

# LC-1117 Integrated Oral and Written Skills

Group Data SCI, Autumn 2023

Session 14: POIs & Logical fallacies

Session 15: Independent Mock Debate



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# S14 & S15

## S14

- Points of Information (POIs)
- Instructions for the chairpersons & time-keeping
- Logical fallacies & Pub Quiz
- Final countdown: final details

## S15 = Self-study with **teams**

- Independent “mock” debate with your **whole debate** team!
  - Instructions in MyC / Week 9



# Chosen debate topics, teams and roles for each team: This house believes that...

1) **Yellow debate (Nov 14th):** Human embryo gene editing should be illegal

PM Gov1 (Rainer), 2nd Gov (Khanh), 3rd Gov (Tuan)

Opp 1 (Sakari), Opp2 (Vadim), Opp 3 (Napat)

Chairperson: *Harsh*

2) **Blue debate (Nov 14th):** Marijuana should be legalized

PM Gov1 (Phuc), 2nd Gov (Aleksi), 3rd Gov (Harsh)

Opp 1 (Magnus), Opp 2 (Anton)

Chairperson: *Rainer*

# Points of Information!



# Points of Information

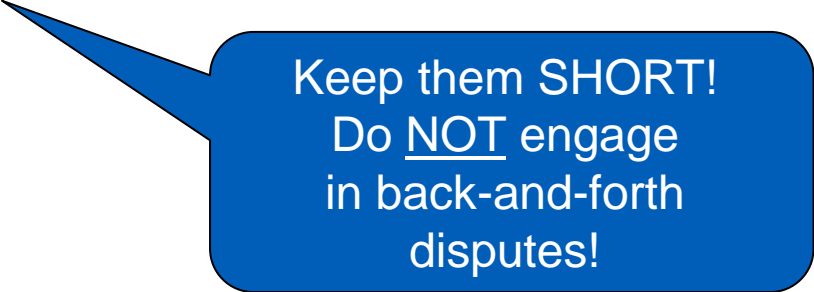
A point of information (POI) is a short interruption by a member of the nonspeaking team.

POIs are usually phrased as *very short* questions:

- Isn't it true that...?
- How can you defend...?

The idea is to:

- **distract** the speaker
- **break** their rhythm
- **point out** inadequate evidence, contradictions in their team's arguments, etc. (*including pointing out any **logical fallacies** they might use...*)



Keep them SHORT!  
Do NOT engage  
in back-and-forth  
disputes!

# Points of Information – protected time

- POIs can only be presented in the middle of the speech (the first minute and the conclusion/last minute is **protected time**)



The **speaker** who was interrupted with "Point of Information!" **has to acknowledge** the interruption and **either allow it or dismiss it**

- You cannot proceed to present your POI without the speaker's permission!
- Do not present follow-up questions without saying "Point of Information" and without having been acknowledged by the speaker first!
- No disputes!** You will get your turn to refute the other team's point(s) **during your own speech(es)!**

# Points of Information – number of POIs allowed / expected

**The speaker decides** how to handle the POI that was offered

- The chairperson does not force anyone to answer anything...
- ...**But** the speaker must accept at least 1 POI per speech if they are offered
- See grading rubric – handling & presenting POIs is included in the grade

**In our debates, only 2 POIs are allowed per speech**

- If the opposing team has already used up 2 during a speech, further POIs during that speech can and should simply be waved down (c.f. how Johan Båge did it in NDC)

**The chairperson should intervene in POIs *only if***

- the non-speaking team tries to present more than 2 POIs after the speaker has already answered 2 POIs during that speech
- the POIs by the non-speaking team are excessively long and lead to disputes



# The role of the Chairperson is vital to maintain control of the event

- They will be “chairing” the debate.
- They will first **introduce the proposition** of the debate
- They will **introduce the teams and their members** (by name).
- They will be the **time-keeper**, meaning they will ensure that each speaker sticks to their time (warn them after 3 min passed/60 seconds left (**POI closes-sign**), stop them (i.e. ask for closing lines) at exceeding by 30 secs at 4:30\*).
- In other words: The **total time** the speaker may have is **4 min**, so POI are **ok after 1:00**, POI **close at 3:00**, stop speaker at **4:30 at the latest**.
  - \*Note: Blue team, Govt 3<sup>rd</sup> speaker: 6 minutes max & 1 speech only!



