

**ASSOCIATION FOR INFORMAL LOGIC
AND CRITICAL THINKING
(AILACT)
NEWSLETTER
APRIL 2010**

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From the Editor: In early March, a list of textbooks in informal logic and critical thinking, together with abstracts prepared by their authors, was prepared for posting to the AILACT website—<http://ailact.mcmaster.ca/>. Soliciting and assembling the list was the first work of the new AILACT Textbook Review Committee consisting of Blair F. Goodlin, Jr., a graduate student at the University of Illinois and myself. We shall be joined soon by Catherine Hundleby from the University of Windsor and Jan Sobocan from the University of Western Ontario. Once the list appears, we invite those who have used posted texts to send us reviews of them for posting also. The invitation to send us notices, abstracts, and reviews is open for any appropriate text in the area, as long as the text remains available.

As announced in the December Newsletter, one of our members interviewed another of our members on public radio. Jack Weinstein interviewed Harvey Siegel on the question “What is Critical Thinking?” as part of his “Why” series for North Dakota Public Radio. The show is archived on the “Why” website. Go to www.whyradioshow.org. Click on Previous Shows, Episode 11 “What is Critical Thinking?” Then Click on Podcast and follow the further prompts. Alternatively, go to the AILACT website, where there is a link to the podcast.

At the December 2009 AILACT Group Meeting at the APA, David Hitchcock announced the winners of the 2009 AILACT Essay Prize. There were two winners, Patrick Bondy for “Truth and Argument Evaluation” and David M. Godden for “The Importance of Belief in Argumentation.” Both papers are posted on the AILACT website.

David Hitchcock has completed his term on the AILACT Essay Prize jury. The Appointments Committee has put forward Ralph H. Johnson to fill the position and the Board has endorsed the choice. Otherwise, the committee structure of AILACT is almost finalized. Besides the Textbook Review Committee, the Appointments Committee consists of Dan Boone, Dan Cohen (chair), and Maurice Finocchiaro; the Critical Thinking Assessment Committee, Bob Ennis, Tom Solon, Michael Scriven, and Carol Tucker; and the Recruitment Committee, Tom Solon and Dale Turner. A further AILACT member will be added to the Recruitment Committee.

Kevin Possin has been reappointed by the Board of Directors for a further three-year term as AILACT Program Chair for the APA Central Division; the Board is grateful to him for his willingness to undertake this additional important service for AILACT.

In response to a call from Bob Ennis (AILACT's Director of Special Projects), a number of AILACT members have made themselves available for consulting in the following areas: the definition of informal logic/critical thinking, the teaching of informal logic/critical thinking, the incorporation of informal logic/critical thinking into a course curriculum, the assessment of informal-logic skills and critical thinking, research in informal logic and critical thinking. We hope that this will be a useful service not only for members of AILACT but also for interested others.

The Board has approved a budget for 2010 with a minimum expected revenue (dues, gifts, interest) of \$500 US, which our president, Derek Allen, regards as a conservative figure. Anticipated expenses for 2010 are \$900, which means we may be using some reserve funds. We have already received some dues payments, but if you have not yet paid, please use the form on the last page of this newsletter to send in your dues.

Finally, we note with sadness the passing of Michael Leff, a major contributor to argumentation theory, on February 5, 2010.

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Upcoming Meetings 2010-2011

7th Conference on Argumentation, International Society for the Study of Argumentation, Amsterdam, The Netherlands, June 29-July 2, 2010.

Further information is available on the conference website:
http://cf.hum.uva.nl/issa/conference_2010.html.

Call for Papers, Group Session at the American Philosophical Association, Eastern Division Meetings, Dec. 28-30, 2010, Marriott Westin Copley Place, Boston, MA

Topic: Current Issues in Critical Thinking

Papers dealing with Michael S. Roth's thesis that critical thinking is inimical to important humanistic goals will be favored:

"Beyond Critical Thinking" <http://chronicle.com/article/Beyond-Critical-Thinking/63288>

Papers on other aspects of critical thinking will be considered.

Please send a (max. 400-word) abstract to hoaglund@cnu.edu.

Submission deadline: May 7, 2010

Call for Papers and Panel Discussions, Group Session at the American Philosophical Association Central Division Meetings, March 30-April 2, 2011, Minneapolis Hilton, Minneapolis, MN.

Please send your suggestions on any topic in informal logic, critical thinking, or argumentation, their instruction, their assessment, or their relations with other disciplines and world events. Ideas regarding a guest speaker, an author-meets-critics, or a joint session with another Group meeting are very welcome. And please forward this announcement to anyone else who might be interested.

