**HZT4U Fallacies Assignment**

**1. a.** Search the internet for pictures or graphics (think memes, comics, demotivational posters, political

cartoons, etc.), or written pieces (letters to the editor for example) that illustrate at least 5 of the logical

fallacies looked at in class.

b. As an option you may wish to CREATE your own memes that illustrate the various fallacies using a

website like http://memegenerator.net/.

**2.** You will create a presentation (Power Point, Prezi, Google Presentation, Word Document, something

that makes sense) of the five fallacies. In the presentation of each example you must:

**a**. Present the example

**b**. Identify the Fallacy correctly

**c.** Explain what the Fallacy is in your own words (an example may be useful)

**d**. Explain how the example in your presentation illustrates or demonstrates this fallacy.

**Due: Monday, September 24th**

**List of Fallacies:**

* **Appeal to Force** (*Argumentum ad baculum*) – Someone in a position of power makes threatening statements to force a conclusion.

Example: *“I’m the teacher here, and I say that Steven Harper was Canada’s greatest prime minister. Therefore, Steven Harper is Canada’s greatest prime minister.”*

* **Appeal to Pity** (*ad misericordiam) –* Tries to force a conclusion by evoking sympathy. It does this by focusing on the distressing condition of the speaker or another group.

Example: *“Hey, I’m just a teenager whose only method of transportation is a skateboard. If you give me this ticket, officer, my parents will take away my skateboard, and then I won’t be able to attend school. Wouldn’t that make you feel bad?”*

* **Appeal to Emotion (***argumentum ad populum***)** – An appeal to emotion relies on emotionally charged language to arouse strong feelings and force a conclusion*.*

Example: *“As all clear-thinking residents of our find province have already realized, Candidate X’s plan for financing public housing is nothing but the bloody-fanged wolf of free market capitalism cleverly disguised in the harmless sheep’s clothing of concern for children. I urge you to reject this plan – and this candidate.”*

* **Irrelevant Conclusion** (*ignoratio elenchi*) – Tries to establish the truth of a proposition by offering an argument that supports a different conclusion.

Example: *Kids need a lot of attention, and working parents don’t have as much time to provide this attention as stay-at-home parents, so mothers should not work outside the home.*

* **Appeal to Authority** (*argumentum ad verecundiam) -* Insisting that a claim is true simply because a valid authority or expert on the issue said it was true, without any other supporting evidence offered.

Example: *Richard Dawkins, an evolutionary biologist and perhaps the foremost expert in the field, says that evolution is true. Therefore, it's true.*

* **Attack on the Person** (*ad hominem*) *-* Attacking the person making the argument, rather than the argument itself. The aim of this fallacy is to force a conclusion by mounting a personal attack on the person who holds the opinion.

Example: “So you think that a 12-month school year would be a good thing? Well, you’re a terrible student and your locker’s a complete mess. So your opinions aren’t worth considering.”

* **Appeal to Ignorance** (*ad ignorantiam*) – Tries to argue that something is true because it has not been proven false, or conversely, that something must be false because it has not been proven true.

Example: *“No one has proven that there is no intelligent life on the moons of Jupiter, right? So you have to admit that intelligent life exists on the moons of Jupiter.”*

* **False Cause** *(post hoc ergo propter hoc) – Infers the presence of a causal connection simply because events seem to be related in time or place.*

Example:*“I watched a movie on Thursday night and work up with a sore throat on Friday. I’m not going to watch movies anymore because they give me a sore throat.”*

* **Begging the Question** - Any form of argument where the conclusion is assumed in one of the premises.  Many people use the phrase “begging the question” incorrectly when they use it to mean, “prompts one to ask the question”.  That is NOT the correct usage. *Begging the question* is a form of [*circular reasoning*](https://www.logicallyfallacious.com/tools/lp/Bo/LogicalFallacies/66/Circular-Reasoning).

Example: \**Everyone wants the new iPhone because it is the hottest new gadget on the market!*

*\*The state has the right to put someone to death for having intentionally killed someone else. Therefore, capital punishment is justified for cases of murder.*

* **Equivocation** - Using an ambiguous term in more than one sense, thus making an argument misleading.

Example: “*I have the right to watch "The Real World."  Therefore, it's right for me to watch the show.  So, I think I'll watch this "Real World" marathon tonight instead of studying for my exam.”*

* **Straw Man** - Based on giving the impression of refuting an opponent's argument, while actually refuting an argument that was not presented by that opponent.

Example: “*The Senator thinks we can solve all our ecological problems by driving a Prius*.”

* **False Dilemma** - When only two choices are presented yet more exist, or a spectrum of possible choices exists between two extremes.  False dilemmas are usually characterized by “either this or that” language but can also be characterized by omissions of choices.

Example: “*You either support Hillary Clinton for President or you don't believe in women's rights”*

* **Slippery Slope** - Asserts that a relatively small first step leads to a chain of related events  culminating in some significant (usually negative) effect.

Example: “*If America doesn’t send weapons to the Syrian rebels, they won’t be able to defend themselves against their warring dictator. They’ll lose their civil war, and that dictator will oppress them, and the Soviets will consequently carve out a sphere of influence that spreads across the entire Middle East.”*

* **Hasty Generalization** - Drawing a conclusion based on a small sample size, rather than looking at statistics that are much more in line with the typical or average situation.

Example: “*My father smoked four packs of cigarettes a day since age fourteen and lived until age sixty-nine.  Therefore, smoking really can’t be that bad for you.”*

* **Red Herring** - A deliberate diversion of attention with the intention of trying to abandon the original argument.

Example: *Mike: It is morally wrong to cheat on your spouse, why on earth would you have done that?*

*Ken: But what is morality exactly?*

*Mike: It’s a code of conduct shared by cultures.*

*Ken: But who creates this code?...*

* **Sunk Cost** - Reasoning that further investment is warranted on the fact that the resources already invested will be lost otherwise, not taking into consideration the overall losses involved in the further investment.

Example: *I have already paid a consultant $1000 to look into the pros and cons of starting that new business division.  He advised that I shouldn’t move forward with it because it is a declining market.  However, if I don’t move forward, that $1000 would have been wasted, so I better move forward anyway.*