

Presidential search creates opportunity for continued improvements

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On Friday, President Bill Scoggins announced his plans to retire from his position at the end of the 2014-2015 academic year. Since taking over as president in 2006, Dr. Scoggins has confronted several obstacles and seen Mines through a significant transition. As the Board of Trustees begins the search for new candidates, they should consider the strengths and weaknesses of the Scoggins administration and attempt to find a new president who can strike a balance between the two. Furthermore, the Board should attempt to include faculty input at all stages of the process in order to promote shared governance on campus.

Before determining the characteristics the Board of Trustees (BOT) should prioritize in the presidential search, it is important to evaluate the last administration. The president who will follow in Scoggins' footsteps will need to pick up where he has left off as well as deal with some emerging issues. The next president's challenges can be broken down into three impact groups: financial, student, and faculty.

Financial Impact:

In their email to campus, the Board highlighted many of President Scoggins' achievements over the last eight years, but stated that his "leadership was most apparent as he helped navigate Mines through one of the worst financial recessions in the history of this state and nation." Indeed, Scoggins is frequently praised around campus for his financial prowess and role in helping move the institution towards its current financial stability. The Board credited Scoggins' success to his focus on "diversifying [Mines'] revenues and reducing the impact of state budget cuts." In order to investigate this claim, *TheOredigger* collected historic budget data from the school's website (http://inside.mines.edu/Budget_Information). Figure 1 shows the various revenue sources the school has relied on historically and their percentage of the school's annual revenue. Note that this data set excludes revenue contributions from the CSM Foundation.

Based on the data in Figure 1, the school has faced declining support from the federal and state governments. In order to counteract this, the school relied primarily upon increasing tuition for both residents and non-residents. Even within the tuition category, the school had to grapple with decreased state funds. The Colorado Opportunity Fund (COF), which is responsible for subsidizing tuition for Colorado residents, has decreased over the past eight years.

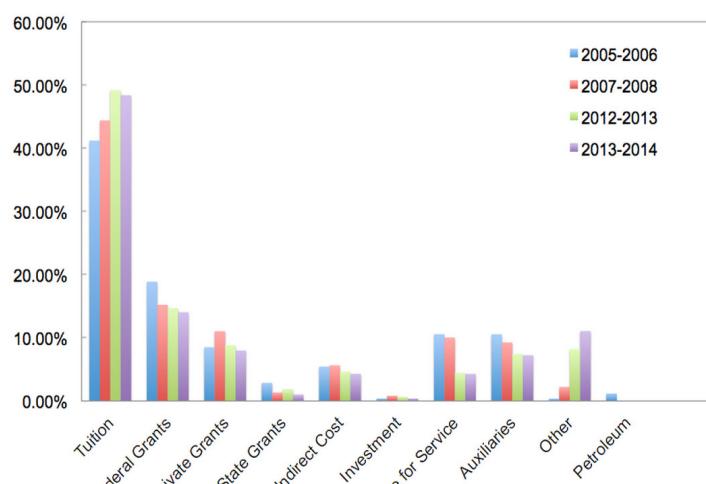


Figure 1: This chart shows the various sources of revenue in terms of their percentage of the total revenue brought in for that year. The data was pulled from BOT approved budgets.

In fact, as shown in Table 1, the percentage of Mines tuition dollars provided by COF have declined from 12.34% in 2006 to just under 4% in 2014. In order to counteract this, the school has had to increasingly rely on student tuition dollars.

Year	Percent of Total Tuition Dollars
2006	12.34
2008	10.92
2013	4.09
2014	3.92

Table 1: This table shows the percentage of Mines' tuition dollars coming from the Colorado Opportunity Fund.

The result has been a significant increase in the tuition paid by students. Figure 2 shows the amount of tuition and fees each year from 2005 to 2014. Note that the tuition rate for resident students reflects the discount provided by COF and has been adjusted for inflation.

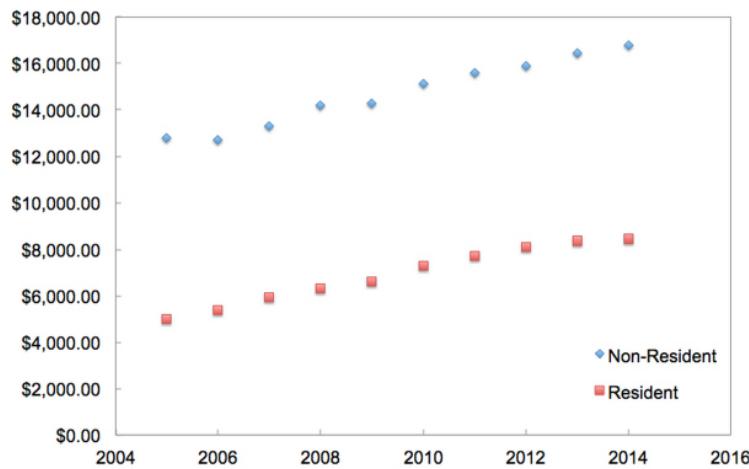


Figure 2: This figure shows the increase in both resident and non-resident tuition and mandatory fees. All data was found on the Finance & Administration section of the school's website and was adjusted for inflation. Data is shown in 2014 dollars.

