

STRATEGY STATEMENT

Management & Organizations (M&O) as a field seeks to understand organizations and the people who lead and work within them. Several disciplines actively contribute to the study of organizations, including: psychology, sociology, political science, and economics. M&O sits at the intersection of these disciplines and focuses on building new insights for diagnosing and solving organizational problems as well as understanding and intervening to build new organizational capabilities. The field has three overlapping perspectives. Organization behavior (or “micro”) seeks answers to important questions about individuals and groups and draws primarily from psychology, including: theory on cognition and decision making, emotions, groups, and social and cultural psychology. Organization theory (or “macro”) seeks to understand how organizations come to be structured the way they are, how they are related to each other, and how their structures and relationships change over time, as well the effects of these structures and relationships on individual members and organizational performance, drawing primarily from sociology and economics. These two fields come together in what has come to be known as “meso” organizational work. This cross-level work bridges the individual and organizational levels by analyzing how organization-level phenomena (such as organization design, compensation systems, culture and identity) shape individual and group behavior and how individual actions in turn shape organizational processes and outcomes. Human resource management, as an applied sub-field, applies these insights to recruiting, selecting, training, developing, appraising, and rewarding employees.

The M&O group at RSB inherits a five decade-long tradition of excellence in the social scientific study of organizations at the University of Michigan. The Institute for Social Research pioneered the rigorous study of organizations and their members. Michigan’s psychology and sociology departments conducted much of the foundational research of the 1950s and 1960s. M&O is central to the contemporary organization studies community at Michigan (formalized through ICOS), which is perhaps the largest group of organizational scholars in the world and includes researchers housed in the departments of Psychology, Political Science, and Sociology, and in the schools of Education, Engineering, Information, Medicine, Natural Resources, Nursing, Public Health, Public Policy, and Social Work. The ties between M&O and the rest of the university are dense and mutually beneficial for the area and the school.

The orientation of M&O has shifted over the years to reflect the changing priorities of the Ross School of Business. From a heavy emphasis on providing functional training in industrial relations and human resource management as late as the 1980s, the area has shifted to a general management orientation that brings the best in social science research and theory to improving management practice. Our aim is to serve students who intend to enter general management, consulting, and human resource management, as well as those who simply work with others in their chosen functional specialties. A special strength we offer students is the development of leadership potential through the Ross School’s Leadership Initiative. We accomplish this by maintaining a network of strong relationships spanning the scholarly world of the university and the world of management practice. Faculty members in the area hold additional appointments in Corporate Strategy and International Business, Education, Natural Resources, Nursing, Psychology, Sociology, Public Policy, Organizational Studies, and the Institute for Social Research. The area is a crossroads of the university, and its reservoir of academic leadership experience includes seven department chairs, three associate deans, two senior associate deans, a business school dean, one graduate school dean, and an associate provost. M&O is also the scholarly home of the largest programs in Executive Education, and the area has very strong ties to practice.

Partly as a result of its boundary-spanning approach, M&O has achieved international prominence and is generally regarded as one of the top departments in the world. Indeed, eight of our senior colleagues (Ashford,

Cameron, Davis, Dutton, Quinn, Walsh, and Weick) have been elected Fellows of the Academy of Management, the primary professional association of management scholars. Other top departments include those at Columbia, Harvard, Northwestern, Pennsylvania, and Stanford. Michigan's M&O group is unique among this set in that the faculty that thrive here are typically entrepreneurs both in how they do their research as well as the topical areas they study. The entrepreneurial approach shows up in how faculty draw together dispersed intellectual resources from inside and outside the University. For instance, M&O faculty members maintain active research collaborations with colleagues in the departments of psychology and sociology, in the medical school, at the Institute for Social Research, and elsewhere. M&O faculty members were among the organizers of the Nonprofit & Public Management Center (with Public Policy and Social Work), the Positive Organizational Scholarship research initiative, the Detroit Area Study/Detroit Arab-American Study (with Sociology and ISR), and the creation of the Section on Economic Sociology within the American Sociological Association. Our work on investigating medical errors, the effects of network ties among corporate directors, the development of virtue and empowerment in the workplace, and firms' direct investments in society, for example, reflect the kinds of programmatic and innovative research programs that are vibrant domains of research excellence here.

MISSION & STRATEGY

The M&O group collaborates across boundaries to develop understandings of organizational processes that have impact. Boundaries may be those of discipline and method or nationality and culture. Understandings can take the form of theory, quantitative investigative results, qualitative descriptions, or frameworks for action. Organizational implies that we are oriented toward issues of organized action, in firms and in organizations more broadly. We strive for impact in the worlds of scholarly discourse and business practice in the world. We describe how this mission is implemented in our research and teaching.

Research

The M&O faculty group stands out by collaborating across boundaries for developing intellectual capital around organizations. Three core values underlie our approach: diversity, community, and the enhancement of human well-being. We strive for intellectual diversity in who we are, what we do, and how we do it. One way to characterize this diversity is by the range of theory and methodologies employed. Our work spans from qualitative studies of people at work, to lab experiments, to computer simulations, to large-scale surveys of community members, to statistical analyses of large samples of corporations over extended periods. Publication outlets range from core journals of psychology and sociology, to journals of organization and strategy, to managerially-oriented books and articles. Internal diversity and expansive networks across the university make for ready access to appropriate tools. This problem-driven approach contrasts with a theory-driven approach of prosecuting a single theoretical agenda with internally-derived problems (examples might include the ecological study of organizational death rates).

