

## COMMON FALLACIES

1. Term or phrase is used to define something, but then there are so many qualifications to the definition that they render the original term meaningless. \_\_\_\_\_
2. Trying to persuade people to agree with you by threatening them with painful consequences. The violence need not be physical. \_\_\_\_\_
3. A conclusion is drawn about a whole based on the feature/s of its parts when, in fact, no justification is provided for the inference. \_\_\_\_\_
4. Attacking the person rather than the argument or the issue. \_\_\_\_\_
5. Interfering what is true of the whole must also be true of its constituents (parts), in other words, to argue from a property of a group to a property of a member. \_\_\_\_\_
6. Shifts meaning of a word or phrase within a single argument. \_\_\_\_\_
7. Misleading interpretation of data, statistics, or other factual information. \_\_\_\_\_
8. The claim (conclusion) *does not follow* the premises (reasons). \_\_\_\_\_
9. Arguer infers that because one event follows another event, the first event must be the cause of the second. \_\_\_\_\_
10. Attempt to shift attention from the merits of the argument—the validity of the reasoning, the truth of the claims—to the source or origin of the argument, This fallacy deflects attention from the real issue. \_\_\_\_\_
11. Argues for a claim or idea based on irrelevant appeal to popularity. \_\_\_\_\_
12. A broad claim based on too small of a sample size (usually what lies behind a stereotype). \_\_\_\_\_
13. A simplistic and improbable (sometimes horrible) prediction based on a series of steps. This fallacy ignores the complexity of the developments in any long chain of events. \_\_\_\_\_
14. Merely a descriptive association and offers no proof of the connection between two things being compared. \_\_\_\_\_
15. Reframe opponent's position to make it easier to attack. The newly framed position may be a view similar to but not the same as the one your opponent holds—a diversionary tactic. \_\_\_\_\_
16. Argues a situation or person is an exception to a rule based on one or more irrelevant characteristics that do not define an exception. Leads to unmerited advantages. \_\_\_\_\_
17. A statement that assumes that the very question being argued has already been proved. In other words, the conclusion of the argument is hidden among its assumptions \_\_\_\_\_
18. Groups more than one question in the form of a single question and presupposes something that has not been proven or accepted by all the people involved. \_\_\_\_\_
19. The arguer presents an either/or situation, suggesting that only two alternatives exist—the simplification of a complex problem. \_\_\_\_\_
20. Generalizations that exaggerate and therefore oversimplify the truth. \_\_\_\_\_
21. Irrelevant topic is presented in order to divert attention from the original issue. \_\_\_\_\_
22. The attempt to defend or attack a position, oneself, or another from criticism by turning the critique back against the opponent or accuser. Remember: the merit of a person's argument has nothing to do with the person's character or behavior. \_\_\_\_\_
23. Arguing against some claim by pointing out that its origin (genesis) is tainted or that it was invented by someone deserving our contempt. \_\_\_\_\_
24. Argues for or against a proposition on the basis of lack of evidence for it. In other words, makes an assertion based on what "we do not know." \_\_\_\_\_
25. Individuals are presented as experts in fields in which they are not—a problem with credibility. \_\_\_\_\_
26. The arguer assumes that what has existed for a long time and therefore become a *tradition* should continue to exist because it is a *tradition*. \_\_\_\_\_

**Fallacies of Ambiguity**

- A. Fallacy of Composition
- B. Fallacy of Division
- C. Equivocation
- D. Non Sequitur “does not follow”

**Fallacies of Presumption**

- E. Distorting the Facts
- F. Post Hoc, Ergo Propter Hoc or Doubtful Cause
- G. Many Questions or Loaded Question
- H. Hasty Generalization
- I. Slippery Slope / Parade of Horrors
- J. False Analogy
- K. Straw Man
- L. Special Pleading
- M. Begging the Question
- N. False Dichotomy or Dilemma
- O. Oversimplification
- P. Red Herring

**Fallacies of Relevance**

- Q. Tu Quoque
- R. Genetic Fallacy
- S. Poisoning the Well
- T. Appeal to Ignorance
- U. Ad Hominem
- V. Appeal to Authority
- W. Appeal to Fear
- X. Death by a Thousand Qualifications

**Additional Fallacies (not in text book)**

- Y. Appeal to Tradition
- Z. Ad Populum