

TO: Bradley Kirkman, Chair OB Division

FROM: Sabine Hoidn, University of St. Gallen
Chair, Division and Interest Group Relations (DIGR) Committee

CC: DIGR Committee Members:
Michael Barrett, University of Cambridge (DIG Leader, Past Chair, CTO Division)
Russ Coff, University of Wisconsin (BOG Representative at Large)
Deanne Den Hartog, University of Amsterdam (BOG Vice President-Elect)
Peer Fiss, University of Southern California, (BOG Representative at Large)
Denise Jepsen, Northumbria University (DIG Leader, Past Chair, CAR Division)
Beth Livingston, Universität Innsbruck (DIG Leader, Past Chair, MOC Division)
Mary Tripsas, UC Santa Barbara (BOG Representative at Large)

DATE 25 April 2025

RE: Feedback on OB's 3-Year Report

Dear Bradley and Colleagues

Congratulations! On behalf of the Academy of Management Board, I am pleased to share that the Organizational Behavior (OB) Division has been renewed for another three years. The Division and Interest Group Relations (DIGR) Committee finds the OB Division to be a large, active, and well-managed unit that has produced a comprehensive and thoughtful review. The division demonstrates high member satisfaction, a strong international footprint, and an impressive history of programmatic innovation. The strategic plan builds effectively on the previous review, and the division has maintained consistent engagement through a variety of development-focused initiatives. At the same time, there are opportunities to strengthen alignment between strategic goals and activities, increase engagement between annual meetings, and enhance transparency and accountability mechanisms within its planning and governance structures.

Below we summarize the DIGR committee's thoughts based on our review of your report and the accompanying data. DIGR committee members were asked to identify what they see as strengths, challenges or concerns, as well as to offer recommendations for addressing concerns. 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.

Academy of Management

*Vision: We inspire and enable a better world through our scholarship and teaching about management and organizations.
Mission: To build a vibrant and supportive community of scholars by markedly expanding opportunities to connect and explore ideas.*

Thank you again for the effort you invested in the 3-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 that the Division provides for the Academy of Management and its members, and look forward to the division's continued development.

2024-25 Review of the Organizational Behavior (OB) Division

The following review outlines the OB Division's key strengths, highlights current and emerging challenges, and offers targeted recommendations to support the division's continued growth and impact.

Strengths

The OB Division remains the largest division in AOM. Despite a membership growth rate slightly below the AOM average, international membership has increased by nearly 10%, and student membership is holding steady. Member satisfaction remains high at 83%.

The division stands out for its innovative programming, including the OB Research Incubator, the Speaking Science PDW, and initiatives focused on doctoral students and junior faculty. Plans to promote micro-communities are well suited to the division's size and member diversity, and the Executive Committee meets regularly, reflecting engaged governance.

The division has taken a reflective and systematic approach to strategic planning, using both survey data and stakeholder interviews to evaluate progress on prior goals. The appendix clearly documents achievements and identifies areas still in progress. Financially, while not fully detailed in the executive summary, the division appears to be on solid footing in terms of operating funds per member.

Challenges

While the report is thorough and forward-thinking in many ways, several areas would benefit from refinement:

- **Strategic Plan Execution and Monitoring:** Although the division did an excellent job assessing progress on previous goals, the new strategic goals lack specificity. Key elements such as timelines, assigned responsibilities, and KPIs are missing. Ownership of the strategic agenda and mechanisms for accountability remain underdeveloped.
- **Year-Round Member Engagement:** Engagement opportunities outside the annual meeting are limited and appear somewhat ad hoc. Survey responses indicated lower satisfaction in this area. While micro-community programming is promising, the current plan relies too heavily on bottom-up member initiative and lacks a clear implementation strategy.
- **Cross-Divisional Collaboration:** The division has few formal collaborations with other DIGs, despite clear overlap in membership and interests (e.g., with HR or SIM). There is an opportunity to explore joint programming or research-oriented partnerships.



- **Strategic Framework Structure:** The use of the “3 Rs” (Rigor, Relationships, Relevance) provides thematic organization but does not always align clearly with the goals or activities listed. In some cases, content overlaps or appears under multiple categories, limiting clarity and focus.
- **Communication and Continuity:** The strategic plan could better articulate a process for knowledge transfer across leadership transitions, ensuring continuity and long-term follow-through.

Recommendations

To further strengthen the division’s already solid foundation, the DIGR Committee recommends the following actions:

- **Refine and Operationalize the Strategic Plan:** Add timelines, clear accountability structures, and measurable indicators (KPIs) for each strategic objective. Consider reducing the number of initiatives and prioritizing a smaller set of high-impact goals.
- **Clarify Strategic Structure:** Reconsider the “3 Rs” framework or revise it for better alignment with activities and outcomes. Group related initiatives more cohesively to aid planning and implementation.
- **Expand Year-Round Programming:** Develop a structured calendar of off-conference activities such as webinars, online mentoring, and themed virtual events. Look to other large divisions (e.g., STR, CTO, ENT) for models of successful year-round engagement.
- **Foster Cross-DIG Collaboration:** Actively pursue collaborative programming with divisions such as HR or SIM, building on overlapping member interests and shared development goals.
- **Support Micro-Communities Strategically:** Instead of relying solely on bottom-up momentum, consider offering seed funding, dedicated coordination support, or formal partnerships to help launch and sustain these subgroups.
- **Improve Strategic Communication:** Provide regular updates to the membership on progress toward strategic goals. Include financial summaries in public-facing documents and align strategic goals more clearly with survey insights.
- **Institutionalize Knowledge Transfer:** Establish mechanisms to carry the strategic roadmap forward across leadership transitions. Formalize onboarding materials and knowledge-sharing tools to support continuity.

Overall, the OB Division is clearly in excellent health, with a committed leadership team, a strong track record of innovation, and high levels of member satisfaction. Its size, reach, and financial position provide a strong platform for continued impact. By clarifying strategic alignment, deepening member engagement between meetings, and enhancing internal processes for accountability and continuity, the division is well positioned to grow its relevance and service to its diverse, global membership.