# The role of the Chairperson is vital to maintain control of the event

- The chairperson *might* need to **stop unwarranted interruptions** by the opposing team during the speeches. Especially during the protected time of the first and last minute of each speaker's speech (=No POIs).
- **Only 2 POIs** are allowed **per speech**. The speaker needs to acknowledge the POI and then respond. If the opposing team tries more than 2 POIs per speech *once the speaker has already responded to 2*, the chairperson should help the speaker wave these down.
- POIs have to be kept **SHORT**. The chairperson needs to intervene if they are too long!
- The chairperson will not be asked to vote on which was the winning team. They must remain neutral from beginning to end.



# Points of information – preparation (~15 min)

With your debate partner(s) **on the same side as you** (Govt. or Opp.)

- Try to anticipate *the arguments or evidence* the opposing side will use!
- Start to compile a list of (at least) **ten questions** to ask as POIs.
- You will want each question to address a **different aspect** of your opponents' arguments.
- Share your team's POIs **evenly**
- Remember to keep them **short!**

e.g. Topic is Nuclear energy

- POI: How can you say nuclear energy is safe when we have had so many nuclear accidents? (**Safety**)
- POI: Are we not going to run out of uranium in the near future? (**Supply**)

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# Logical fallacies

# Logical fallacies

- Argumentation is based on rational thought that persuades the audience
- **Logical fallacies** are statements that might *sound* reasonable or superficially true but are actually flawed or dishonest
- They are mistakes of *reasoning* (not *necessarily* factual mistakes)





# Logical Fallacies Infographics



## strawman

Misrepresenting someone's argument to make it easier to attack.  
Abe: We said that we should put more money into health and education. Warren responded by saying that he was surprised that Will hates our country so much that he wants to leave it defenseless by cutting military spending.



## slippery slope

Asserting that if we allow A to happen, then Z will consequently happen too, therefore A should not happen.  
Colin: Closet asserts that if we allow same-sex couples to marry, then the next thing we know we'll be allowing people to marry their parents, their cars and even moose.



## special pleading

Moving the goalposts to create exceptions when a claim is shown to be false.  
Edward: Johns claimed to be psychic, but when his abilities were tested under proper scientific conditions, they magically disappeared. Edward explained this saying that one had to have faith in his abilities for them to work.



## the gambler's fallacy

Believing that 'runs' occur to statistically independent phenomena such as roulette wheel spins.  
Red had come up six times in a row on the roulette wheel, so Greg knew that it was close to certain that black would be next up. Suffering an economic form of natural selection with this thinking, he soon lost all of his savings.



## black-or-white

Where two alternative states are presented as the only possibilities, when in fact more possibilities exist.  
While rallying support for his plan to fundamentally undermine citizens' rights, the Supreme Leader told the people they were either on his side, or on the side of the enemy.



## false cause

Presuming that a real or perceived relationship between things means that one is the cause of the other.  
Pointing to a fancy chart, Roger shows how temperatures have been rising over the past few centuries, whilst at the same time the numbers of pirates have been decreasing. Thus pirates cool the world and global warming is a hoax.



## ad hominem

Attacking your opponent's character or personal traits instead of engaging with their argument.  
After Sally presents an eloquent and compelling case for a more equitable taxation system, Sam asks the audience whether we should believe anything from a woman who isn't married, was once arrested, and smelts a bit weird.



## loaded question

Asking a question that has an assumption built into it so that it can't be answered without appearing guilty.  
Grace and Helen were both romantically interested in Brad. One day, with Brad sitting within earshot, Grace asked in an [accusatory](#) tone whether Helen was having any problems with a drug habit.



