**Social Issues in Management (SIM) Division**

**Five-Year Review**

**2020**

***Submitted to Division & Interest Group Review Committee***

***and Board of Governors, Academy of Management***

**Review Team**Jill Brown, Division Chair

David Wasieleski, Immediate Past Division Chair

Andy Wicks, Division Chair-Elect

Rich Wokutch, Division Member

Michelle Westermann-Behaylo, Representative-at-Large

**Analysis and Reflection on Member Survey Results**

About three-fifths of the 324 members responding to our survey have been members of the SIM Division for 7 years or less; the majority of these, for 3 years or less. About 75% of our members are academic faculty members and 20% are students. We view the relatively high percentage of student membership to be a good trend and could be a good source for maintenance and growth of our membership in the future. The most active members continue to appear to be doctoral students and junior faculty. Engagement seems to decrease among the mid-to-late-career stage members, generally. This is a problem that our Division and other Academy of Management Divisions and Interest Groups faced in the last 5-Year Review as well.

The Division is in a good position. Our membership continues to grow. AOM membership has increased over 4% over the last 5 years, with much of our new membership coming through international growth. SIM Division membership has increased over 19% within the past 3 years, with much of that coming from international growth as well. SIM Division’s international membership grew at triple the rate of AOM’s international membership growth. One of our Division’s strengths is that our research spans many different disciplines, making our work relevant to a variety of other divisions at the Academy.

Overall, the 324 responding members were satisfied with most aspects of the SIM Division. About half of those responding indicated that they attend the annual meeting regularly. Those who do not come every year primarily cite financial and timing reasons for not attending the meeting; very few (14 total) reported any lack of interest in attending. Only 4% of respondents expressed dissatisfaction with any aspect of the annual program. The survey indicates that members are mostly satisfied with the perceptions of the quality of reviews. Only 6.17% of respondents indicated that they were not satisfied with SIM in some regard. Eight respondents indicated dissatisfaction with the newsletter, three felt that the elections were not fair and open, and six were not satisfied with the responsiveness of division officers to member concerns. Only 2 respondents deemed the quality of SIM scholarship to be of very low quality as compared to other divisions, while 94% deemed it to be of average, higher, or very high quality.

In sum, 10 respondents said that they were not satisfied with their membership in SIM Division; 96% were at least somewhat satisfied, 83% indicated that they are satisfied, very satisfied, or extremely satisfied. More than 3 out of 4 respondents would definitely recommend SIM to a colleague. We are gratified by these positive responses, but we will not ignore the negative ones.

**Observations for Improvement**

Given the results of this survey, this review committee offers some suggestions that the current Division leadership could consider for improving our members’ experience. While we would like to hear from more of our members, we nonetheless got some useful input that helps us better understand how we are serving SIM – and how we can improve. In general, SIM needs to remain relevant to a variety of divisions and interest groups at the Academy. We are now the 10th largest division at the Academy. Despite the growth, we cannot rest on our laurels and must continue to innovate to appeal to new members from inside and outside the Academy.

*Mid-Career Members*

It has become evident that we need to engage our mid-and-late career members more actively. The Governance Committee recommends dedicating space on the PDW program to mid-career issues each year. This will enable the SIM leadership to obtain specific feedback about our established scholars’ needs. According to our survey, members strongly indicated that improvements could be made on opportunities for members to receive mentoring, encouragement from division leaders to form network communities, and value from AoMConnect community discussions.

*Website and Online Platforms*

79% are satisfied with the website and feel that it is useful. However, 63% still feel there could be improvements made to enhance website functionality. This remains a concern from the last audit in 2015. Efforts have been made these last five years to modernize the website and the current leadership team has put in place an I/T team responsible for maintaining its content. The SIM Governance Committee will conduct a more in-depth survey of our membership about what specific elements could be improved. Also, 75% of survey participants feel that SIM division presence on social media sites (like Twitter and Facebook) are important. Given the adoption of AoM Connect and its lack of popularity across the Academy, we feel that expanding our social media presence for our members is critical for keeping our membership engaged and informed about SIM member initiatives. Our survey also indicates much interest in internet-based collaboration tools and online sessions to offer more services to SIM members.

*Research*

Gaining and sharing information relevant to research is the most important aspect of the SIM division for 71% of respondents. Thus, we recommend continuing our member blogs regarding research and using social media to increase the awareness of the impactful research taking place within our division. In the last five years, the Governance Committee has charged the SIM Research Committee with creating new initiatives that engage our membership year-round about their ongoing scholarly work. Our members feel disconnected from one another once the annual meeting ends each year. Thus, more work needs to be done to advertise the fine work being conducted among our membership.