Since 2005, tuition has increased an astonishing 68 percent for residents and 32 percent for non-residents. Fortunately, the amount of students receiving financial aid has also increased. During Scoggins' tenure, the percentage of entering full-time students who received financial aid increased from about 76 percent in 2005 to roughly 88 percent in 2013 (Figure 3). The average amount of financial support received by students also increased. Figure 4 shows the distribution of financial awards Mines students received.

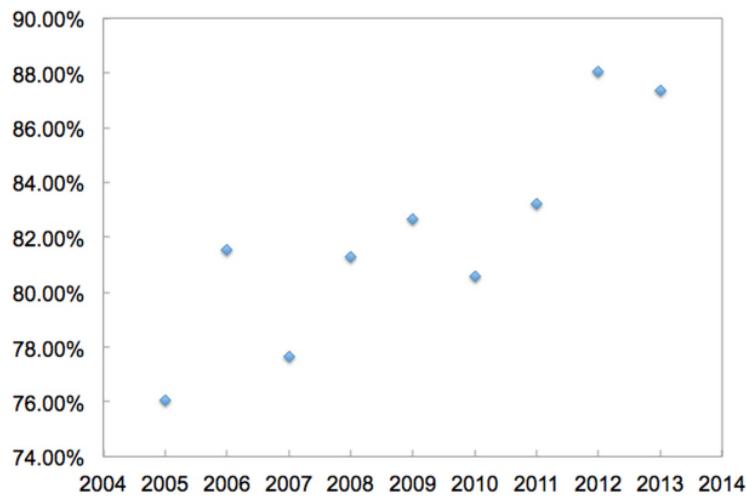


Figure 3: This figure shows the increase in the percentage of entering full-time students who received financial aid from the federal government, the state/local government or Mines. This data was found in the IPEDS reports published online at nces.ed.gov/ipeds.

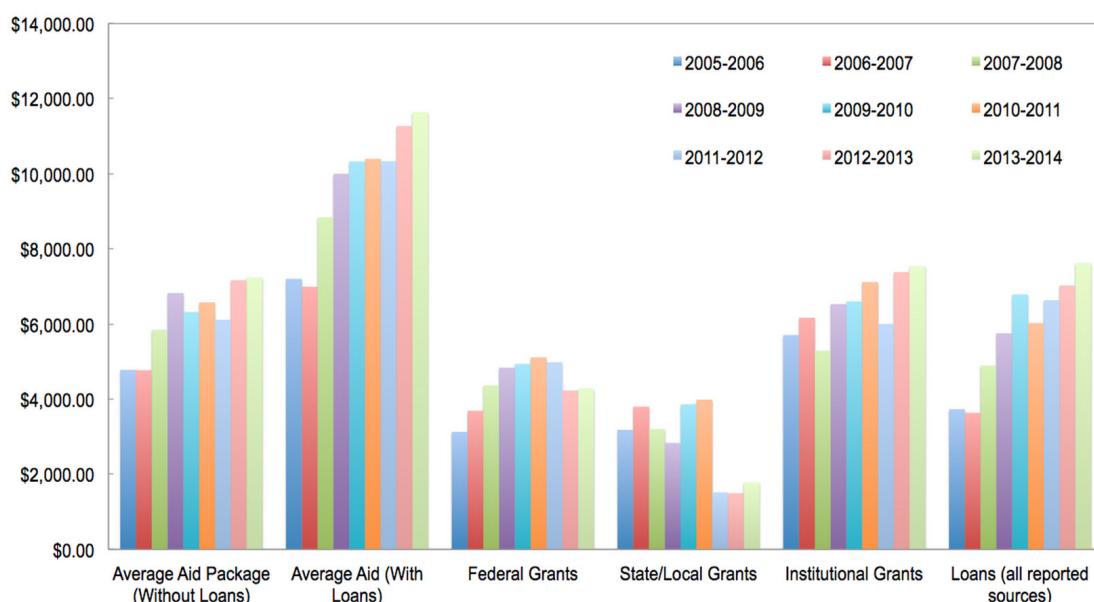


Figure 4: This figure shows the composition aid packages. The bars represent the average amount of that particular type of aid received by full-time, entering students. The average was calculated based on the total number of students who received aid, not the total number of full-time, entering students. This data was pulled from the IPEDS reports.

