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Chair, Social Issues in Management (SIM) Division

FROM: Division and Interest Group Relations (DIGR) Committee

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DATE: April 20, 2020

RE: Feedback on the SIM Division's 5 year Report

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Congratulations! On behalf of the Academy of Management Board, I am happy to report that the Social Issues in Management (SIM) Division has been renewed for another five years. The committee found your report to be very thorough and well-constructed. We know that your leadership team worked hard over the last year to produce the report. We appreciate the time and energy your team invested.

After reviewing your report and the accompanying data, the DIGR committee members identified strengths and concerns going forward, and assessed the efforts underway to address any concerns, all of which are summarized below. In addition, we offer recommendations for building on the division's strengths and continuing to provide valuable services to your members. Many of these issues and actions were identified in the report, although some were identified by the DIGR committee. We hope that our feedback will enable you to leverage the division's strengths and advance our shared goal of strengthening and invigorating the Academy of Management.

Please recall that an important element of the review process is for division leaders to share the report and review results in an open letter to their membership, via the website or email. In addition, if you are interested, we would welcome the opportunity to meet with your leadership team virtually to recognize your accomplishments, answer any questions, and discuss any concerns.

Thank you again for the effort you invested in the 5-year review. We hope the review has provided an opportunity to reflect on the state of the division, areas of strength, and opportunities to further enhance members' experiences. We value the activities and services the SIM Division provides for the Academy of Management and its members. We look forward to the continued division's continued

development.

## **2020 Review of Social Issues in Management (SIM) Division**

### **STRENGTHS**

The overall sentiment of the Division and Interest Group Relations (DIGR) Committee is that the SIM Division is a growing community with many opportunities for development. Specific strengths include:

#### **Strength #1 Membership & Membership Satisfaction**

- The division's membership is growing and members are generally satisfied with the quality of the division's annual program.

#### **Strength #2 Collaboration with SBE**

- The division has established a direct partnership between the SIM Division Chair and the SBE President for activities and events, such as a joint speaker event.

#### **Strength #2 Financial**

- The division's financial report suggests the division is financially healthy.

### **CHALLENGES**

A few challenges and concerns were noted by members of the DIGR Committee, all of which were also identified in the SIM report. They are:

#### **Challenge #1 Communication**

- While the division has worked to expand its social media presence, we have less information regarding how social media is being used to fulfill the communication and engagement needs of the membership
- Website issues identified in the previous 5-year report remain.
- The survey results indicate that participants are interested in digital collaboration resources.
- The division acknowledges that there is a learning curve in using AOM Connect but the report lacks information regarding how to leverage this resource to better serve the membership.

#### **Challenge #2 Engagement, Member Services & Elections**

- Counter to the AOM trend, the division experienced a decline in submissions for papers, symposia and PDWs in 2019 relative to 2018.
- The survey results indicate that midcareer members seek mentorship opportunities.
- The report notes that members feel disconnected but offers limited information regarding membership services beyond the annual meeting. The Health and Governance checklist suggests activities beyond the annual meeting include sharing teaching materials online.
- The report suggests nominations and elections were held at the annual business meeting; as a result, individuals not able to attend the meeting may not have been able to participate.

#### **Challenge #3 Continuity in operations and strategic plans**

- The previous 5-year review report included a plan to develop a Mentoring Committee and a Plenary Committee but neither committee was formed.



- The previous 5-year report also included a plan to develop a Continuity Committee and no action was taken. The report indicates that the Governance Committee views “continuity” as a membership issue and proposes resurrecting a SIM Membership Committee in 2020-2021.

#### **Challenge # 4 Strategic Plans relative to last review**

- The strategic plans are not entirely aligned with the strategic needs of the division: How do the plans build on the previous 5 year report? How do they align with current needs?

#### **Challenge # 5 Bylaws Revision**

- The report indicates that the division revised its bylaws but it is unclear if the process followed AOM policies (the committee notes that the Health and Governance checklist indicates the division conforms to all AOM policies).

Some of these concerns are mitigated by additional discussion, observations or strategic plans evident in the report, including:

#### **Observation #1 Engagement, Member Services & Elections**

- The division plans to explore developing a mid-career scholar workshop similar to the format of the joint ONE-SIM junior faculty consortium.
- The report suggests the division will consider moving elections online but will continue the process of taking nominations at the annual SIM Business Meeting.
- The division seems aware of some of the challenges mentioned in the previous section and the report states “we must continue to innovate to appeal to new members”.

### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

The DIGR Committee supports the strategic goals suggested by the Division leadership in their report. In an effort to help the SIM Division we also offer these additional thoughts and recommendations for consideration:

#### **Recommendation #1 Planning: Establish Priorities, a Timeline and Metrics**

- The division’s leaders have identified some very worthwhile initiatives. We recommend the division prioritize the list, develop a timeline for implementation and create metrics for tracking the progress on each initiative. For each initiative, the plan should identify the specific leaders or volunteers responsible for developing, implementing, tracking and reporting progress.
- We recommend the EC develop a plan for maintaining continuity in how the plan will be shared, used and managed over time as leaders transition through EC roles and new leaders join the EC.

#### **Recommendation #2 Digital Communication & Engagement**

- The committee noted that an IT/Communications officer is in place but communication challenges remain. As a result, we recommend that the EC define the IT/Communication officer’s roles and responsibilities, specify action plans for the short and long run along with a timeline, and consider creating a task force or committee to provide additional support if needed. Perhaps consider whether a doctoral student member could play a supporting role to the communications officer.
- Additionally, the division should define the roles and responsibilities of the online programs committee and develop an action plan and timeline for advancing digital engagement. This committee should develop actionable initiatives that are specific to member needs as well as



metrics to monitor progress on goal achievement. We encourage the division to seek best practices from other divisions.

### **Recommendation # 3 Continuity**

- As noted above, the division plans to resurrect the SIM Membership Committee but it is unclear how this committee would address concerns regarding continuity in the division's operational and strategic plans over time. Moreover, the membership is growing. As a result, we recommend the division step back and consider the problem they are trying to solve. For instance, is the problem associated with drift in the division's purpose fostering misalignment with the original domain? Alternatively, is the challenge associated with a natural evolution of scholarship in the domain, or something else? The report's action item related to reviewing the domain statement is an important first step in exploring this item.

### **Recommendation #4 Engagement and Membership**

- The report indicates that the division plans to explore ways to increase diversity of membership but offers no concrete action plans or initiatives to support this activity. The report also states that the division views reinvigorating engagement with existing members as an important priority, but the plans remain somewhat exploratory or are vague in how this will be realized. We encourage the EC to develop explicit action plans, timelines and metrics for these items as well as identifying the EC roles that will take ownership of the initiatives.
- Related to the above, we encourage the division to consider building complementary relationships with other DIGs and associations, beyond the robust relationships with ONE and SBE. Doing so may help increase the membership diversity in terms of scholarship and advance scholarly thinking at the intersections of different domains.

### **Recommendation #5 Elections and Bylaws**

- We strongly encourage the division to follow AOM norms by using the AOM's online nominations and elections process. This will ensure that all members have an opportunity to participate in the process and will reduce perceptions that the processes are only available to members who attend the annual meeting.
- The formal process for bylaws revisions may be found [here](#). Please review the process and ensure the division's recent bylaws revisions align with AOM policy, including having the membership approve revisions to bylaws.