Our values as a collaborative community make this diversity coherent. Diversity per se is of limited value if it is not embedded in a culture with norms and routines that make cross-boundary collaboration easy. (Consider, for instance, successful industrial districts such as Silicon Valley.) We sustain a culture of mutual respect and celebrate contributions that come from unexpected quarters. We are also careful in selecting faculty hires both for excellence in research and teaching and for their ability to contribute to the intellectual community and thrive in the distinctive environment of the University of Michigan and the Ross School of Business. Michigan M&O faculty members have made contributions that have changed the conversations of the field, often by making surprising linkages. At the same time, we have high standards of rigor and integrity. These are indicated by the important "gatekeeper" roles that department members have held in top-tier journals and professional associations. We believe that by sustaining community values of openness and rigor we provide a context conducive to field-changing contributions.

Our community of diverse colleagues is held together by another, even deeper value. We strive to create value for society by doing research with impact beyond the immediate business environment. The scope of this quest is evident in the kinds of questions that we address. This can range from the micro level of the individual experience of work (e.g., understanding how individuals proactively change work contexts) to the meso level of organizing to enhance human well-being (e.g., work on understanding and avoiding medical mistakes) to the macro level of corporate social responsibility. The initiative on Positive Organizational Scholarship strives to understand the organizing dynamics that enable flourishing at the micro, meso and macro levels.

Teaching

M&O is responsible for staffing required courses in all degree programs from BBA and both MBA day and evening programs, to our GMBA and EMBA programs, to the PhD program. M&O Faculty also play key roles in the Ross Leadership Initiative which leadership development activities throughout students' experience at Ross. Our professional teaching mission flows from our assessment of the needs of future leaders of contemporary organizations. New kinds of organizations require new kinds of leadership skills, and we are committed to providing up-to-date frameworks and skills for current managers. As we see it, managers of flat, focused organizations with diverse workforces and multilateral partnerships with other organizations require a distinct and identifiable set of conceptual frameworks and skills. As such, we provide students with the skills and understandings to lead in an interdependent organizational world.

As a crossroads area, M&O is uniquely placed to translate advanced scholarship from the university to the curriculum. For example, research on high reliability medical practices, psychological research on cultural differences in cognition between East Asian and Western cultures, and complex systems research on network architecture have all found a path from basic academic research to business school teaching via M&O faculty. Conversely, the UMBS Management Series originated in the most important problems identified by participants in our executive education programs. M&O works from practice to theory to develop and deliver high impact ideas.

Our MBA elective offerings cluster into five different groups, organized around different topical and skill domains for leadership and management. The full range of courses are useful for individuals preparing for careers as general managers and consultants, but also as leadership complements to students pursuing careers in finance, marketing, operations or related fields. Our current MBA (BBA electives in italics) electives that fall into these five areas are listed below. We have a more limited set of electives in the undergraduate program that fall into these five topical domains:

Leading Change

Navigating Change (603, 1.5 credits)
Business Leadership in Changing Times (611, 1.5 credits)
Social Intrapreneurship (637, 2.25 credits)
Managing Change (314, 3 credits)
Strategic Management of Knowledge (470, 3 credits)

Leading Through Relationships

Negotiations in a Global Economy (Bargaining and Influence Skills) (512, 2.25 credits)
Interpersonal Dynamics in Management (561, 3 credits)
Managing Professional Relationships (615, 1.5 credits)
Leadership Coaching Practicum (625, 3 credits)
Managing Professional Relationships (324, 3 credits)

Leading Teams

Developing and Managing High Performing Teams (617, 1.5 credits)

Teamwork in organizations (317, 3 credits)

Leading Human Capital

Leading and Leveraging Difference (605, 1.5 credits)

Leading Non-Profit Organizations (672, 3 credits)

Introduction to Managing Human Capital (315, 3 credits)

General Leadership

Leading with Creativity and Innovation (563, 1.5 credits)

Leadership Development: Self-Awareness, Skills, and Strategies (621, 3 credits)

Transformational Leadership (623, 3 credits)

Organizing for Sensemaking and Meaning (700, 3 credits)

Leadership (321, 3 credits)

Finally, our PhD program is a source of great pride in the M&O group. Our doctoral students are welcomed as full members of the scholarly community from their first day in Ann Arbor. These M&O students are excellent scholars-in-training who are active in the profession from a very early stage. Their record of success in teaching, fellowships, publications, and placements is very good and continues an upward trajectory. We count Harvard, Kellogg, MIT and Wharton faculty among our recent graduates.

OUR AMBITION

Our ambition is to sustain a position as one of the top management departments in the world. We will do that by continuing to conduct high quality research that both shapes the conversation in our field and significantly informs business practice. We will also teach in a way that adds value to our students' lives by bringing a diversity of solid academic research to bear on the problems of leaders and managers.