The data shows a troubling but unsurprising trend of shrinking governmental support and increasing student debt. The average amount of institutional grants provided to students on financial aid increased marginally over this time period but could not keep pace with the increase in loan availability. In 2013, the average student took out roughly the same amount in loans as he/she received in institutional grants.

There are obviously additional metrics with which to evaluate the President's impact on the school's financial standing. Not the least of which includes the fact that Dr. Scoggins has overseen in excess of \$230 million dollars invested in new buildings, facilities, and other capital improvements. He has been fundamental in transforming and updating the physical infrastructure of the campus in order to ensure that students continue to receive a cutting edge education.

At the other end of the extreme, President Scoggins has led the school through three record-breaking years of philanthropic donations. According to reports published by the National Association of College and University Business Officers (NACUB),

the school's endowment grew roughly 36 percent between 2005 and 2013 and based off on reports from the CSM Foundation, it has already grown an additional 15.7 percent in 2014. Figure 5 shows the market value of the endowment, adjusted for inflation, at the end of each fiscal year.

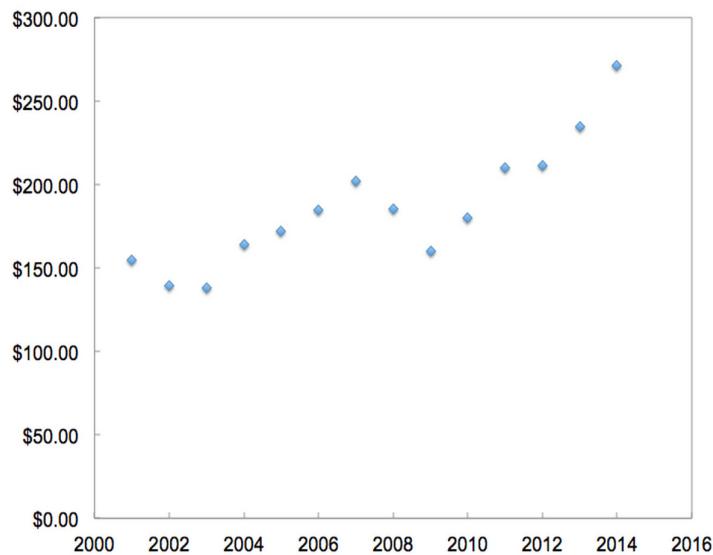


Figure 5: This figure represents the market value of the CSM Foundation's Endowment in millions of dollars. The data was pulled primarily from the National Association of College and University Business Officers' (NACUB) annual Total Market Value report. The data for 2014 was pulled from the CSM Foundation's website.

Student Impact:

President Scoggins' impact on students extends beyond the financial burden of tuition. Over the past eight years, President Scoggins has navigated the school through many changes including an academic restructuring that led to the birth of the college system and a push to convert Mines to a residential campus.

According to data published in the Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS) reports, Mines housing capacity has increased 53 percent since 2005. This data was collected before the completion of Elm Hall, so this number actually underestimates the expansion of campus housing ushered in by President Scoggins.

In addition to developing housing options, Dr. Scoggins pushed the university to increase student services and support. In fact, under Scoggins's leadership, inflation-adjusted spending on "Student Services" and "Academic Support" has increased 59 percent and 138 percent respectively (percentages based on inflation adjusted data). These increases were used to expand the resources available to students, such as the Center for Academic Services & Advising (CASA).

These changes were all aimed at improving academic outcomes for students. Two metrics can be used to measure the impact of these changes. The first is retention, which represents the percent of first-time, full-time students who return to Mines

for their second year. Retention rates, which can be found in Figure 6, were calculated using data from the IPEDS reports. Under President Scoggins's tenure, the schools retention rate increased from 86 percent to 92 percent.

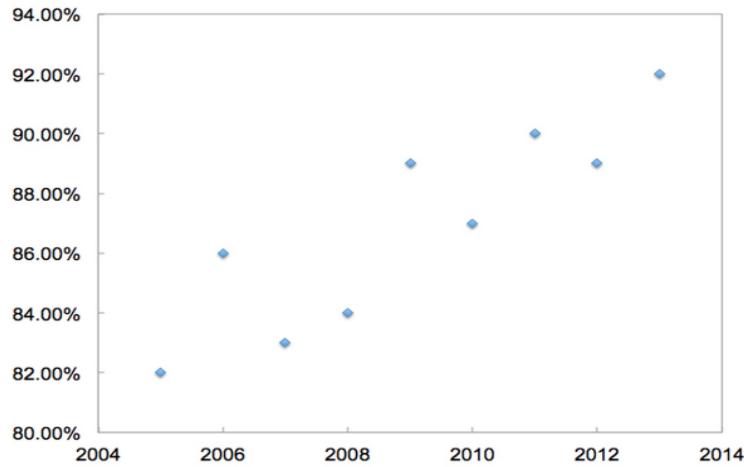


Figure 6: This figure shows the increase in retention rate. Retention rates were calculated within the IPEDS reports.

