

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

**December 2020**

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**From the Editor**

Greetings, Newsletter readers, and a happy New Year to you all!

Below, you will find a statement from the AILACT President, plans for the 2021 APA sessions, and an announcement of the 2020 Essay Prize-winning paper, as well as an honorable mention.

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 April 1<sup>st</sup> for potential inclusion in the next Newsletter.

Best,  
Pat Bondy  
[patrick.bondy@wichita.edu](mailto:patrick.bondy@wichita.edu)

**From the president**

Dear fellow members of AILACT,

I hope you and your families are well and that the New Year brings for you all the personal and professional encounters that have been deferred because of the pandemic.

During these months the regular activity of our community has been affected, with many conferences and events cancelled or postponed. Fortunately, we haven't lost contact with each other and we have managed to keep working, researching, and teaching almost as well as usual.

The Internet and the many resources that universities and other institutions and organizations have developed to promote online meetings have been key for this achievement, which is something that only a few decades ago was just unthinkable.

Despite nothing can compare with offline discussions and exchanges, we should take advantage of all that we have learned at a breakneck pace during this year (from making presentations while attending the students' chat to clapping an online presentation) and be ready for the "new normality" or just for the new possibilities of all this know-how speedily acquired.

AILACT's website and AILACT's discussion list are the main online resources that our community has at its disposal. We want to encourage you to make them yours and use them to announce your publications, to exchange ideas, and to raise questions.

As you know, AILACT's website publishes information about any new book on the topics of the field, and you are welcome to send us your announcement to this end. Besides, recently, the board of directors has approved the use of AILACT's discussion list to announce publications not only of books but also of articles. We think that, with your cooperation, this may promote a better knowledge of the work that we produce and raise a sense of community that can be especially cherished in times of isolation like these.

All best wishes for the season and Healthy and Happy New Year!

Warmest regards,

Lilian Bermejo-Luque  
President of AILACT

**AILACT @ APA**

\*Note: all APA conferences will be online this year.\*

**Eastern Division**

Saturday, January 9<sup>th</sup>, 2021

2:00 – 3:50 PM

Session 10 M

**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, ThinkerAnalytix and Harvard edX

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 yet. If and when I have details to pass along, I'll be sure to do so! \*\*

**Pacific Division**

Given the cancellation of 2020 Pacific APA, the AILACT group panel (see below) has been rescheduled for the 2021 Pacific APA meeting. 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](mailto:ccusick@csufresno.edu).

The cancelled 2020 Pacific session, that is 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”

\*The 2021 Pacific APA will be held online. A detailed program has not yet been released.\*

### **2020 AILACT Essay Prize Winner**

The 2020 AILACT Essay Prize was won by José Gascón, for an essay titled “Argumentative bullshit.”

Frank Zenker and Shiyang Yu’s essay, titled “A dialectical view on conduction: Reasons, warrants, and normal suatory inclinations,” earned an honorable mention. A longer version of this paper was published in *Informal Logic*, Vol. 39, No. 1 (2019).

Congratulations, all!

**THE ASSOCIATION FOR INFORMAL LOGIC & CRITICAL THINKING**

**MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION OR RENEWAL FOR 2021**

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](mailto: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](mailto:dhatcher@bakeru.edu)