

**ASSOCIATION FOR INFORMAL LOGIC  
AND CRITICAL THINKING  
(AILACT)  
NEWSLETTER  
April 2021**

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**From the Editor**

Greetings, Newsletter readers!

Below, you will find updates on the 2021 AILACT @ APA sessions, plans for the 2022 sessions, and a call for papers for the 2021 AILACT Essay Prize.

Here are a couple of pieces of good news that I've seen lately:

The second edition of *Studies in Critical Thinking* (J. Anthony Blair, ed.) came out this year: <https://windsor.scholarsportal.info/omp/index.php/wsia/catalog/book/106>. An open-access PDF copy of the whole book is available at the above website, as are PDFs of individual chapters. The book contains chapters on various aspects of the theory and pedagogy of argumentation. A hard copy is available for purchase on Amazon.

A new argumentation network, the Argumentation Network of the Americas, is now up and running! According to their website, <https://www.argnet.org/>, there will be a scholarly meeting held via Zoom this August, and the first annual general meeting will be held in October. Graduate students, post-doctoral researchers, and adjunct faculty are invited to submit papers for the scholarly meeting.

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

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

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## **AILACT @ APA**

### **Eastern Division**

Summary of AILACT group meeting, 2021 Eastern APA on-line, January 9<sup>th</sup> 2-3:50 PM:

#### **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?

#### **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

Andy Egan and Jeff Buechner discussed problems which arose while each taught critical thinking on-line. Jonathan Haber and Allison Cohen gave tutorials—Cohen on teaching argument diagrams on-line and Haber on methods and resources for teaching critical thinking on-line.

**Proposal for 2022 AILACT Eastern APA meeting in Montreal:****Social justice and argumentation**

What does argumentation have to do with social justice? In answering this question, there are (at least) two basic matters that can be addressed. The first concerns how argumentation can be used to discuss and evaluate problems of social justice. That, in turn, divides into two areas of concern: (a) which specific problems of social justice can be addressed by the methods of argumentation? Here specific problems of social justice need to be described and how problems each raises can be evaluated by methods of argumentation. (b) Can argumentation help to define and clarify problems of social justice?

The second matter concerns the nature of argumentation and its effects and their relation to social justice. What features of argumentation either impede or promote socially just environments? Are they intrinsic to argumentation? If they impede social justice, what are the alternatives? If they promote social justice, how do they do it?

Format: a panel discussion consisting of 4 or 5 speakers

**Central Division**

Call for Papers for the 2022 AILACT Group Session at the APA Central Division Meeting February 23–26, 2022 in Chicago, IL:

**Humor and Critical Reasoning**

AILACT invites submissions for our annual meeting in conjunction with the APA Central Division Meeting (2/23–2/26/2022 in Chicago, IL). The topic for this year's session will be on Humor and Critical Reasoning. Papers which address the use of humor in pedagogic roles, or where humor can be used to teach reasoning are preferred. Funny papers are also preferred. Possible topics include:

- memes as arguments
- the use of humor in memory retention/learning
- teaching satire for the purpose of social critique
- using jokes as a way of illustrating informal fallacies
- etc.

Abstracts of proposals (300-500 words) should be submitted to Thomas Brommage (brommage@shsu.edu) by Sunday, August 1, 2021. Accepted papers will be considered for a special issue of *Inquiry: Critical Thinking Across the Disciplines*, which is slated to be published in 2023.

**Pacific Division**

Summary of the 2021 AILACT meeting at the APA Pacific Division:

Attendance was minimal, though we had a good conversation. There were three papers all about generalizations as powerful components of good inductive reasoning, with questions about the limits of generalizing, tradeoffs with accuracy, and dangers of generalizations about people. We discussed a bit about distinguishing types of fallacies of generalization and the means and value of practicing argument repair on weak generalizations. Keyser's paper remained as he initially proposed, though Alvarez and Cusick joked that they had effectively traded titles between abstract writing and paper drafts, except that Jacki argues that identity stereotypes are always bad generalizations, which wasn't Carolyn's initial intuition.

**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 2021 AILACT Essay Prize. This will be the 17th 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, 2018 and September 1, 2021 are eligible. Maximum length: 6,000 words (exclusive of footnotes and bibliography). 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 2021 AILACT essay prize, approved by the AILACT Board of Directors, are Geoffrey Goddu, Professor of Philosophy, University of Richmond; Jean Goodwin, Distinguished Professor, Department of Communication, North Carolina State University; Hans Hansen, Professor of Philosophy, University of Windsor. 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 bibliography. If the paper was published between January 1, 2018 and the date of its submission for the 2021 AILACT Essay Prize, please include in your covering note the name of the journal concerned, the year of publication, the volume number and issue number. 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 bibliography). Each page should be numbered.
- *The deadline for receipt of submissions is September 1, 2021.* The winner will be announced by December 15, 2021. AILACT will publicize the name of the winner on its web site and at AILACT sessions held at American Philosophical Association divisional meetings in 2022.
- For further information about the essay prize, contact Gilbert Plumer ([plumerge@gmail.com](mailto: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 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 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.

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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)

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: your first name, your last name, your email address, your user name (which you make up; don't use your email address), your password (which you make up), and "repeat password". Click on "Register." When you have registered, send an email to [derekallen@trinity.utoronto.ca](mailto:derekallen@trinity.utoronto.ca) saying that you have done so. He will validate your registration and send you instructions for entering 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)