

**ASSOCIATION FOR INFORMAL LOGIC  
AND CRITICAL THINKING  
(AILACT)  
*NEWSLETTER*  
DECEMBER 2011**

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**Notes from the President**

(a) The Board has approved the appointment of **Geoff Goddu** as editor of the AILACT Newsletter for a three-year term (2012-2014 inclusive). Geoff will succeed **Jim Freeman**, who served as editor of the Newsletter from January 2006 to August 2011 and did an exemplary job.

(b) **Susana Nuccetelli** will complete her three-year appointment as publicist for the AILACT essay prize at the end of this month. She is willing to continue in the position for a further year, and the extension of her appointment has been approved by the Board. Thanks to her vigorous efforts, submissions have increased in number and have come from a wider range of countries. (The 2011 competition attracted entries from Canada, China, Hungary, Israel, Portugal, and the United States.)

(c) **Bob Ennis** has stepped down as AILACT's Director of Special Projects, a position he held for four years. We are greatly in his debt for the splendid and energetic work he did in this capacity. He was the prime mover behind AILACT's response to the Spellings Commission recommendation for "transparent nationwide [U.S.A.] testing for critical thinking in higher education" (2007); he wrote AILACT's press release on this topic and spent many hours distributing letters to a host of individuals and institutions summarizing AILACT's views. Following widespread consultation, he produced our website list of advanced degree programs in critical thinking and argumentation. In addition, he recruited 21 members of AILACT to serve as AILACT consultants on informal logic and critical thinking, and wrote our website entry on this topic, giving detailed information about each consultant. He also maintained the AILACT-D list. The position of Director of Special Projects was created with Bob in mind as the person who would be appointed to it, and the Board has decided that it should now be allowed to lapse, at least for the time being, but on the understanding that the task of maintaining the D-List and the task of monitoring advanced instruction in IL/CT/argumentation theory will be assigned to designated individuals, who need not be Board members. Special matters that may arise from

time to time (such as responding to controversies regarding CT) will be handled individually by the Board as they come up.

(d) We have 110 “paid-up” members (i.e., members who paid their membership fee for 2009 or for 2010 or for 2011).

(e) Included in this issue is an AILACT Membership Form for 2012. Dues (which continue to be \$10.00 U.S.) may be paid by cheque or credit card or by PayPal; the form should be completed and sent (with a cheque if payment is by cheque) to our treasurer, **Don Hatcher**.

With best wishes for the season,  
Derek Allen  
Department of Philosophy  
University of Toronto  
derekallen@trinity.utoronto.ca

### **Upcoming Meetings 2011-2012**

**(1) AILACT Group Session at the Eastern Division APA meeting, December 29, 2011, Group Session X, 7:00-10:00 p.m. at the Marriott Wardman Park Hotel, Washington, DC.**

Chair: George Boger (Philosophy, Canisius College)

Matthew McKeon (Philosophy, Michigan State University, East Lansing, MI)  
“On the rationale for distinguishing arguments from explanations”

Susana Nuccetelli (Philosophy, St. Cloud State University, St. Cloud, MN)  
“Reflective equilibrium, inference rules and the logical possibility of cognitive diversity”

Catalin Stanculescu (Philosophy, Universitatea din Craiova, Craiova, Romania)  
“*Pluralist consensus*, inferential semantics and deliberative argumentation”

**(2) AILACT Group Session at the Central Division APA meeting, February 17, 2012, 7:30-10:30 p.m. at the Palmer House Hilton, Chicago, IL.**

Chair: Kevin Possin (Winona State University)

Frank Fair (Sam Houston State University)  
“Intelligence, IQ Tests, and Critical Thinking”

Marcus Gillespie (Sam Houston State University)  
“The Critical Thinking Assessment Test [CAT]: Assessing CT in Science Courses”

Panel Discussion: “Critical Review of the Collegiate Learning Assessment [CLA] Test”  
Panelists: Robert Ennis (University of Illinois—Urbana-Champaign); Kevin Possin (Winona State University)

**(3) AILACT Group Session at the Pacific Division APA meeting, April 6, 2012, 7:00-10:00 p.m. at the Seattle Westin Hotel.**

CRITICAL REFLECTION ON TEACHING CRITICAL THINKING:  
Learning Outcomes, Course Content, and Assessment

Chair: Wanda Teays (Professor, Mount St. Mary's College, Los Angeles, CA. [wteays@msmc.la.edu](mailto:wteays@msmc.la.edu))

Paul Green (Associate Professor, Mount St. Mary's College, Los Angeles, CA. [pgreen@msmc.la.edu](mailto:pgreen@msmc.la.edu))  
"What are the learning outcomes for a critical thinking course?"

Jerry Cederblom (Professor, University of Nebraska at Omaha, NB. [jerryced@unomaha.edu](mailto:jerryced@unomaha.edu))  
"Problems with Teaching How to Reconstruct a Common Kind of Argument"

Donald Hatcher (Professor of Philosophy, Baker University, Baldwin City, KS [dhatcher@bakeru.edu](mailto:dhatcher@bakeru.edu))  
"Assessing Critical Thinking: What Standard Program Assessments Are Not Telling Us"

Dale Turner (Department of Philosophy, California State Polytechnic University, Pomona, CA  
[dturner@csupomona.edu](mailto:dturner@csupomona.edu))  
"What Are We Assessing When We Assess Critical Thinking?"

**CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE: MEMBERSHIP FORM**

**Membership Form**  
**The Association for Informal Logic and Critical Thinking**

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The Association (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.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 holds an annual essay prize competition.

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**MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION OR RENEWAL FOR 2012**

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:** \_\_\_\_\_ (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: \_\_\_\_\_

**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.

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