

ENGL210/CA - WEEK 5 - DAY 2

INTRODUCTION TO ESSAY WRITING



HOW TO SOUND SMART

**WHAT IS AN
ARGUMENT?**

**Not
necessarily,
I could
be arguing
in my
spare time...**



THE GOAL OF AN ARGUMENT:

**TO OFFER GOOD REASONS IN SUPPORT OF
YOUR CONCLUSION, REASONS THAT ALL
PARTIES CAN ACCEPT.**

**WHAT TWO THINGS DOES
AN ARGUMENT NEED?**

WHAT IS AN ARGUMENT?

- ▶ An argument is, to quote the Monty Python sketch, "a connected series of statements to establish a definite proposition".
- ▶ There are two stages to an argument:
- ▶ **Premises** and **Conclusion**.

STAGE ONE: PREMISES

- ▶ **A reason offered as support for another claim.**
- ▶ **One or more propositions will be necessary for an argument to continue. They must be stated explicitly.**

STAGE TWO: CONCLUSION

- ▶ **The conclusion is affirmed on the basis the original premises. Conclusions are often indicated by phrases such as "therefore", "it follows that", "we conclude" and so on.**

Commonly Used Inference Indicators

Premise Indicators

Since
For
Seeing that
Because
The reason is that
As it is implied by
In view of the fact that
Granted that
Given the fact that

Conclusion Indicators

So
Therefore
Consequently
It follows that
Thus
Hence
We may conclude
This entails that
Accordingly

All men are mortal.

Socrates is a man.

Therefore,

Socrates is mortal.

DANGER: BEWARE FALSE SYLLOGISMS

- ▶ Premises are in red:
- ▶ **No one can receive a Concordia degree unless he or she has paid tuition to Concordia.**
- ▶ **Tom received a Concordia degree.**
- ▶ So, Tom paid tuition to Concordia.





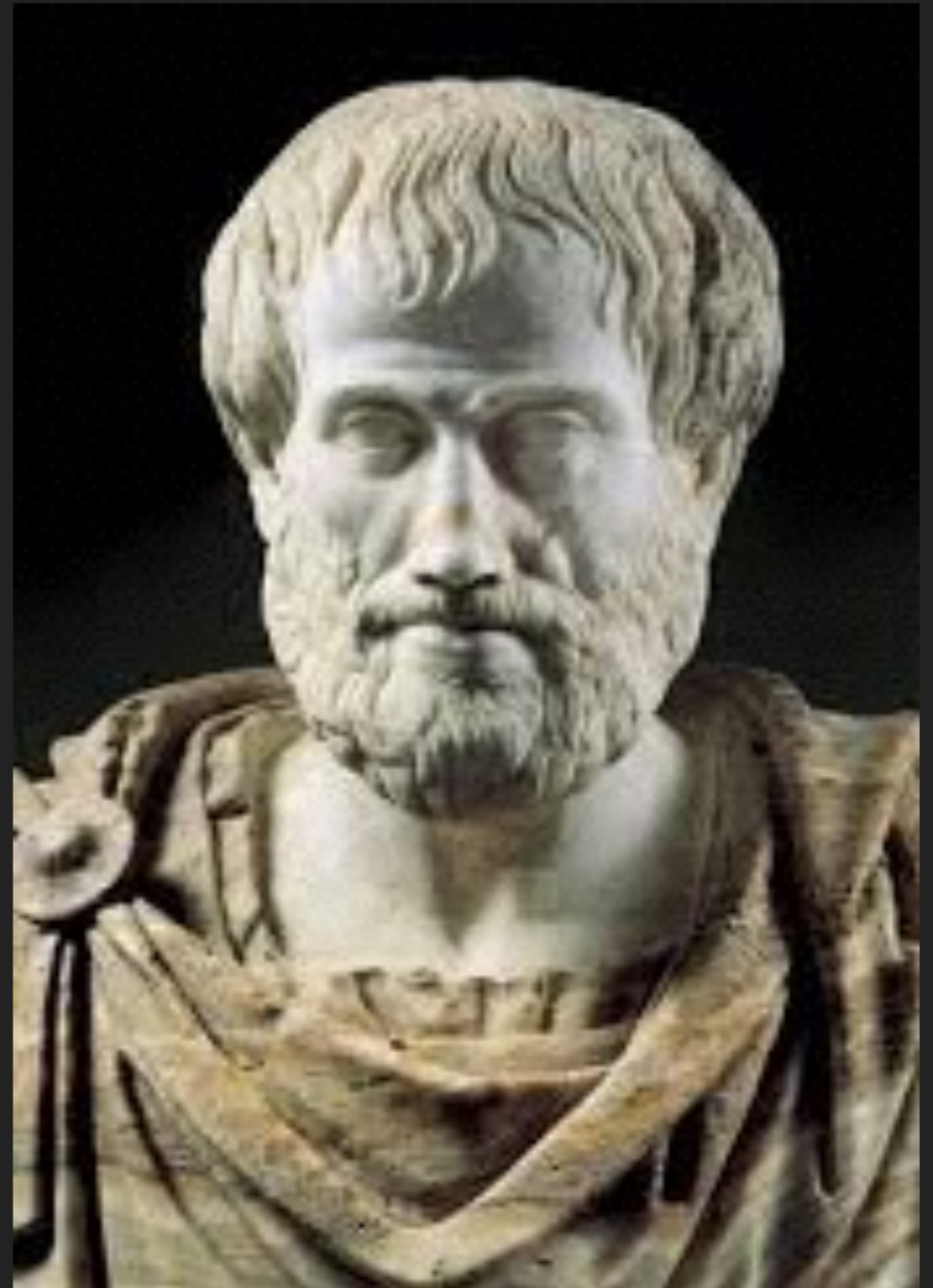
**HOW CAN WE CRAFT
PERSUASIVE ARGUMENTS?**

