

Dear Colleagues,

I write today with promising signs of Spring cropping up all over the place here in Charlottesville, Virginia. This welcome change of season also helps me appreciate progress happening across much of the world, especially regarding COVID-19. I hope this note finds you and your families doing well.

I'd like to share an update on an initiative I have prioritized during my year as Division Chair. Following the 5-year review process SIM just completed with AOM, I found the feedback we received to be helpful and intriguing, yet not nearly detailed or customized enough. Especially given the rapid changes happening in the world, the way other divisions of AOM have incorporated ideas and themes from SIM, and the changing expectations of our members, it is not clear how the 5-year review data helps us make informed decisions about how best to steward SIM into the future. Rather than lament these shortcomings, we decided to use this review as an opportunity to dig deeper: to better understand how members think SIM is doing, what members value from their affiliation with SIM, how the Division can be more responsive to members, and how the Governance Committee might most effectively advance SIM interests and aspirations through these very challenging times.

To expand on SIM's learning from the review process, I have established an operating group called the "Exploratory Committee" (or "EC") to help connect with and listen to our members to better understand who we are and what we want as a scholarly community. I value the emphasis of this committee because, while its engagement this year will be extensive and important, it will likely continue in the "exploring" phase for some time to come. I anticipate that future Division leadership will continue to build on the work of the EC, both to continue our efforts to explore SIM and to begin to move toward acting on what we learn. When the work of the EC concludes this summer (the end of my tenure as Division Chair), we will reflect on our initial learnings and share what we consider to be most significant with the Governance Committee and our Division membership. This will include taking a few minutes in the Business Meeting to include a short presentation on the EC.

I'd also like to note that our EC is an incredible and dedicated group of people from SIM. I'm thrilled that Erica Steckler agreed to chair the EC and that she put together an excellent team to serve with her: Sandra Waddock, Pushpika Vishwanathan, Emilio Marti, and Jean-Pascal Gond. The EC has been meeting and working since the Fall to engage with members of SIM by creating structured ways of listening to the community, gathering information and insights, and learning from our members. The EC has also sought the input of the Governance Committee and benefitted from their guidance. If anyone from the EC reaches out to you, I hope you will do all you can to support their efforts – whether this involves participating in a small group discussion, responding to a survey, or helping them analyze data. Their work is important and the more we all can help, the more useful the results will be for all of us.

On that note, I hope you can attend our next Coffees & Cocktails event that will take place on Thursday, April 15 at 2:30PM (EDT) – a component of this member gathering will involve the EC. <https://aom-org.zoom.us/meeting/register/tJYocOusrT4vE9FNEEr4uFwLLPIgtgDP8euR>.

Erica Steckler will host the event and Sandra Waddock will kick off with a short presentation on the history of SIM. There will be ample time for meeting and catching up with colleagues during this event, and we will designate a part of small group conversations to discuss things that the EC would like to hear about from you.

If you have any questions, or would like to talk more about this, feel free to reach out to me. If you wish to contact members of the EC, including Erica, please reach out to them directly (e.g. Erica's email is: Erica_Steckler@uml.edu).

Thank you for all you are doing to support SIM and the work we do. I look forward to seeing you online for the 2021 AOM conference this summer!

Best,

Andy Wicks
SIM Division Chair (2020-21)