(1) Visiting scholar policy. The College is experiencing increased costs in managing visiting scholars, so we need to find a better way to manage those costs. The Dean has a proposed mechanism, and has opened up the topic for discussion amongst the faculty. I’d like to ask EFAC for their input on this topic.

Also from BMEN: Pursuant to a joint meeting of the Engineering Caucus Members (to the Faculty Senate/EC-FS) and Engineering Reps. to the CPI (ER-CPI) today we are writing to enquire on the following items (regarding the visitor scholar fees):

A. Transparency:

A1. How are the funds currently used?

A2. How will the proposed fees be used in the future?

A3. What is the expected revenue generation to the College from the proposed fee increase?

A4. Why can't the visitor pay for these proposed fees?

B. Comparison:

B1. What are the fees assessed to faculty in other units in Texas A&M?

B2. What are the fees assessed to faculty in State of Texas peer institutions (UT, TTU, etc.)?

B3. What are the fees assessed to faculty in peer universities across US?

C. Justification:

C1. What is the reason for the timeline for proposing the fees this year and not in prior years?
C2. What is the itemized cost currently per visitor on campus (Engineering, Science, HSC, etc.)?

C3. What is the benefit to the faculty paying this fee?

C4. What is the benefit to the College and University?

C5. What are the anticipated impacts (positive and negative)?

(2) **College operating guidelines**: our college does not have a formal set of operating guidelines. Do we want to propose their creation? They would simply describe how currently we do things in the college, in each faculty committee, and just write them down in a place where we can see them and know how things are done. What college-wide committees do we have? How are the members selected? What is their term? What is the charge of the committee? Who does it report to in the administration? If there is a college-wide faculty vote, who votes? What role does the faculty play in selecting/reviewing Department Heads? How does the T&P process work in the college? The document would include how EFAC works, for example. And so on. All of these operating guidelines would need to be in accordance with University Rule & System Policy, of course.

The document would not be written in stone (it would need a mechanism for amendments), and it needs to be flexible (in the creation of new ad-hoc committees, for example, and it needs to give the Dean flexibility in creating new committees). The document would need approval from the Dean, from the college faculty, and perhaps from the University as well. In suggesting the creation of this document, I'm not suggesting we change any of our existing policies or standard procedures. I'm just suggesting that it would be a good idea to put them all down on paper so we can all know how we are structured as a college, and how we do things, by listing how we do what we do.

There are some procedures that would be subject to approval and modification only by the committee itself. If those were written down (which I think is a good idea) they would be in a set of separate documents and the main set of operating guidelines would link to them, one per committee. I think this structure would give both a well-defined committee structure (in the Operating Guidelines) plus flexibility (in the per-committee guidelines that the committee itself is free to modify on its own).

EFAC has a set of ByLaws already at [https://engineering.tamu.edu/information/efac/bylaws.html](https://engineering.tamu.edu/information/efac/bylaws.html). That document would be one section of the document I'm suggesting.
From BMEN: Set of rules for COE is a good idea, but, but citing the COE leadership “We have a strict set of rules … but there are always well justified exceptions”. Unfortunately, most of those rules are not openly available, and the justification for exceptions made are not always justified. The faculty is requesting additional transparency on the process, and in particular how the exceptions are handled.

(3) Bypassing EFAC on some topics. EFAC sometimes deals with topics that are best dealt with between an individual department, or sometimes an individual faculty member, and a particular Dean or member of the administration. I'm happy to have those topics bypass EFAC, if they don't need input from a college-wide perspective. Where to draw the line is a fuzzy thing, of course. I'd like to have EFAC focus its attention on topics that really require college-wide discussion and feedback. Please keep this in mind when soliciting input from your departments. Perhaps we could come up with a new agenda item: topics that EFAC may wish to consider and discuss, but if not, then they can just be forwarded directly to/from the Dean and the specific department or faculty member. I'm open to suggestions on how we might do this.