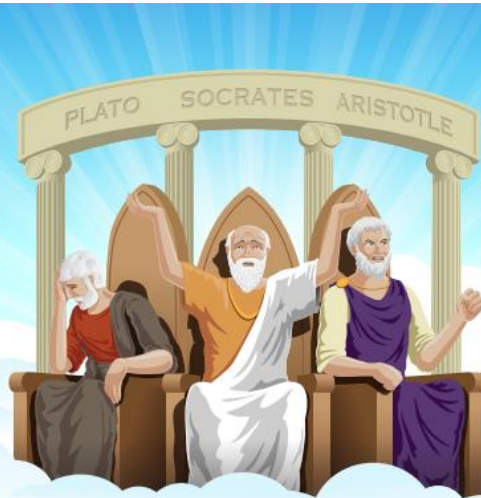
## bandwagon

Appealing to popularity or the fact that many people do something as an attempted form of validation.  
Sherman pointed a dirty keen finger at Sean and asked him to explain how so many people could believe in leprechauns if they're only a silly old superstition. Sean, however, had had a few too many Guinness himself and fell off his chair.



## begging the question

A circular argument in which the conclusion is included in the premise.  
The word of Zorbo the Great is flawless and perfect. We know this because it says so in The Great and Infallible Book of Zorbo's Best and Most True Things that are Definitely True and Should Not Ever Be Questioned.



## appeal to authority

Using the opinion or position of an authority figure, or institution of authority, in place of an actual argument.  
Not able to defend his position that evolution isn't true? Bob says that he knows a scientist who also questions evolution (and presumably isn't a primate).



## appeal to nature

Making the argument that because something is 'natural' it is therefore valid, justified, inevitable, or ideal.  
The medicine man rolled into town on his handwagon offering various natural remedies, such as very special plain water. He said that it was only natural that people should be wary of artificial medicines such as antibiotics.



## composition /division

Assuming that what's true about one part of something has to be applied to all, or other, parts of it.  
Daniel was a precocious child and had a liking for logic. He reasoned that atoms are invisible, and that he was made of atoms and therefore invisible too. Unfortunately, despite his thinking skills, he lost the game of hide and go seek.



## anecdotal

Using personal experience or an isolated example instead of a valid argument, especially to dismiss statistics.  
Jason said that that was all cool and everything, but his grandfather smoked, like, 30 cigarettes a day and lived until 97 - so don't believe everything you read about meta-analyses of sound studies showing proven causal relationships.



## appeal to emotion

Manipulating an emotional response in place of a valid or compelling argument.  
Lulu didn't want to eat his sheep's brains with chopped liver and brussels sprouts, but his father told him to think about the poor, starving children in a third world country who weren't fortunate enough to have any food at all.



## tu quoque

Avoiding having to engage with criticism by turning it back on the accuser - answering criticism with criticism.  
The blue candidate accused the red candidate of committing the tu quoque fallacy. The red candidate responded by accusing the blue candidate of the same, after which ensued an hour of back and forth criticism with not much progress.



## burden of proof

Saying that the burden of proof lies not with the person making the claim, but with someone else to disprove.  
Bertrand declares that a teapot is, at this very moment, in orbit around the Sun between the Earth and Mars, and that because no one can prove him wrong his claim is therefore a valid one.



## no true scotsman

Making what could be called an appeal to purity as a way to dismiss relevant criticisms or flaws of an argument.  
Angus is a precocious child and had a liking for logic. He reasoned that atoms are invisible, and that he is a Scotman and puts sugar on his porridge. Furious, like a true Scot, Angus yells that no true Scotman sugars his porridge.



## the texas sharpshooter

Cherry-picking data clusters to suit an argument, or finding a pattern to fit a presumption.  
The makers of Sugarette Candy Drinks point to research showing that of the five countries where Sugarette drinks sell the most units, three of them are in the top ten healthiest countries on Earth, therefore Sugarette drinks are healthy.



## the fallacy fallacy

Presuming that because a claim has been poorly argued, or a fallacy has been made, that it is necessarily wrong.  
Recognising that Amanda had committed a fallacy in arguing that we should eat healthy food because it was popular, Alvin resolved to eat bacon double cheeseburgers every day.



