

Minutes of the Informal Meeting of AILACT at the University of Windsor (Informal Logic @ 25), May 18, 2003

Note: This was a luncheon discussion-and-straw-vote meeting attended by available Board and other members. Please notify Bob Ennis (rhennis@uiuc.edu) of any errors or omissions in these minutes.

Because of the shortage of time, the interest expressed by attending members in the topics considered, and a provision in the Constitution that authorizes member contributions to Board discussions, Bob Ennis invited attending members to join the Board's subsequent e-mail discussions of these and other topics, an invitation that seemed to be widely approved. [Non-Board members: to join this discussion write Bob Ennis, rhennis@uiuc.edu .]

[In the middle of July, Bob Ennis plans plan to initiate discussion among Board members and other interested members of the issues discussed here. Only the Board members will vote on the motions, but everyone's opinions and reasons are important.]

Michael Gilbert offered to set up a listserv for joint discussions among AILACT members and the Board. (The almost complete inactivity of our listserv, AILACT-L, was noted. The uniqueness of the instructions for joining, and popularity of the ArgTheory list were suggested as possible causes.)

Approximately 25 people were present.

A. Election: New Board

Treasurer Don Hatcher announced the results of the nomination and election process for regular Board members and the offices of Treasurer, Vice-President, and President.

Members at large of the new Board: Tony Blair, Dan Cohen, Trudy Govier, Hans Hansen, David Hitchcock, Gerry Nosich, Michael Scriven

Treasurer: Don Hatcher

Vice-President: Maurice Finocciaro

President: Bob Ennis

Together with Sharon Bailin and Connie Missimer (Immediate Past Co-Presidents), that gives the current Board a membership that is twelve in number (all for two-year terms).

Ennis congratulated the new Board members (Dan Cohen, Trudy Govier, and Hans Hansen), and our new Vice President, Maurice Finocciaro; and thanked the Nominating Committee (composed of Sharon Bailin (Chair), Jonathan Adler, David Hitchcock, and Harvey Siegel). He also expressed the strong gratitude of the Association to Don Hatcher, continuing Treasurer, and his staff, for the important organizational tasks they perform.

B. Treasurer's Report and Proposed Budget

The Treasurer's Report and the Proposed Budget were distributed but not discussed. E-mail discussion (beginning with the distribution of these minutes) is invited prior to Board action on these two items.

1. AILACT 2003 Treasurer's Report

Number of members:

227 (2001)

165 (2002)

165 (2003)

Number of members paying dues:

61 (12-01)

29 (4-02)

33 (5-03)

Financial history:

12-31-99 Balance 1101.61

12-31-00 Balance 1286.24

2001 Income 418.39

2-16-01 Expense (election mailing) 240.91

5-9-01 Expense (mailing) 112.60

11-6-01 Expense (election mailing) 381.00

12-31-01 Balance 970.12

2002 Income 193.58

4-22-02 Balance 1163.70

12-31-02 Balance 1352.00

2003 Income 359.34

3-31-03 Balance 1711.34

Outstanding Debits: Election mailing, est. \$75

Submitted by: Donald L. Hatcher, Treasurer

2. Proposed AILACT Budget for 2003

Estimated income \$500

Estimated expenses:

Mailings 200

Web site assistance 200

Contingencies 100

Total estimated expenses \$500

Net change in AILACT assets \$0

C. Our Web site, <http://ailact.mcmaster.ca/> Do you have any suggestions? Are you pleased with our Web site?

1. General approval of our Web site was strongly expressed.
2. David Hitchcock, Webmaster, noted that there are opportunities for members to post information about themselves and to give links to their own sites.
3. He also noted that there will be links to, or copies of, presentations at sessions sponsored by AILACT, if available electronically. He will obtain these items from speakers via session organizers.
4. There is also the opportunity to post a notice of any book in print written by an AILACT member, including textbooks. David intends to post a notice to AILACT-L and Argthry lists soliciting such notices.
5. David also offered to post AILACT members' papers on the Web site, if they do not have a site of their own. If they do have a site of their own, he could post a Web address for their papers.
6. Trudy Govier suggested that there be a section in which various members post research ideas, ideas that in particular could be of use to students doing research. This idea received strong approval.
7. It was strongly supported that there be information about, or links to:
 - a) sites where there are materials which could be used in courses (Peter Asquith has already pointed David to a page of such links on Peter's Web site.);
 - b) sites with summaries of research about informal logic and critical thinking Leo Groarke noted that there are already several research summaries, including one he did for the Encyclopedia of Philosophy, and suggested that the Web addresses of these sites (which he will provide) be posted instead of our providing the summaries), and
 - c) centers, programs, and workshops in informal logic and critical thinking (Bob Ennis is working on this).

D. Jobs announcements on our Web site. A good idea? Suggestions for assuring comprehensiveness?

A straw vote showed very strong approval of the job announcement effort. Claude Gratton noted some other sources of job listings (other than Jobs for Philosophers) that could be put on our site, one of which is

<http://www.HigherEdJobs.com/faculty/facultySearch.cfm?JobCat=89>

David Hitchcock suggested that the AILACT Board be asked to approve the following motion: that the Association recommends to the Canadian Philosophical Association and the American Philosophical Association to adopt as a statement of policy that departments of philosophy who are advertising an appointment whose holder will be expected to teach a course in critical thinking or informal logic should list it as an area of competence or specialization in the advertisement. There was strong support for this suggestion.

The suggestion was also made that we seek to have job listing facilities (such as Jobs for Philosophers) offer Informal Logic and Critical Thinking as one of the checkable areas of competence or specialization.

E. An annual AILACT essay prize of \$300 (or more, if donors enlarge it)

Various names have been suggested:

The C. L. Hamblin Essay Prize in Informal Logic and Critical Thinking

The John Dewey Essay Prize in Informal Logic and Critical Thinking

The Michael Scriven Essay Prize in Informal Logic and Critical Thinking

The Annual AILACT Essay Prize

After a short discussion, a straw vote strongly favored the last title, or something closely similar, "The Annual AILACT Essay Prize".

F. Our group sessions at the three annual APA meetings. How are they? Any suggestions?

General satisfaction was expressed with AILACT-sponsored group sessions, which currently are organized by Dan Boone (danboone@iup.edu), Eastern Division; John Hoaglund (valepres@erols.com), Central Division; and Don Hatcher (dhatcher@idir.net), Pacific Division. Bob Ennis noted that we are deeply indebted to these three members for the fine job they have done in organizing and supervising these sessions.

It was noted that the Canadian Philosophical Association often includes IL/CT papers on its regular program, avoiding the need for special group sessions that appears to exist for APA meetings.

A suggestion was made to seek to get the support of the policy committees of the APA, the CPA, and the World Congress to list Informal Logic and Critical Thinking as a category for classifying papers on the regular programs. This suggestion received strong approval.

Jim Freeman suggested that in order to increase acceptance among professional philosophers of the fields of Informal Logic and Critical Thinking, we offer sessions in which some IL/CT-related work (book, article, etc.) of a highly regarded philosopher is critiqued, followed by an author response and discussion.

G. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at the agreed-upon time of 1:50, in order to enable prompt attendance at the upcoming sessions. The general feeling, we believe, about the meeting was quite positive. Much enthusiasm was expressed, though no doubt some good ideas were left unstated because of time limits.

Respectfully submitted,
Don Hatcher and Bob Ennis