

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

August 2020

Contents

1. From the Editor
2. From the President
3. AILACT @APA
4. Essay Prize
5. Membership

From the Editor

Greetings, Newsletter readers!

I hope everyone has been adjusting as well as possible to the new circumstances, and that the new semester is fresh and exciting in spite of the obstacles we're all facing.

It seems we will be dealing with the pandemic for quite a while yet. So here are a few things to remember about life during COVID-19—we all know these things, but it's easy to let them slip if we're not mindful:

- Stay home when possible; wear a mask in public
- Wash hands frequently, and sanitize surfaces and doorknobs
- Check in with friends and family
- Shop local when possible
- It's normal to feel unproductive or overwhelmed these days
- Let's remember to be kind and understanding to each other, our students, and ourselves
- Take heart, take breaks, and keep on trucking!

On to the main content of the Newsletter:

Jonathan Haber, who recently hosted the workshop for online teaching of critical thinking that was advertised on the AILACT listserv, will be available for email consultation throughout the Fall

2020 semester, for anyone who is putting their CT courses online. His website is here: <https://www.jonathanhaber.org/>.

Below, you will find a statement from the AILACT President, plans for the 2021 APA sessions, and a copy of the final call for papers for the 2020 Essay Prize.

As always, there is a Membership Form at the end of this document. Dues, which continue to be \$10.00, may be paid by check or credit card or PayPal; the form should be completed and sent (with a check if payment is by check) to our treasurer, Don Hatcher. Please note that new members are now required to register on AILACT's online Member Area.

If you have any news, events, or calls for papers that would be of interest to the AILACT readership, please send me details by December 1st for potential inclusion in the next Newsletter.

Best,
Pat Bondy
patrick.bondy@wichita.edu

From the president

Dear fellow members of AILACT,

I hope you all and your families are well, despite the pandemic.

I thought that the previous statement would be my last one as president of AILACT. However, the Nominating Committee—Derek Allen, Sharon Bailin, and James Freeman—asked me and the rest of the board of directors to stay for another term and we found no reason not to accept. Their proposed ticket ran almost unopposed and, after the election, the new board is composed of: Kevin Possin, as Vice-President; Donald Hatcher, as Treasurer; and John Casey, Frank Fair, Maurice Finocchiaro, Dima Mohammed, Dona Warren, Mark Weinstein and Yun Xie as Members at Large of the Board of Directors. I am grateful for having the opportunity to work with them again, and I wish to thank them and the Nominating Committee for it.

One of the people who no longer remains on the board is James Freeman. He was the previous president of AILACT and also served in the last board as immediate past-president. Professor Freeman's work for AILACT during all these years has been remarkable and not only his example, but also his support and generosity are the main reasons why I accepted to continue in charge. Thank you so much for this too, Jim!

The Covid-19 crisis has been a challenge for academic life during the last months and it will probably continue to be in the near future. In my last statement, I said that AILACT will need to adapt itself to new times and challenges. This crisis is indeed an opportunity for this. We all are developing new tools to teach and lecture and are finding, no doubt, a continuous reassurance of

the importance of good arguments. Once again, we find the need for good argumentation to find ways ahead in times when uncertainty, dubious news, and political manipulation abound. In such times we have an extra stimulus to strengthen argumentation theory and critical thinking as academic fields and social tools, and a reason to believe in the mission of AILACT. I am sure that we will all be up to the task.

Do, please, stay safe...!
Warmest regards,

Lilian Bermejo-Luque
President of AILACT

AILACT @ APA

Eastern Division

Topic for AILACT group meeting at the 2021 Eastern APA in NYC: On-line courses in critical thinking: how should they be designed?

In response to COVID-19, faculty at universities throughout the world converted their face-to-face courses to on-line courses. This will certainly happen again with the next pandemic. This past spring (2020), faculty in philosophy who taught face-to-face critical thinking courses had to design on-line critical thinking courses. How should this best be done? What design principles should be employed in doing this? Should teleconferencing be used as a primary teaching tool, as a secondary teaching tool, or not at all? Should the course be synchronous or asynchronous? Should there be required due dates for course work—such as exams, homework, and special projects? Are there important on-line tools—such as tools for creating argument diagrams—and should they be incorporated into the course? If so, how? Should faculty keep in touch with their students using personal e-mails, group e-mails, or not at all?

Format: a panel discussion consisting of 5 speakers

Chair

Lloyd Carr, Rivier University

Panelists

Susana Nuccetelli, St. Cloud State University

Jonathan Haber, PCG Education and ThinkerAnalytix

Andy Egan, Rutgers University

Allison Cohen, Langley High School and PLATO

Jeff Buechner, Rutgers University-Newark and The Saul Kripke Center, CUNY, The Graduate Center

Central Division

** No details to include yet, as this Newsletter goes to press (or, to your inbox!); check back in the next installment of the Newsletter for information about the 2021 Central APA session **

Pacific Division

Given the cancellation of 2020 Pacific APA, the AILACT group panel (see below) has been rescheduled for the 2021 Pacific APA meeting in Portland. The focus will be on generalizations. If anyone wishes to submit an additional possible paper for the session, or suggestions for future meetings, contact Carolyn Cusick at ccusick@csufresno.edu

The cancelled 2020 Pacific session, that is now intended to be rescheduled for 2021, includes:

- (1) Jacqueline Alvarez (Fresno City College), “The Strengths of Induction in Everyday Life”
- (2) Vadim Keyser (California State University, Fresno), “Uncertainty: Tradeoffs Between Accuracy and Generalization”
- (3) Carolyn Cusick (California State University, Fresno), “When Stereotypes are Good Generalizations”

Essay Prize in Informal Logic/Critical Thinking/Argumentation Theory

CALL FOR PAPERS

The Association for Informal Logic and Critical Thinking (AILACT) invites submissions for the 2020 AILACT Essay Prize. This will be the 16th year in which the prize has been offered.

- Value: \$700 U.S.
- The prize-winning paper, and any “honourable mention” 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, 2017 and September 1, 2020 are eligible. Maximum length: 6,000 words (exclusive of footnotes and references). Authors may not submit the same paper, or a similar paper, more than once following the first submission.
- Entries will be assessed on the basis of their argument, scholarship, style, and importance to the field. There is a limit of one entry per author.
- The jury members for the 2020 AILACT essay prize, approved by the AILACT Board of Directors, are Jean Goodwin, Distinguished Professor, Department of Communication, North Carolina State University; Hans Hansen, Professor of Philosophy, University of Windsor; David Sherry, Professor of Philosophy, Northern Arizona University. The jury's decision is final.
- To submit a paper, attach a PDF or MS Word or RTF document to an email with AILACT ESSAY ENTRY on the “subject” line and send it to Derek Allen (derekallen@trinity.utoronto.ca) with a covering note giving your name, a mailing address, and the word-length of your paper exclusive of footnotes and references. 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). Each page should be numbered.
- ***The deadline for receipt of submissions is September 1, 2020.*** The winner will be announced by December 15, 2020. AILACT will publicize the name of the winner on its web site and at AILACT sessions held at American Philosophical Association divisional meetings in 2021.
- For further information about the essay prize, contact Gilbert Plumer (plumerge@gmail.com). For information about AILACT, visit our web site: <https://ailact.wordpress.com/>.

* The prize-winning paper, and any "honourable mention" 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 the reviewers' suggestions, or to justify not doing so.

THE ASSOCIATION FOR INFORMAL LOGIC & CRITICAL THINKING

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION OR RENEWAL FOR 2020

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: _____ CVC code _____

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: <https://forum.ailact.org>. 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