **Center for Complexity and Self-Management of Chronic Disease (CSCD):** Leads research in self-management approaches for individuals with complex chronic conditions.
- **CASCAID (Complex ACEs, Complex Aid):** Focuses on trauma-informed care interventions, especially where adverse childhood experiences are prevalent
- **Fogarty International Training Program:** Hosting trainees from Thailand in postdoctoral research to build capacity in non-communicable disease research.

These centers reflect UMSN's long-standing investment in high-impact, community-engaged, and translational research, supported by endowed funds and professorships that empower faculty and mentor future nurse scientists.

Innovation

UMSN fosters a vibrant culture of innovation that empowers students, faculty, and staff to develop transformative solutions to real-world challenges. Through the [Healthcare Innovation Impact Program](#) (HiIP), the School provides individualized consulting, coaching, and strategic guidance to support nurse-led innovation from idea to implementation. This includes assistance with intellectual property, funding pathways, prototyping, and interdisciplinary collaboration, ensuring that innovation is broadly defined, impact-driven, and inclusive.

Innovation at UMSN is inclusive and practical. Programs such as the [Innovate 4 Change](#) hackathon, [Nursing Innovation Fellows](#), and student ambassador initiatives foster creativity in care delivery, education, and community interventions. Faculty receive tailored support to advance innovations in clinical practice, pedagogy, and population health.

UMSN's first spin-off company, [HealthyLifetime](#), exemplifies the School's translational strength. Drawing on decades of faculty research, it offers a virtual, nurse-led program that supports aging adults in living independently. Strategic partnerships and connections across the University of Michigan innovation ecosystem continue to expand UMSN's reach, bringing nursing solutions to market and shaping the future of healthcare delivery.

Clinical Education and Patient Care

UMSN offers robust clinical training through more than 600 placement sites statewide and beyond, including Michigan Medicine, regional health systems, and community clinics, providing students with experience across diverse populations and care settings.

The [Clinical Learning Center](#) (CLC) further enhances clinical education with advanced simulation, standardized patients, and debriefing spaces that build clinical judgment and teamwork.

Faculty practice is central to UMSN's mission, integrating care delivery, teaching, and research across partner sites to improve health outcomes.

UMSN's clinical programs are bolstered by strong federal investment, including nearly \$4 million in HRSA funding to expand the nursing workforce in underserved communities, more than \$1 million in SAMHSA funding for interprofessional addiction education, and a recent \$2 million grant from the Bedford Falls Foundation-DAF to provide scholarships to more than 140 BSN students over the next four years.

Global Nursing

UMSN has a long-standing global presence, advancing education, research, and practice through international collaboration. As a designated [Pan American Health Organization / World Health Organization Collaborating Centre](#), UMSN is one of only 44 nursing institutions worldwide recognized for leadership in global health promotion, and the only Big Ten school with a PAHO/ WHO Collaborating Center and a BSN minor in Population Health in a Global Context.

Global experiences for faculty and students include education abroad opportunities, international visiting scholars, and efforts to address maternal mortality by improving safe clinical practices in low-resource environments.

The School's annual [Global Health Summer Institute](#) draws participants from over 30 countries, with recent themes focused on climate change, migration, and mental health equity. Faculty are active leaders in international forums and maintain partnerships in regions such as Southeast Asia and Latin America.

Faculty, Staff, and Students

UMSON students are known for their academic excellence, clinical skill, and commitment to advancing health for the public good. Over 1,200 students are enrolled across UMSN programs: 809 in BSN, 267 in MSN and certificate programs, 129 in DNP, and 23 in PhD programs.

There are 133 academic faculty: 86 full-time, 47 part-time, and 28 LEO lecturers. Approximately 47% of full-time faculty are tenured or on the tenure track.

The School is supported by a talented corps of 134 professional staff members.

Finances

In coordination with the Provost, the Dean oversees an operating budget that exceeds \$55 million with an endowment greater than \$90 million. UMSN derives revenues from these principal sources: sponsored research contracts and grants, degree and certificate program tuition and fees, gifts and endowment payouts, and other miscellaneous income. The [U-M budget model](#) functions within a hybrid system of responsibility center budgeting, incremental budgeting, and centralized/initiative budgeting.

Alumni and Development

UMSN is an active partner in the University's \$7 billion Look to Michigan campaign, with a goal of raising \$38 million. The School has already secured \$24.2 million, representing 63.7% of its target.

Philanthropy fuels student scholarships, faculty research, global learning opportunities, and other strategic priorities. The School's more than 14,000 alumni remain an essential force in this effort, contributing through annual giving, endowed funds, and planned gifts. The Office of Development and Alumni Relations works closely with School leadership to ensure fundraising aligns with the mission and vision.

Looking ahead, a key goal for the next Dean will be to secure a \$50 million naming gift. This transformational investment would elevate the School's national profile, catalyze additional philanthropic support, and expand its capacity to lead in nursing education, research, and service.

Signature initiatives illustrate the impact of donor engagement. The We Dare campaign challenges supporters to invest in ideas and innovative solutions. Endowed professorships, such as the Elizabeth Tone Hosmer Professorship, help attract and retain world-class faculty. Programs like the Rothschild Global Health Scholars prepare students to address health needs around the world.

ANN ARBOR, MICHIGAN

The vibrant and active city of Ann Arbor is a cultural hub and urban oasis in the heart of the Midwest that is rated as one of the nation's top college towns. It is no surprise to residents that a recent publication named Ann Arbor as #1 among "Best Places to Live in the U.S." In addition to its world-class university, Ann Arbor is home to high-tech research companies and charming neighborhoods with a rich mix of cultures. People from across the country and around the world come to Ann Arbor to study, work, and thrive. Downtown Detroit is less than an hour's drive away, and Detroit Metro Airport (DTW) offers a nearby (half-hour from Ann Arbor) gateway to the globe. Chicago and Toronto are just four hours away.

Although geographically small, the Ann Arbor area is perhaps most renowned for its cultural offerings and nightlife. It boasts a vibrant arts sector with renowned galleries, museums, and arts non-profits, as well as theatrical and musical organizations, such as the Ann Arbor Symphony. The University Musical Society is among the top four university presenters in the nation and features 70–80 performances by world-class artists each season, such as the Berlin Philharmonic, Ballet Preljocaj, and the Royal Shakespeare Company. From independent bookstores and cutting-edge art exhibits to performances by local, regional, and international artists, there are abundant opportunities to enjoy arts and culture throughout the community. Every July, the award-winning Ann Arbor Art Fair transforms the campus and downtown into an art gallery featuring thousands of juried artists and drawing nearly 500,000 visitors. The Ann Arbor Summer Festival hosts a month-long schedule of performances each June, many of which are outdoors and free. Additionally, athletics is woven into the fabric of U-M.