**Common Logical Fallacies**

**Review: Elements of Perusaision**

**Logos:**

**Ethos:**

**Pathos:**

**Logical Fallacies…**

* Flaws in an
* Often
* Learning to recognize these will:
  + Strengthen your own arguments
  + Help you critique other’s arguments

**Important Terms**

* **:** A conclusion together with the that support it.
* : A reason offered as support for another
* : A claim that is supported by a premise.

EXAMPLE: Whichever basketball team scores the most points will win the game. UK scored more points than UNC therefore UK won the game.

Argument Premise Claim

* **:** An argument whose premises genuinely support its
* : An argument that has at least one false
* **:** An argument that relies upon faulty

**Fallacy:**

A generalization based on insufficient or evidence

-Deaths from drug overdoses in Metropolis have doubled over the last three years. Therefore, more Americans than ever are dying from drug abuse.

-Dr. Spencer, a scientist at UK, doesn’t think that humans are causing global warming. Therefore, humans are probably not causing global warming.

**Fallacy:**

A conclusion that does not follow logically from or that is based on irrelevant data.

-Mary loves children, so will make an excellent school teacher.

**Fallacy**

The suggestion that only two alternatives exist when in fact

-Either learn how to program a computer, or you won’t be able to get a decent job after college.

-Either you’re a Republican, or you’re socialist and un-American!

**Fallacy of**

Labeling one thing as the cause of another thing on or unrepresentative evidence or using evidence that conflicts with established higher-level truths or theories.

-Since Governor Smith took office, unemployment for minorities in the state has decreased by seven percent. Governor Smith should be applauded for reducing unemployment among minorities.

-Dan White ate a lot of Twinkies and then killed the Mayor of San Francisco. If I were a mayor, I’d ban Twinkies so no one would kill me.

**Fallacy of (Unsupported Assertion)**

An argument in which the writer, instead of applying evidence simply the point in other language.

-Students should not be allowed to park in lots now reserved for faculty because those lots should be for faculty only.

-I’m the boss because I said I’m the boss.

**(*Ad Populum)***

A claim that an idea should be accepted because a large number of favor it or believe it to be true.

-Everyone knows that smoking is physically addictive and causes bodily harm.

**(Argument to the person)**

An attack on the person proposing an argument rather than on the itself.

-Senator Jones was a conscientious objector during the Vietnam War, so his proposal to limit military spending has no merit.

-Tom dresses like a nerd! How could he run for president of student council?

**Fallacy**

An argument that focuses on an issue to detract attention from the real issue.

-Reporters are out to get the president, so it’s no wonder we are hearing rumors about these scandals.

-You say that Coach Smith pressured teachers to give his students passing grades. But don’t you agree that athletics are important to schools? Don’t they build character?

**(*Testimonial)***

This fallacy consists of an appeal to , that is, an ‘authority’ who is not an authority in the field of question (or at least one we have no reason to believe to be such an authority).

-Oprah says that she won’t eat beef, therefore you shouldn’t eat beef.

-I bought a Harley Davidson because Arnold Schwarzenegger says it’s the best motorcycle.

**Fallacy**

An error in deductive reasoning in which the parts of a premise may, or may not, . The middle term is undistributed in that all instances of a conclusion are also instances of the premise.

Valid argument: All mammals have hair. All whales are mammals. All whales have hair.

* + The middle term is distributed: Whales fits into the categories of “mammals” and “having hair.”

Undistributed Middle: All whales have hair. All humans have hair. All whales are human.

* + Undistributed: The middle term (Human) does not fit into both categories (Whales and Hair).

**Examples:**