

TO: Peer Fiss, University of Southern California  
Chair, Organization and Management Theory (OMT) Division

FROM: Division and Interest Group Relations (DIGR) Committee

Tammy L. Madsen, Santa Clara University (Chair & BOG Representative at Large)

DIGR Committee Members:

Quinetta Connally, Villanova U. (BOG President-elect & Coordinator of Professional Divisions)

Brianna Caza, University of North Carolina at Greensboro (Past Division Chair, MOC)

Elizabeth George, University of Auckland (BOG Representative at Large)

Isabel Metz, Melbourne Business School (BOG Representative at Large)

Scott Siebert, Rutgers University (Past Division Chair, CAR)

Danielle Zandee, Nyenrode Business Universiteit (Past Division Chair, ODC)

DATE: April 20, 2020

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

---

Congratulations! On behalf of the Academy of Management Board, I am happy to report that the Organization and Management Theory (OMT) 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 lesson 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 OMT Division provides for the

Academy of Management and its members. We look forward to the continued division's continued development.

## **2020 Review of Organization and Management Theory (OMT) Division**

### **STRENGTHS**

The overall sentiment of the Division and Interest Group Relations (DIGR) Committee is that the OMT Division is a very robust organization with a stable and relatively satisfied membership. Specific strengths include:

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

- The division's membership is relatively stable with some growth from international membership and strong membership satisfaction (85%). The average membership satisfaction rating associated with the annual program, sense of community, domain-specific activities, and welcoming of members from various demographic groups increased relative to 2014.

#### **Strength #2 Collaboration & Outreach**

- Recognizing that many OMT members also are members of the European Group on Organization Studies (EGOS), the two organizations have collaborated to provide mutually beneficial services for their members. For example, over the last 5 years, the OMT division has sponsored a "Meet OMT@EGOS" social at EGOS' annual colloquium. In 2019, EGOS agreed to a 7 year co-sponsorship of the division's Meet OMT social at the AOM annual conference (new label: Meet EGOS@OMT) and to share costs of the Meet OMT@EGOS event. OMT representatives also participate in a variety of EGOS workshops conducted outside of the U.S. Additionally, since 2015, leaders from OMT participate in EGOS' annual board meetings and vice versa.

#### **Strength #3 Financial**

- Prudent financial management and ability to gain sponsorship. The division is now planning expenses in proportion to the division's AOM allocation, rather than planning around expected funding. This approach has led the division to accumulate reserves.

### **CHALLENGES**

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

#### **Challenges #1 International Outreach**

- The international character of the division may be a strength as well as a challenge. While the collaboration with EGOS is beneficial, a question is whether this hampers the inclusion of members from other regions of the world. The survey results indicate that respondents are less satisfied with efforts to support international members and to network outside of the annual meeting.

#### **Challenge #2 Community**

- The survey results suggest that members are somewhat ambiguous about the community spirit of the OMT division, some viewing it as welcoming and some viewing it as "elitist", "cliquey" or "snooty". Other data suggest the division's large size inhibits community building. These



perceptions, perhaps inevitable in large divisions, might have contributed to the low survey response rate (in addition to blocked emails, an explanation offered in the report).

### **Challenge #3 Program**

- Over the last five years, paper submissions have declined by 3.4% but increased 6.8% for the AOM as a whole. At the same time, symposia submissions increased by 43.4% (vs. the AOM overall at 26.4%) and the division has accepted ~ 8-9% more symposia than the AOM overall. These results motivate the following: 1) What explains the decline in paper submissions?; and 2) While symposia may be more valued by members relative to traditional paper sessions, increasing the amount of program time allocated for symposia may conflict with inclusion and community building (reducing access to participation in the program for underrepresented groups rather than increasing it) and reinforce perceptions of elitism or lack of access. The latter is especially concerning since the report suggests that the division associates the higher symposia acceptance rate with the “profile of participants”.

### **Challenge #4 Awards**

- The survey results indicate a decline in participants’ satisfaction with the selection process for awards and recognition relative to 2014.

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

#### **Observation #1 International Outreach**

- The division is actively working to strengthen international outreach. For instance, as noted above, OMT representatives participate in EGOS research workshops in different parts of the world (Croatia; Central, Eastern and Southeastern Europe; Romania; Japan). The division has identified additional actions to advance international outreach, such as identifying OMT Ambassadors in parts of the world that are underrepresented or less well integrated.

#### **Observation #2 Community**

- The division is committed to creating a strong sense of community. Actions include effective communication via social media and an innovative and vibrant “off program series” of activities at the annual meeting; the latter provides a lot of freedom for volunteers to contribute to event content and form.
- Future action plans are focused on improving inclusiveness and member involvement.

### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

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

#### **Recommendation #1 Planning: Establishing a Timeline and Metrics**

- The divisional leaders have identified some very worthwhile initiatives. We recommend the division develop a detailed action plan with a timeline for implementation, an EC member or committee assigned to each initiative, and metrics for tracking progress on each initiative. The detailed action plan should also consider resource allocation and funding priorities.



- We also 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 Tapping Potential Synergies Among Initiatives**

- The committee observes that many initiatives may benefit from scope economies. For example, the division might consider way to leverage technology (social media, AOM Connect) to create communities, particularly ones that allow members to “gain and share information about research”. Similarly, facilitating online forums or communities to share teaching and/or practice materials might help foster stronger connections with international members and/or those who are unable to attend the annual meeting. Further, given the resource-intensiveness of formal mentoring programs, encouraging and supporting member-driven communities of interest may also help to achieve these goals without creating additional burden.

#### **Recommendation #3 Exploring Mentoring**

- We understand that mentoring is a challenging area for future development. The field has experienced a shift with junior scholars seeking more and more mentoring. We recommend the division appoint an EC member or a task force (Mentor Committee) to lead this effort if it is something the division is interested in pursuing. The division also might benefit from collaborating with other divisions examining mentoring initiatives.

#### **Recommendation #4 Awards**

- As part of the “Further improve inclusiveness and member involvement” initiative, we recommend the division share details regarding the evaluation criteria and selection process for awards. This might be included as part of the proposed “brief presentations of how the division works”.