**WHAT IS
RHETORIC?**



RHETORIC

**The art of
communicating
effectively.**



Persuasion is achieved by the speaker's personal character when the speech is so spoken as to make us think him credible [Ethos]. Secondly, persuasion may come through the hearers, when the speech stirs their emotions [Pathos]. Thirdly, persuasion is effected through the speech itself when we have proved a truth or an apparent truth by means of the persuasive arguments suitable to the case in question [Logos].

Aristotle, Poetics

HIERARCHY OF APPEALS

Logos (reason)

Ethos (authority)

Pathos (emotion)



LOGOS

- ▶ **Logos is an argument based on facts, evidence and reason.**
- ▶ **Using logos means appealing to the readers' sense of what is logical.**





ETHOS

ARGUMENT FROM AUTHORITY

The writer or speaker presents him or herself to the reader as credible, trustworthy, honest and ethical.

PATHOS

- ▶ **Argument based on feelings.**
- ▶ **Using pathos means appealing to readers' emotions and feelings.**





**WHAT MAKES FOR
A BAD ARGUMENT?**

BAD ARGUMENTS

- ▶ If we don't accept the premises of an argument, we don't have to accept its conclusion, no matter how clearly the conclusion follows from the premises. Also, if the argument's conclusion doesn't follow from its premises, then we don't have to accept its conclusion in that case, either, even if the premises are obviously true.

CONSIDER THIS ARGUMENT: DOES IT HOLD WATER?

- ▶ Baptists are often politically conservative.
(premise)
- ▶ Republicans are often politically conservative. (premise)
- ▶ Therefore, Baptists are often Republicans.
(conclusion)

DON'T FALL INTO THE TRAP!

- ▶ This sort of argument can be extremely seductive, but logically it does not work. Consider another argument that has exactly the same form:
- ▶ Tom Brady is a great athlete. (premise)
- ▶ Serena Williams is a great athlete. (premise)
- ▶ Therefore, Tom Brady is really Serena Williams. (conclusion)

BAD ARGUMENTS

- ▶ So, bad arguments come in two kinds. Some are bad because their premises are false; others are bad because their conclusions do not follow from their premises. (Some arguments are bad in both ways.)

BAD ARGUMENTS

- ▶ If we recognize that an argument is bad, then it loses its power to convince us. That doesn't mean that a bad argument gives us reason to reject its conclusion.
- ▶ The bad argument's conclusion might after all be true; it's just that the bad argument gives us no reason to believe that the conclusion is true.

The best ~~way~~ to ge

you focus on th

GRAMMAR MATTERS

you're

PRONOUNS