## personal incredulity

Saying that because one finds something difficult to understand that it's therefore not true.  
Kiri drew a picture of a fish and a human and with effusive disdain asked Richard if he really thought we were stupid enough to believe that a fish somehow turned into a human through just, like, random things happening over time.



## ambiguity

Using double meanings or ambiguities of language to mislead or misrepresent the truth.  
When the judge asked the defendant why he hadn't paid his parking fines, he said that he shouldn't have to pay them because the sign said 'Free for parking here and so he naturally presumed that it would be fine to park there.



## genetic

Judging something good or bad on the basis of where it comes from, or from whom it comes.  
Accused on the 6 o'clock news of corruption and taking bribes, the senator said that we should all be very wary of the things we hear in the media, because we all know how very unreliable the media can be.



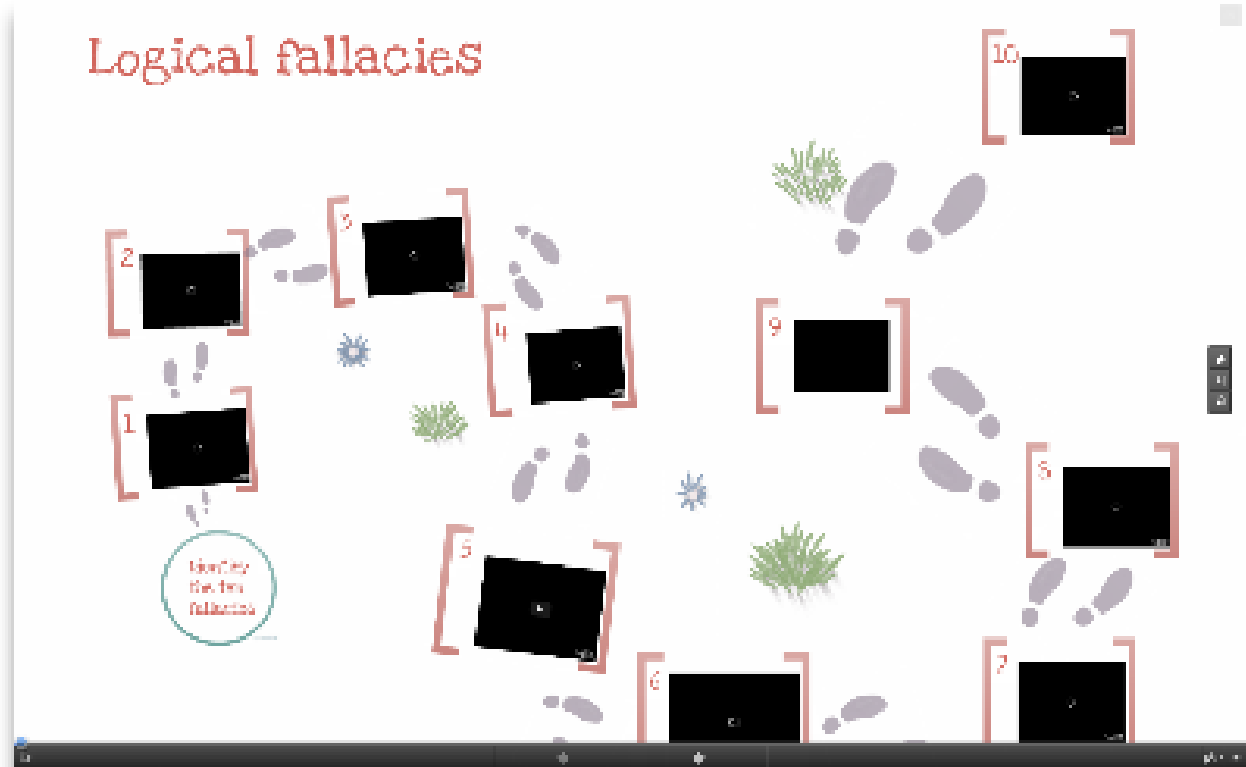
## middle ground

Saying that a compromise, or middle point, between two extremes is the truth.  
Holy said that vaccinations caused autism in children, but her scientifically well-read friend Heidi said that this claim had been debunked and proven false. Their friend Alice offered a compromise that vaccinations cause some autism.

