

ASSOCIATION FOR INFORMAL LOGIC AND CRITICAL THINKING (AILACT)

NEWSLETTER

DECEMBER 2015

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From the Editor

The 2015 AILACT Essay Prize submissions are in and the judges have deliberated. None of the submissions were judged to sufficiently meet the award criteria, so no prize will be given this year. Next year's call for papers is already available at: <https://ailact.wordpress.com/essay-prize/>.

The programs for each of the AILACT sessions of the APA meetings are now available—see section 3 of the newsletter for full details. Please note the call for panelists for the Central Division Meeting and the call for commentators for the Pacific Division Meeting.

A Membership Form is available at the end of this newsletter. A pdf version, which can be completed on-screen, is available here https://ailact.files.wordpress.com/2015/04/2015-ailact-membership-form_new.pdf. Dues, which continue to be \$10, may be paid by check or credit card or PayPal; the form should be completed and sent (with a check if applicable) to our treasurer, Don Hatcher.

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From the President

As I expect many of you know, in the election period ending on November 5, AILACT members elected a new Board of Directors to serve from January 1, 2016 to December 31, 2017. The new Board of Directors consists of Lilian Bermejo-Luque, Maurice Finocchiaro, Steven Patterson, Laura Pinto, Michael Scriven, Donna Warren, and Frank Zenker. Yours truly was elected President, Kevin Possin Vice President, and Don Hatcher, Treasurer by acclamation. Steven Patterson and Donna Warren are new Directors-at-Large, and Kevin Possin is new to the Board. I am very happy to welcome them. I want to thank those leaving the Board, Geoff Goddu who served as Vice President these past two years, Mark Battersby, and Dale Turner for their service. I want to extend a special thanks to Derek Allen, who is also leaving the Board after serving as President for Three Terms and Immediate Past President for the past term. Derek has guided AILACT well as President and has been a great mentor to me in taking over the office from him, as well as continuing to make valuable contributions to the discussions of the Board. AILACT is greatly in his debt.

At its last conference call meeting, the Board discussed where AILACT should place its priorities in following up on the innovation documents. The consensus was to distinguish basic housekeeping tasks from substantive projects. Housekeeping priorities include updating the list of advanced programs in critical thinking which Bob Ennis prepared some years ago. The other priority is getting professional help in redesigning AILACT's website. A proper innovation project should be something AILACT can accomplish at the present time. Before the meeting, Michael Scriven proposed seeking to construct and publish an anthology of critical thinking materials. In his words, "The anthology would be a text that people teaching Critical Thinking or any subject where Critical Thinking was a significant objective (e.g. English composition, contemporary politics, etc.), could use as a whole or, more likely, a choice of chapters.... [The authors of papers possibly to appear] in the anthology would be asked to submit chapters i.e. roughly 20 typed pages on a single topic, or complex example, or set of examples linked by some common feature." The idea is to produce an anthology aimed at the 100-level in a large state university or similar institution. It would be published under AILACT's auspices. Initial steps in the project would identify one or more managing editors and other members of an editorial board. After issuing a call for papers, these persons would act as referees of submitted papers.

I expect that in the new year, the Board will be following up on launching this project. It does have the promise of putting AILACT's name and the subjects it seeks to promote before a wider audience, not only of people in philosophy but in other disciplines with an avowed interest in critical thinking. Stay tuned.

James Freeman
President, AILACT

Upcoming Meetings 2015-2016

(1) AILACT Session at 2016 APA Eastern Division Meeting, January 6-9, 2016, Washington Marriott Wardman Park, Washington, DC

TIME: Thursday, January 7, 9:00 AM –12:00 PM

TOPIC: Critical Thinking Authors Meet Critics

CHAIR: Jeff Buechner (Rutgers University-Newark)

A. *Reason in the Balance: An Inquiry Approach to Critical Thinking*

Sharon Bailin (Simon Fraser University)

Mark Battersby (Critical Inquiry Group-Vancouver)

Critic: Benjamin Hamby (Coastal Carolina University)

B. *How to Think Logically*

Gary Seay (Medgar Evers College, CUNY)

Susana Nuccetelli (St. Cloud State University)

Critic: Vivaldi Jean-Marie (Medgar Evers College, CUNY)

C. *Understanding Arguments: An Introduction to Informal Logic*

Walter Sinnott-Armstrong (Duke University)

Critic: Maureen Eckert (UMass, Dartmouth)

D. *The Vocabulary of Critical Thinking*

Phil Washburn (New York University)

Critic: Omar Mirza (St. Cloud State University)

(2) AILACT Session at 2016 APA Central Division Meeting, February 2-5, 2016, Palmer House Hilton, Chicago.

TIME: Thursday, March 3, 7:40 PM-10:40 PM

TOPIC: Critical Thinking Instruction and the Role of AILACT

CHAIR: Frank Fair (Sam Houston State University)

A. *Speaker:* Heather Battaly (California State University Fullerton)
"Responsibilist Virtues in Reliabilist Classrooms"

B. *Speaker:* Don Hatcher (Baker University)
"Critical Thinking Instruction: A Realistic Evaluation"

C. *Panel:* Panelists: To Be Announced
"New Directions for AILACT: The 'AILACT Innovation Memo' and 'The AILACT Core CT Project'"

If you are interested in being a panelist for Part C, please contact Kevin Possin at:
KPossin@winona.edu *Please join us for this special topic and gathering of scholars!*

(3) *AILACT session at the 2016 APA Pacific Division meeting, March 30 - April 3, 2016, The Westin St. Francis, San Francisco*

Speaker: Stephen Phillips (University of Texas, Austin)
“Common Fallacies in the Nyaya”

Commentators: To be announced.

If you are interested in being a commentator for this session please contact Peter Tan at:
tan.peter.tagore@gmail.com

CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE: MEMBERSHIP FORM

THE ASSOCIATION FOR INFORMAL LOGIC & CRITICAL THINKING

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION OR RENEWAL FOR 2015

AILACT was formed in 1983 to promote research on, and 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.wordpress.com/> 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 holds an annual essay prize competition.

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)

Date: _____

Name: _____

Address: _____

Institutional affiliation (if any): _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

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: _____

PayPal: log in to your account and send the payment to Don Hatcher's email address (dhatcher@bakeru.edu). PayPal will indicate that your payment is to AILACT.

New members: To complete the process of becoming a member of AILACT, you will need to register on AILACT's password-protected Member Area website: <http://ailact1.humanities.mcmaster.ca>. Click on "Register" and complete the listed fields. (These include "User name" and "Password." Make up a user name and a password.) Click on "Register." When your registration has been validated, you will receive an email saying that this has been done and explaining how to enter a profile for yourself on the site.

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