**Vision for the Position of Vice President of Program-Elect**

It is easy to write a statement regarding my vision for the position of Vice-President of Program Elect for the Eastern Academy of Management. The individual in this position serves to carry out directives of the Vice-President of Program. Given that Dr. Gabby Swab is moving into the position of Vice-President of Program, responding to such directives will be interesting and a lot of fun!

Dr. Swab provided us with a thought-provoking and motivating game last year. Pursuing the clues and fitting them together kept members engaged with the conference. It also stimulated conversation and connections among members. I would like to follow in that tradition. I am eager to work closely with Dr. Swab and I expect to learn a great deal from her. I am also hoping to capitalize on my expertise in mentoring to develop some additional developmental opportunities within the Eastern Academy of Management. The Eastern Academy of Management is filled with caring, capable, and creative individuals who are quite willing to engage with others to share these qualities.

The position of Vice President of Program-Elect is a starting position. It leads into the position of Vice President of Program, Vice President-Elect, President, and Past-President. Over the period of years encompassed by those positions, the individual elected will have a great deal of influence over the development and direction of the organization. I have given a great deal of thought to the direction of the EAM and how we will fulfill our mission in the future.

**Vision for the Eastern Academy of Management**

Over my years as a professor and scholar, I have come to love the regional affiliates of the Academy of Management. I believe that the regional associations fill a need that the larger, national organization cannot. To continue to serve our members and potential members well, there are three major issues that I believe the Eastern Academy of Management (EAM) will need to address. But first I would like to take stock of what we already do well.

The EAM serves the full range of needs for our members. The conference offers an array of opportunities for learning and development. Whether an attendee wants for focus on teaching, research, or professional development, there are sessions dedicated to the relevant topic. The sessions directed toward personal career development are notable as a unique feature of the EAM. In comparison to other regional associations, the EAM has done an excellent job of providing member services beyond the conference itself. The “Learn & Share” sessions provide value to members throughout the year. The highly successful biannual international conference has been in place for decades and offers experience beyond national borders. Finally, the organization has demonstrated its ability to “pivot” when necessary—as evidenced by the excellent online conference that was developed very rapidly in 2020 as COVID-19 made the planned in-person program impossible. The measure of the organization’s success is how well it has served its diversity of members.

There are also challenges that the organization will need to tackle. The first concern is the shrinking number of tenure track positions in colleges and universities. While the EAM may as an organization take a stand against the erosion of tenure track positions (supported, of course, by the AACSB), the trend is nonetheless likely to continue. As a result, there will be more individuals in teaching-intensive positions. The EAM must expand our service to those whose principal function is teaching. Some individuals in teaching-intensive positions may find little value in a conference with a strong focus on research presentations and research development. The EAM must be proactive in presenting its range of offerings to teaching-intensive faculty and to their department chairs in order to accentuate the value of membership and attendance at the conference.

It is important to recognize that not all research-intensive faculty plan to invest all of their energy in teaching. We must not assume that teaching-intensive faculty lack interest in research activity. Such faculty may want to engage in research out of personal interest or as a mechanism of moving into a position with a greater emphasis on research. However, many teaching-intensive faculty will lack resources, especially time, to pursue a research program. The EAM can leverage member expertise to assist such faculty to develop manageable and high-quality research projects. The organization can also facilitate research partnerships that allow two or more parties to benefit from one another’s resources. A regional association can support research among all faculty, not just those with research responsibilities.

A second trend is the increasing emphasis placed on societal impact. While all scholarly publications include a section on practical applications, our institutions and our granting agencies are beginning to require evidence that our scholarship has societal impact and/or relevance to business practice (especially in the area of sustainability). EAM as an organization has worked to build connections to practitioners and to practice. However, we must intensify our efforts to connect to practice within the business community. Psychologists often express the idea of “giving away” psychology to society as a whole. I believe we must adopt that stance with respect to learning what is important to business practitioners and then “giving away” our research to the business community.

I will discuss our most difficult issue last. We must learn to live comfortably with generative artificial intelligence (AI) and its successors both in the classroom and in our research activities. We do our students a disservice if we ignore the potential of generative AI. However, incorporating generative AI into the classroom without “guardrails” risks the deterioration of the skills that we endeavor to teach. Many faculty are struggling to identify the appropriate role of generative AI in their courses, but they should not struggle alone. Bringing the collective expertise within the EAM to bear on this issue will produce a variety of options for different types of classes. As an organization, EAM can help its members to leverage the potential of this “brave new world.”

We must confront the same issues of use of generative AI in our own academic work. We must explore the ways that faculty can employ generative AI to become better educators and scholars. We must learn how to model for our students the effective and ethical use of this new tool through our classroom behavior. Further, we must explore the limits of the use of generative AI in research. The potential of generative AI is great, but so are the pitfalls. We must develop and enforce guidelines on the use of this tool in research.

I recognize that as the Board wrestles with these and other issues identified by the members the Board will simultaneously be engaged in the “routine” activities of organizing and presenting the annual conference! I have had experience working with regional associations, including the Midwest Academy of Management, the Southern Management Association, and the Southwest Academy of Management (I am a former President of that association). In addition, I learned a great deal through my service as the Division Chair of the Gender and Diversity in Organizations Division (now the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Division) and the Board of Governors of the Academy of Management. The challenges facing associations, both large and small, are very similar. However, it is likely that associations will take different routes to address these issues depending on their specific mission and purpose.

While I have had experience with a number of associations, I am both an “old” and “new” member of the EAM. While working in my first job at Russell Sage College (in Troy, New York), I presented my first paper at the EAM. After the move to Florida a few years later, my attendance and involvement were “spotty.” Inspired by Carolyn Dexter’s legacy, I attended my first EAM – International in 2007 and more recently three out of the past four international conferences. During the pandemic, I wanted a change in academic stimulation and I returned to the EAM. After the amazing online program in 2020, I was “hooked.” Since then, I have regularly submitted papers to and reviewed for the EAM. I listened carefully at business meetings, and I have tried to learn the culture of the EAM. It is essential to preserve the culture of the association on which the current success is predicated while adapting to our changing external landscape. While I have not held a formal office for the EAM, I am dedicated to leveraging the strengths of the association’s culture while pursuing new opportunities presented by our current environment.

I would truly enjoy working collaboratively with the members of the EAM Board to flesh out these issues (and other that have been identified). We can build on and expand the EAM’s strengths to meet the needs of the diversity of members (and potential members) to ensure the viability of the organization. With the talent available on the EAM Board and among the EAM membership, even these extremely difficult issues can be addressed. The organization can and should demonstrate its value to its members, potential members, the business community, and society as a whole. Regardless of the outcome of the election, I anticipate sharing in the continued success of the EAM.