The second metric is graduation rates. According to the email sent out by the Board, the graduation rate under Scoggins has increased from 68 percent to 75 percent. However, according to the data published in the IPEDS reports, the 6-year graduation rate has only increased from 67 percent to 70 percent. Meanwhile, the 4-year graduation rate increased from 39 percent to 41 percent. Figure 7 shows the year-to-year graduation rate found in the IPEDS reports.

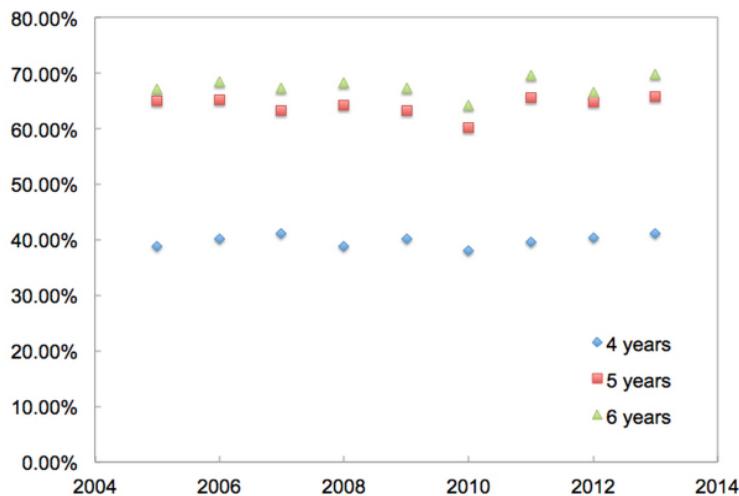


Figure 7: This figure shows the annual 4-year, 5-year, and 6-year graduation rates. These numbers reflect data found in the IPEDS reports after qualifying exclusions were applied to the base group.

Finally, President Scoggins' impact on the student experience can be seen in the changes he helped implement to academic faculty. Since taking over, enrollment has grown nearly 34 percent and the student-to-faculty ratio has increased from 14.7 in 2005 to 15.3 in 2013 (this ratio was calculated by dividing the total full-time undergraduate enrollment by the number of instructional staff using data found in the IPEDS reports). This number, however, does not tell the full story. Since Scoggins took over in 2006, the number of teaching faculty on campus has increased 12 percent. Increasing the number of teaching faculty on campus is representative of the school's emphasis on teaching as well as its desire to increase interactions between students and faculty. Because teaching faculty members do not have research requirements, they are able to focus entirely on developing their courses. Figure 8 (see page 8) shows the percentage of academic instructional staff considered to be teaching faculty from 2002 to 2012.

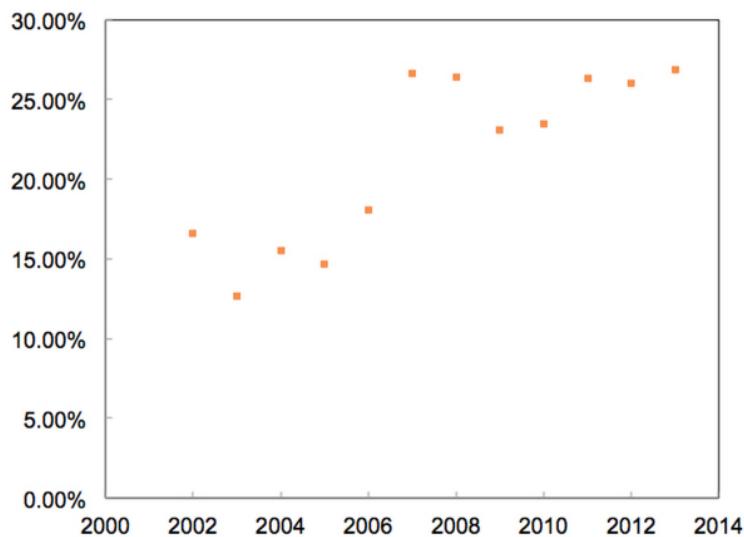


Figure 8: This figure displays the composition of Mines' instructional staff. The data points represent the percentage of instructional staff (tenured, tenure-track, teaching faculty) that is teaching faculty. This data was pulled from the IPEDS Reports. Note that this calculation did not include instructional staff without faculty status.

President Scoggins successfully led the school towards financial stability in the face of diminishing state and federal support at the same time as investing in campus improvements, expanding student support systems and working for a more dynamically integrated faculty/student experience. However, these changes came with a cost, a substantial portion of which is now being borne by the students themselves in the way of personal debt. The next president will need to be as creative in confronting this troubling scenario as President Scoggins has been in confronting the challenges of his tenure.