Possible topics include: Critical Thinking/Informal Logic and healthcare, CT/IL and religious belief, CT/IL and relativism, the nature of CT/IL, and methods and means of teaching CT/IL.

Deadlines: Please send emails of interest by August 1, 2010. Papers and [confirmed] speaker lists should be submitted by September 20, 2010. Send papers as attachments in pdf or MS Word. Send all emails and submissions to the Program Director, Kevin Possin, Winona State University, kpossin@winona.edu.

Essay Prize in Informal Logic/Critical Thinking/Argumentation Theory

The Association for Informal Logic and Critical Thinking (AILACT) invites submissions for the 2010 AILACT Essay Prize. This will be the sixth year in which the prize has been offered.

- Value: \$300 U.S.
- The prize-winning paper will be considered for publication in *Informal Logic* upon the conditions listed below.*
- Papers related to the teaching or theory of informal logic or critical thinking, and papers on argumentation theory, will be considered for the prize.
- There are no restrictions on authorship. Authors need not be members of AILACT.
- Previously unpublished papers, and papers published or accepted for publication between January 1, 2007 and October 31, 2010, are eligible. Maximum length: 6,000 words.
- Entries will be assessed on the basis of their argument, scholarship, style, and importance to the field.
- The jury members for the 2010 AILACT essay prize, approved by the AILACT Board of Directors, are Ralph Johnson (Professor Emeritus, Department of Philosophy, University of Windsor), Harvey Siegel (Department of Philosophy, University of Miami) and Mark Weinstein (Department of Educational Foundations, Montclair State University). The decision of the jury is final.
- To submit a paper, attach a PDF (preferred) or MS Word or RTF document to an email with AILACT ESSAY ENTRY on the “subject” line and send it to Prof. Derek Allen (derekallen@trinity.utoronto.ca) with a covering note giving your name and a mailing address. Please send the paper ready for blind-reviewing (the author not identified on the paper or file containing the paper or in the description of the document’s properties that is part of the file, and self-identifying references removed from the text, notes and references).
- There is a limit of one entry per author.
- The deadline for receipt of submissions is Oct. 31, 2010. The winner will be announced by January 12, 2011. AILACT will publicize the name of the winner on its web site and at AILACT sessions held at APA divisional meetings in 2011.
- *Informal Logic* will send any “honourable mention” submissions eligible for consideration for publication in *Informal Logic* to be blind-refereed by editors of its choosing and will publish the papers if, in the editors’ judgment, taking account of the referees’ recommendations, they merit publication either as they stand or with revisions.
- For further information about the essay prize, please contact Prof. Susana Nuccetelli (snuccetelli@stcloudstate.edu). For information about AILACT, visit our web site: <http://ailact.mcmaster.ca/>

*The prize-winning paper will be eligible for consideration for publication in *Informal Logic* if it has not already been published or accepted or committed for publication elsewhere and is not under consideration for publication elsewhere, and if the author consents to its consideration for publication in *Informal Logic*. The editors of *Informal Logic* will arrange for blind review of the paper if these conditions are met. The author will be expected to revise the paper in light of reviewers’ suggestions, or to justify not doing so.

Membership Form

The Association for Informal Logic and Critical Thinking

The Association (AILACT) was formed in 1983 to promote research, teaching, and testing of informal logic and critical thinking at all levels; to increase the extent and quality of such research, teaching, and testing; and to facilitate discussion among its members. AILACT sponsors sessions at each APA divisional meeting and other meetings; has a Web site, <http://ailact.mcmaster.ca/>, that provides a wide variety of information about AILACT, informal logic, and critical thinking, and posts papers and other members' materials; has an e-mail discussion list for discussion of topics of interest to members; and offers an annual Essay Prize-

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION OR RENEWAL FOR 2010

- I would like to become a member of AILACT (US\$10 or equivalent)
- I would like to renew my membership (US\$10 or equivalent)
- I am a student and would like to become a member of AILACT (Fees waived)

Please fill in the following:

Date: _____

Name: _____

Address: _____

Institutional affiliation (if any): _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____ (Please print clearly. Much of our business is conducted electronically. However, you will not be disenfranchised if you do not have an e-mail address.)

Payment Options: Check: Make checks (US or Canadian only) payable to AILACT

 Credit Card Payment: Please deduct US \$10 from

 Credit Card: __ Visa __ MasterCard

 Account Number: _____

 Expiration Date: _____

What would you like to see AILACT do, or do better?:

Mail to: Donald Hatcher, AILACT Treasurer, Department of Philosophy, Baker University, Baldwin City, KS 66006 USA Email: <dhatcher@bakeru.edu>