*Plenary and Preferred Sessions at Annual Meeting*

85% of respondents are satisfied with plenaries within the SIM division. Some of the suggestions we received to improve the plenary consisted of more research focused with topics involving social impacts on businesses. Others suggested having published authors, activists, or business executives as speakers. Recently, the Governance Team has changed the format of the regular program by eliminating a formal plenary to give more program space for papers to be presented by our members. We have instead made changes to the SIM Business Meeting that allow the opportunity for outside speakers to address our members.

Our members would also like to see more of a SIM focus on research in the sustainability and corporate social responsibility areas. In recent years, both topics have received much attention on the program. In 2019, six paper sessions were devoted to CSR and four were related to social sustainability. 37% prefer Traditional Paper Sessions, 30% prefer Interactive Sessions, 28% prefer Symposia. Pre-conference practicums and paper sessions dedicated to teaching and pedagogy are the least important to SIM members.

*Reviewing*

It is well noted that our membership recognizes the need to make improvements on the quality of reviews of papers submitted to the SIM division. Roughly 30% feel this could be improved. It has been a recurring issue that the Division needs more quality reviewers and Associate Editors to ensure we have a meaningful program. The Governance Team has been working with the Academy to address this issue and has suggested that reviewers be signed up for a period of three years. This is an Academy-wide problem and other divisions are joining in the effort to increase the number of reviews. We also propose a reviewer-rating system be implemented on the AoM platform.

*Membership and Mentoring*

Our members have indicated that we need to improve on being more welcoming to new members and connecting the long-time members with the new. Relatedly, members want more attention given to doctoral students, with 40% answering that as their highest priority of possible new initiatives. While we already have a successful doctoral consortium, this workshop can increase the number of participants accepted each year. We suggest that senior and mid-career scholars also be recruited to fulfill a mentoring role for doctoral candidates, which would address the declining engagement issue for established members as well.

Members would also like to see more diversity in membership over the next five years. Efforts need to be made to connect SIM more closely with the European and Indian Academy of Management Associations. As international membership is on the rise (indicated above), we feel there is momentum to continue to expand our division’s diversity.

**Revisiting the Action Plan for 2015**

The leadership in place during the last 5-Year Review recommended that four ad hoc committees be formed to address the challenges facing the division in 2015.

1. Mentoring Committee. This committee was never formed. However, we expanded the SIM doctoral consortium and junior faculty consortium to include opportunities for both formal and informal mentoring to take place.

2. Online Programs Committee. To extend the reach of the Division beyond one week in August, and to those members who do not attend every year, it was proposed that online programming, in the form of webinars and online discussions be offered. This has been addressed by the current leadership through an expanded social media presence and through the discussion forums offered through AoMConnect.

3. Plenary Committee. This committee was not formally formed, but the SIM Governance Committee has taken the responsibility to revisit the utility of the plenary session and move the plenary talk to the SIM Business Meeting to afford more room on the program for additional high quality papers. In 2018, the Division invited Duff McDonald, author of the bestselling book, “The Golden Passport: Harvard Business School, the Limits of Capitalism, to present insights from his latest book on business/society relationships. In 2019, we set aside this time to allow Best Dissertation Award finalists to present their research before giving out the award. Both were very well received by those in attendance.

4. Continuity Committee. Because of regular turnover in membership, there was a concern for continuity of our division’s direction. The Governance Committee viewed this as a membership issue and has proposed the resurrection of a SIM Membership Committee which will take effect in 2020/21.

**Action Plan for 2020 and Beyond**

Given all the above, it seems appropriate that SIM takes the following initiatives in the coming years:

1. Review of domain statement. To address the Division’s relevance and differentiation from other divisions and interest groups at the Academy, it is necessary for the Governance Committee to review the SIM domain statement to ensure the language represents the unique contributions to research in the social issues areas.

2. Review the bylaws. We completed a review of the SIM Constitution, and the revised document was approved by the Division Governance Committee in June 2019. We recommend revising the Nominating Committee process by taking nominations at the SIM Business Meeting but holding the actual election online so more of our Division’s members can be involved.

3. Strengthen relationship with Society for Business Ethics. The SIM-SBE liaison position has been eliminated and replaced with a direct partnership between the SIM Division Chair and the SBE President each year. In addition to revising our contract with SBE for the joint speaker event, we continue to explore other opportunities for collaboration between groups.

4. Explore ways to increase diversity of membership. We do now have a fairly significant and increasing number of members from Oceania and Asia. But most of our international growth has been across Europe. Beyond Europe, we have not attracted as many new members as we would like.

5. Re-invigorate the engagement of current members. We seek ways to generate more mentoring opportunities for senior and mid-career members to engage with students and junior scholars. The governance team will explore the possibility of starting a Mid-Career Scholar Workshop similar to the format of the Joint ONE-SIM Junior Faculty Consortium.