Faculty Experience:

At the beginning of this year, tensions between the administration and the academic faculty flared up. There was an anonymous letter condemning the administration and a faculty climate survey that portrayed dismal results. Given the President's announcement on Friday, evaluating the current administration's leadership styles seems relatively pointless. Rather than critique the current administration, however, this article aims to identify areas where the next administration should focus its energy, specifically in regards to the concept of shared governance.

Based on data from the IPEDS reports, since President Scoggins took over in 2006, the total number of instructional staff has increased by nearly 30 percent. This increase was a result of key budgeting decisions as well as successful faculty

searches. Figure 9 shows the percent of faculty searches that have resulted in filled positions since 2006. The average fill rate from 2006-2013 was a solid 81 percent. However, this number only reflects the percent of approved searches that were successful. The Oredigger was unable to determine the number of faculty search requests that were denied by the administration during this same time period.

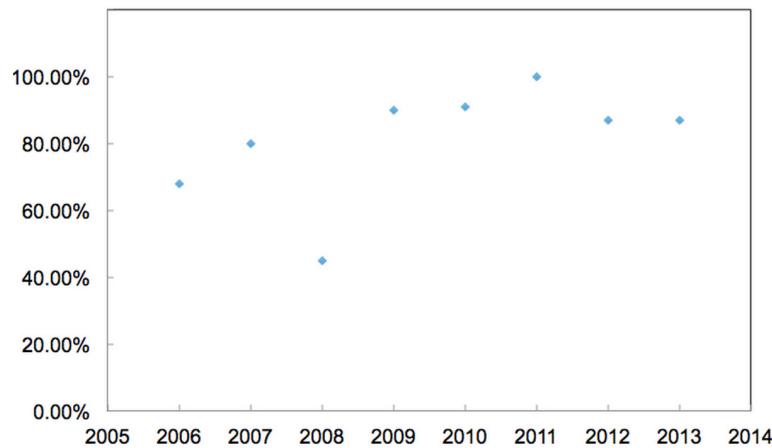


Figure 9: This figure shows the percentage of successful faculty searches. A successful faculty search results in the hiring of a new faculty member. This data was provided by the Office of Academic Affairs.

The increased faculty did not alleviate much of the workload, however, since these increases were accompanied by a 34 percent in enrollment. Meanwhile, the salaries of most Mines professors, see Figure 10, have been relatively flat. The stagnant salaries are largely a result of the budgeting constraints imposed by the 2008 financial collapse. Professor salary raises are generally correlated with state mandated raises for classified staff, which were lowered significantly due to statewide budget cuts in 2008.

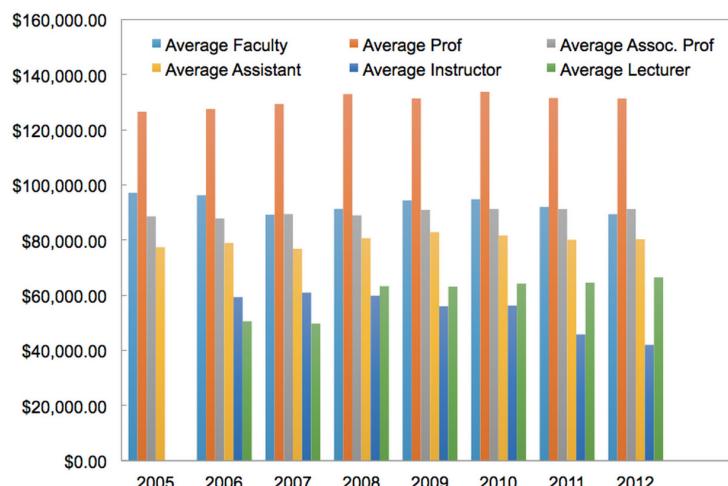


Figure 10: This figure displays the average salary for differently academic faculty positions. Salaries have been adjusted for inflation and are represented in today's dollars. This data was collected from IPEDS reports.

Professor John Dorgan spoke with the Oredigger about faculty salaries and argued that the flat wages were responsible for some of the faculty dissatisfaction. According to Dr. Dorgan, "it speaks volumes to the dedication and commitment of the faculty that they went four years with no pay increases without any disruption to the operation of the University." As the school continues to prosper financially, this issue may grow in its relative importance to the school's faculty. Retaining cutting edge professors for subjects that pay well in the private sector requires some effort at competitive pay. If Mines wants to retain the status gains enhanced by Scoggins, it will have to step up in terms of professor compensation.