A?

# The ULTIMATE Logical Fallacies Pub Quiz

(by Maurice Forget)



# Logical fallacies (Quiz prep 15-20 min)

Step 1: Get into your debate teams (**Yellow** & **Blue**)

Step 2: Access your notes for *HW Task*: Logical fallacies (=Evenly divide the no. of logical fallacies amongst yourselves (24))

Link to the infographic also available in MyC and at

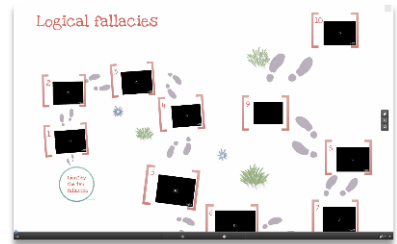
[https://yourlogicalfallacyis.com/pdf/LogicalFallaciesInfographic\\_A3.pdf](https://yourlogicalfallacyis.com/pdf/LogicalFallaciesInfographic_A3.pdf)

**Step 3: Explain your fallacies to your group. Try to come up with examples of your own\***

If you finish early: Discuss which do you think are the most common fallacies?



# Logical fallacies: Quiz time!



- Watch the videos in your teams
- You'll have **only one minute after each video** to discuss what fallacy might exist in each video. Write your answers to the handout provided
- Most of the commercials could arguably contain more than one fallacy
- Key provided afterwards – award points for the other team

# Final countdown: Preparation for the final debates

# On the day of the debate

## Pre-debate 5 mins warm-up:

- Go over your team's position (points, refutations, etc.) to refresh your memories and get geared up

## Debate ~45-55 mins:

- Chairperson takes over; teams start debating; POIs from the opposing team (each speaker needs to accept at least 1 POI during their speeches if they are offered)

## Post-debate 5-10 min cool-down:

- Audience questions
- Each team member shares immediate impressions of performance, audience & teacher respond by giving some of their own feedback based on their written feedback

# During your debate – do not forget

- **Definitions** – Gov 1st (Prime minister) defines the terms of the debate (and Opp 1st disputes these if necessary)
- **Intros and conclusions** – Each speaker needs an **introduction/ opening line** and a **conclusion** (summary and concluding statement) for their speeches. RESTATE team opinion!
- **Content** – **logos** is not enough! Do not forget to include **ethos** (credibility) and **pathos** (appeal to emotion)
- **Refutations** – *before* presenting your own points!
- **Signposting and linking arguments**
  - Is the **structure** of your speech **clear**? **Logical progression between arguments** and **supporting points/evidence**?
  - Use **signposts** and **transitional phrases** to show how one point relates to another
- **Points of information (allowed during 2nd&3rd minutes only)**
  - Say “Point of information!”. **The speaker you have interrupted needs to acknowledge you before you can speak.** Keep it **short!!**
  - As a speaker, prepare for possible POIs

# Course Assignment: Preparatory task on debate

Writing your **Individual Speaker Outlines**: an organized map of your speeches **but not a transcript!**

- Do **not include** all the words you are going to say
- Include supporting data
- Write only the first line of each main argument as **topic sentences in a similar parallel form**
  - 1st claim: *"It has often been claimed that...; however, recent events in Ethiopia have proven otherwise..."*
  - 2nd claim: *"It has been stated by the New York Times that...; nevertheless, we can demonstrate that..."*

Check the individual speaker outlines posted in MyCourses: **choose the correct one!**

# Before the 14<sup>th</sup>...

**Continue honing your own arguments, and communicating with your partner(s) face-to-face, via email/ social media, whatever works**

**Can you identify any logical fallacies in your own arguments? *Should you use any?***





# Homework

## S14&S15

Mock debate: **Practice a mock debate** (on a different topic than your actual debate) with both sides of the team (Govt&Opp) -> Instructions in this week's section in MyC; S15

Continue working with debate partner(s) on the same side as you on your debate content and strategy

**Write out & deposit your individual speech outlines. Due Mon Nov 13th, at noon**



**See you next week!**