In addition to the influx in new faculty members and students, Scoggins introduced the college system in August of 2011. This new reorganization created three colleges: the College of Applied Science and Engineering, the College of Engineering and Computational Sciences, and the College of Earth Resources, Sciences, and Engineering.

Each college is composed of between four and five academic departments and is led by an academic Dean. When the Oredigger spoke with the university's provost, Dr. Terry Parker, he explained that, "managing the breadth of fields and degrees in a manner that produces excellence in academic and research programs requires Deans that strategically manage and advocate for their college." According to Dr. Parker, before the college system, Mines "had 13 separate and very different departments vying for resources with little coherence in terms of strategy." Much has been said about this new structure and the purpose behind it. In fact, tension over the college system is a microcosm of sorts for some of the issues between the faculty and administration.

In April of 2014, the faculty senate conducted a climate survey in order to gauge faculty morale. Nearly 80 percent of the faculty responded, and the results of the survey were troubling. Approximately 35 percent of all faculty identified themselves as "very or somewhat dissatisfied." Dissatisfaction rates were highest among tenured faculty, of which 47 percent identified as dissatisfied. Similarly, 38 percent of all faculty and 41 percent of tenured faculty, indicated they were "very or somewhat likely" to leave Mines in the next three years.

According to the faculty senate's analysis, 66 percent of the individuals who identified themselves as dissatisfied cited a desire for a "more supportive work environment" as the largest factor in their dissatisfaction. Meanwhile, 47 percent, 45 percent and 44 percent of the dissatisfied individuals identified paperwork/bureaucracy, campus politics, and departmental politics, respectively, as extensive sources of stress. When all of the survey's participants were asked about their feelings towards decision-making on campus, the results were even worse. Table 2 shows how responses varied by faculty role.

Table 2: This table shows some of the significant results from the faculty survey broken into subgroups based on campus leadership. The survey was distributed via email in April of 2014.

	Disagree or strongly disagree (all CSM faculty)	Disagree or strongly disagree, faculty in leadership roles, including dept. heads*	Disagree or strongly disagree, dept. heads only**
Decision making is collaborative and transparent	71%	73%	60% (of which, all strongly disagree)
Decision making is efficient	61%	69%	80% (of which, all strongly disagree)
Decision-making is fair	61%	59%	50%
Decision-making reflects sound priorities and relevant data	58%	59%	50%
Diversity of opinion is respected and valued	45%	53%	60%

*Among 64 CSM faculty who in 2013 were department heads, served as directors of programs or institutes, or served in other administrative capacities, e.g. assistant department heads, as identified by their answers to Question 5 of the survey. Committee chairs and course coordinators are not included in this tally.

** Among 10 CSM faculty who identified themselves as department heads in 2013 on Question 5 of the survey. Results may include some who are no longer department heads or exclude some who are currently serving.

The survey was extensive. It was composed of 50 questions and took 20-30 minutes to complete. However, it has received a fair amount of criticism. The survey itself was a modified version of a survey given to the faculty at Boston University (BU). Since this was the first survey of its kind at Mines, the faculty senate had no benchmark to compare the results to and instead compared them to the results from BU's College of Engineering. BU's results were much more favorable than Mines's, including only a 25 percent dissatisfaction rate and only 19 percent of faculty saying they were likely to leave the institution in the next three years.

This comparison, however, may not be entirely fair. Boston University is a private college and has an inherently different decision making framework. Furthermore, their survey was conducted in 2007, before the economic collapse of 2008, which forced colleges around the country, to cut costs across the board. Additionally, the faculty senate acted independently in conducting the survey and did not reach out to any experts in the field of surveying for advice on best practices. As a result, some of the survey's questions have been criticized for prompting negative responses. It is unclear whether the senate intentionally avoided outside guidance, but faculty senate meeting minutes from January and February 2014 reveal the senate's concern that faculty would not participate unless they were certain the results were confidential. By acting independently and emphasizing their commitment to confidentiality, the senate hoped to appease many of these concerns.

Faculty Senator Ken Osgood responded to some of these criticisms at the faculty forum hosted by the senate on September 23rd of this year. He conceded "the survey is not perfect," but argued that it is "incontrovertible that it says there is a problem on campus that we need to talk about and we need to find long-term solutions for." Furthermore, some of the survey's responses confirmed the senate's fears that faculty would not answer without a guarantee of anonymity. Even with the senate's assurances, 14 percent of respondents chose not to identify their department, 12 percent did not say how long they had been at Mines, 15 percent chose not to identify their gender, and 19 percent chose not to identify their race/ethnicity. Written comments also indicated concerns about confidentiality. For example, one participant explicitly said, "I want to remove some identifying characteristics [from this survey] because I fear retaliation."

Senator Osgood further supported the validity of the survey's results by pointing specifically to the responses of people in leadership positions. Dr. Osgood stated "when we look at those views we find that people who are in leadership positions are actually more likely than faculty as a whole to be disillusioned with decision making on campus. This suggests that when we talk about dissatisfaction on campus we are not talking about some disgruntled minority. It's simply not statistically supported. These are the folks who are running departments and programs. These are the proverbial middle management at Mines and when only 9% of them believe that decision making is collaborative and transparent or efficient, when 14% think it's fair or when 16% think it reflects sound priorities and relevant data, we have to have a conversation as a community about what's going on."

Some faculty, on the other hand, are concerned that the survey is magnifying dissatisfaction. Tracy Gardner, professor and assistant department head in chemical and biological engineering said, "my concern is primarily for the young faculty. I don't want them to come into an atmosphere that is primarily negative. I'd like them to know that there are still people who are positive and like it here...I think everybody came here in the first place because they were excited about research and about teaching...The more we can remember that amidst everything else, the better that's going to be for the climate as a whole."

Despite these concerns, the survey has sparked many discussions about the decision making process on campus and ways to increase faculty's role in governance. The concept of shared governance and what it implies is itself a heavily debated issue. In reality, there is only one governing structure at Mines, and most universities for that matter: the Board of Trustees. Colorado statute affords the Board with the "control and management" of Mines, but in practice they delegate much of the day-to-day decision making to the President. Shared governance then is not a legal mandate, but rather an idea of how to govern best.

At the faculty forum, Professor Wendy Harrison, who has extensive experience as both an administrator and a professor at Mines, spoke specifically to this issue. She explained, "decision making made by a very small number of people is a model that we see in the corporate world...It works if the decision makers are well informed and if they seek and value input in the process of making decisions...The other end of the spectrum is shared governance. The weakness of truly shared governance, where everything is by committee, is that you can't get anything done. So, there has to be a balance...In the end, some decisions must be made by a single individual. They have a cost, a risk, and if you don't make those decisions, you don't take the risks that advance your community's efforts...What I see right now...is a huge swing towards uninformed corporate decision making and we need that swing to go back towards what faculty and academic communities value so greatly, which is shared governance."

Harrison's comments identify the key tension between shared governance and unilateral decision-making. Put simply, unilateral decision-making is faster. Building consensus, on the other hand, takes time. In evaluating some of the decisions made during President Scoggins's tenure, the issue of expediency emerges as a key issue. Many of the realities of Scoggins's time have demanded fast decisions. However, such turbulent times also call for a greater effort on the part of the administration to stabilize and support its community.

One of the more frequently cited concerns among faculty is the turnover rate of department heads (DHs) and the appointment process employed by the administration when a department head steps down. Of the thirteen DHs who were acting in 2006, only one of them is still leading his department. In 2012, all of the colleges had been formed and permanent DHs had been appointed to all of the new/modified departments. Yet, since 2012, there have been nine official leadership changes in seven of the fourteen departments. Transitioning between leadership is a natural part of the reorganization process, but these numbers represent a significant source of instability. (Note that department head data was collected at the end of each year and may not reflect transitions that occurred in the middle of a term).

In the wake of a department head stepping down the Provost generally appoints an interim or acting department head. Since 2006, there have been 12 interims/acting department heads. In the interest of expediency, this process does not always include input from affected parties. As such, it can cause resentment, especially when 25 percent of the interims appointed since 2006 eventually assumed the role of department head. If leadership transitions during the year were included in the calculation, this number would be even higher. Furthermore, the process of appointing a permanent department head can be cumbersome and often leave interim department heads in these temporary positions for extended periods of time

For example, the Petroleum Engineering department has had only one department head since 2006 and three interim department heads. Before taking over as Dean of CERSE, Dr. Ramona Graves acted as the acting department head of Petroleum Engineering in 2007, the interim department head in 2008, and the official department head from 2009-2011. In the wake of her promotion to Dean in 2011, Dr. William Fleckenstein was appointed as interim department head. Dr. Fleckenstein served as interim department head for two years; the same amount of time that Dr. Graves served as the official department head. There is a limit on the length of time one individual can hold interim status, and of the eight professors who were appointed to interim status between 2006 and last fall, five were in their positions for the maximum allowable time (2 years). Given the duration of such appointments, the administration should take the time to build consensus within a department before appointing anyone to the head position.

At the faculty forum, Dr. Jeffrey King, a professor in the Metallurgical and Materials Engineering department, identified the administration's preference for fast decisions. In a conversation with the Oredigger after the forum, Dr. King explained his position, stating "a lot of the problems we are seeing are a consequence, over the last several years, of allowing the perceived need to make decisions quickly out-weigh the need to follow a truly deliberative process...which has led to many faculty feeling under-valued and dis-empowered." According to Dr. King, "if things are done right, taking the time to be deliberative, and truly involving people in the decisions that matter to them, we are usually going to get pretty good results - even though it may take longer."

King's argument clearly resonates with much of the faculty at Mines. Yet, there do seem to be multiple instances over the past 8 years in which the administration worked hard to promote dialogue with the faculty. For instance, when the administration was working to develop the strategic plan in the spring of 2013, they hired a consulting group to host five campus forums to solicit feedback from the Mines community. Over 250 people participated in these events and those unable to attend were encouraged to submit input via email. It is unclear how the administration incorporated faculty feedback into revisions and updates to the plan, but it is a key example of the administration reaching outside of their offices for feedback.

For some reason the administration's efforts in this regard are rarely considered in the picture faculty members paint of the administration. Faculty Senator Lincoln Carr addressed this issue in his statement at the joint meeting between the faculty senate and the board. According to Carr, "A lot of the [administration's] thoughts are really good, but then faculty don't know what the thoughts are behind, for example, the college structure. To them it looks like just another layer of bureaucracy that makes their lives much more difficult." He argued that the solution was communication, drawing on his own experience on the President's Cabinet in which he learned about the administrations initiatives on campus. The next administration should prioritize persistent communication with faculty in all of their efforts across campus.

Ideally, the new college structure should strike a compromise between the need to make decisions fast and the need to listen to faculty input. Creating an intermediary between the administration and the departments should enable the administration to

more efficiently seek input through the Deans. However, when asked to rate their agreement with the statement “the creation of the colleges has made my professional life better” only 14.5 percent of all of the survey participants “agreed” and 48.6 percent “somewhat” or “strongly disagreed.” Rather than seeing their Dean as a resource to communicate with the administration, faculty members have expressed frustration with the added level of bureaucracy. In the joint meeting, senate president, Dan Knauss, jokingly explained that, “where it used to be one fight, now it’s two fights.”

In response to this criticism, the administration acted quickly to empower the Deans. In an October email to faculty, Provost Parker expressed understanding that there “has been a sense that the colleges have moved individuals one step farther from decisions that are important to them.” Dr. Parker announced the administration’s plans to “actively increase authority, responsibility and accountability for the Deans and communicate these to the campus.” Additionally, he formally announced that the Deans would now have full authority on certain budgeting and hiring decisions. It is too soon to determine the effectiveness of these changes, but it is unlikely that this will be the last major obstacle to overcome in the new college structure. As the board evaluates candidates for presidency they should emphasize flexible and open-minded leadership traits that will enable him/her to effectively guide the evolution of the college system.

While it is important for the board to select a president who can help rebuild relationships with faculty, there is arguably a better way for the university to embrace shared governance. At the joint meeting, the faculty senate seemed optimistic about the new line of dialogue that the meeting had opened with the board. However, this is not the first time the faculty senate has reached out to the board. For example, according to BOT meeting minutes published online, the 2010 faculty senate president, Mark Eberhart, attended multiple Board meetings. In March 2010, the Board and Professor Eberhart discussed the importance of improving communication between the board and the faculty senate. Both parties agreed to develop a plan for enhanced communication. At the next meeting, Eberhart expressed faculty desires to feel involved in governance and once again emphasized the need for better communication with the board, the Board welcomed such efforts. In January 2011, Professor Eberhart again informed the board of the senate’s desire to foster more interaction between the two groups. The lesson? Talk is cheap. If the faculty senate truly wants to improve governance on campus, and if the board is serious about pursuing changes, the two parties should work together to conduct the presidential search.

At the joint meeting, Chairman of the Board, James Spaanstra was eager to discuss concepts of shared governance. He informed the senate that the board was looking to them to “come up with some principles we can get our heads around.” According to Spaanstra, most of the Board members “haven’t been in the academic community, so [the shared governance] concept is a little foreign.” Earlier in the meeting, Senator Carr stated “Mines is a very different kind of place...We have a really different model here, so I don’t think we have to be like other schools. I think we can chart our own course forward.” Indeed, the senate should chart its own course by pushing for as much input in the presidential search as possible.

According to cached versions of the Mines website, in 2006, the board invited only one presidential finalist to interview on campus. While the board did arrange to have Scoggins meet with campus and community groups, it is unclear how they solicited feedback from these events. This issue of processing stakeholder input and communicating the rationale behind decisions has been a key issue with the current administration. The board now has the opportunity to set an example. Improving communication structures and increasing shared governance should begin with the leadership of the board. Furthermore, if the new president can get the buy-in of the faculty before assuming the position, he/she will stand a much better chance at improving faculty morale and increasing effective communication with faculty. As a final note, the Oredigger would like to commend President Scoggins for an impressive eight years of leadership, not to mention his open-door policy with, and continual support of, this newspaper.