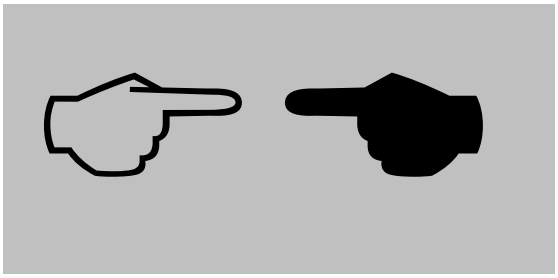


SKI 2049
Argumentation I

UCM 2017-2018

Table of Contents

General Information

Course objectives

As part of the UCM's skills program SKI 2049, Argumentation I, introduces students to the analysis of arguments. In that respect the course aims to provide students with a toolkit to explore the structure, content, use and abuse of arguments in a systematic fashion. At the end of the course students should be able to:

- identify the underlying structures and logical connections of different arguments, by drawing patterns of these arguments;
- evaluate arguments with regards to their structure and content (this entails the ability to identify fallacies);
- build and present their own arguments in a structured and cogent fashion.

Ultimately completing the skills training should help students to structure papers, exam answers and presentations.

Description of the course

The assumption (and conviction) that the quality of arguments depends on their *structure* as much as it does on *content*, has served as a starting point and cornerstone for this skills training.

The course consists of four parts. The first part will serve as an introduction, in which the general characteristics and typology of arguments are discussed. Furthermore, in this part it is practiced how arguments can be standardized and how their structure can be visualized by drawing patterns of standardized arguments. The core question this part of the course seeks to answer is: What is the structure of arguments and what are ways of revealing that structure? This part of the course will also contain an introductory lecture, called "Standardizing Arguments".

In part II an informal, but systematic method for evaluating the quality of arguments, the ARG-method, is introduced. By assessing acceptability of premises, relevance of premises with regards to the conclusion they are supposed to support, and the logical connection between premises and the following conclusion, the ARG-method enables to examine both, structure and content of an argument. During this part of the course an introduction to bad arguments, so-called fallacies, is provided as well. A Lecture, "Evaluating Arguments", will accompany this part of the course.

In the third part the knowledge & skills provided in the first two parts will be applied to complete texts, seeking to isolate the arguments they present in a systematic way and evaluate whether or not they are good arguments. Examples in the context of academic discourse and politics will be examined.

Part IV moves beyond the analysis of already existing arguments, instead standardization and patterns of arguments, as well as the ARG-method are used as tools to construct arguments that can be used when writing papers.

Literature

The literature for this course consists of a number of E-readers. The descriptions of the exercises in this course manual indicate which E-reader should be read for a respective week.

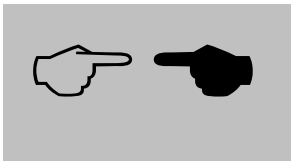
Instructional Format

This skills training will consist of weekly tutorial group meetings and lectures.
Two lectures will take place to introduce the material:

1. Standardizing Arguments (on the nature of argumentation, standardization & patterns)
2. Evaluating Arguments (on the ARG-method and on fallacies).

These lectures will be held (ahead of the tutorial sessions), in weeks 1 and 2.

The tutorial meetings will take place once a week and serve the purpose to apply/practice the methods and techniques introduced in the literature and lectures. To ensure that the time during tutorials is used effectively it is essential that students thoroughly prepare each meeting in advance. **The course manual is divided into 6 weekly sections. It is expected that the students have read these sections before the actual meeting takes place. The sections also include exercises, the exercises in the respective section need to be made at home prior to the tutorial, so that the results can be discussed during the tutorials.** In the course manual, these exercises are marked (as indicted by the sign below) and can always be found at the end of the task section:



Students will only be eligible for a resit if they can proof that they conducted all the assignments, for-grade as well as not-for-grade.

Since the tutorial meetings are not split in pre- and post-discussions, the problem based learning (PBL) format is not applicable to this skills training. Instead, students will discuss the solutions to the exercises (with support of the tutor). Depending on the group dynamics, this could also mean that the tutor might be more active in leading the discussion than students are used to from the traditional PBL format (nevertheless, active student participation is crucial).

Course Overview

Week 1 (5.2.-9.2.)	- Lecture 1: Standardizing Arguments - Read Task 1 and prepare the exercise - Tutorial on Task 1
Week 2 (12.2.-16.3.)	Carnival Break

Week 3 (19.2.-23.2.)	- Lecture 2: Evaluating Arguments - Read Task 2 and prepare (BOTH!) exercises - Tutorial on Task 2
Week 4 (26.2.-2.3.)	- Read Task 3 and prepare (BOTH!) exercises - Tutorial on Task 3
Week 5 (5.3.-9.3.)	- Tutorial on Task 4 (no preparation for the tutorial required) - **DEADLINE FIRST ASSIGNMENT: To be announced on Student Portal**
Week 6 (12.3.-16.3.)	- Read Task 5 and prepare the exercise - Tutorial on Task 5
Week 7 (19.03.-22.03.)	- Read Task 6 and prepare the exercise (preparation for second assignment) - Tutorial on Task 6 (presentation of Arguments)
Week 8 (26.03.-30.03.)	- **DEADLINE SECOND ASSIGNMENT: To be announced on Student Portal**

Attendance Requirement

Students may fail to attend one meeting without further consequences. Those who miss two meetings may apply for an additional assignment, while those who miss three (or more) meetings will fail the course. This is in accordance with UCM policy.

Assessment

This learning community has two moments of assessment, one mid-term and one final assignment (exact deadlines will be announced during the course). The assignments that are graded are indicated in boxes like this:

Assignment:

This is an Example

Both assessments are take-home assignments. The first assessment will focus on analyzing a paper of your own, using the ARG method. In the second assessment it is required that you use the methods introduced in the course to build your own argument for a paper. Each exam will count for 50% of the final grade.

Further instructions about the assessment and the grading policy can be found on pages 21-23 (for the first assignment) and on pages 26-27 (for the second assignment).

Resit Policy

Students who fail the course because their overall grade is below 5.5 will be allowed to retake the assignment they failed. If students fail both assignments, they have to retake both assignments. The grade given for the resit(s) will replace the grade for failed assignment(s). To be eligible for a resit students have to:

- meet the attendance requirements of the course;
- have made a serious attempt to pass the regular moments of assessment;
- be able to proof that they have completed all the assignments that are required for the tutorial meetings.

Course coordinator

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Part I: Introducing Arguments

Task 1: About arguments and their structure

Analyzing arguments: the ingredients of making a point

Two people who disagree strongly are "having an argument". But as you registered for SKI 2049 "Argumentation I", your understanding of the word "argument" probably involved more, or rather something else.

> Anthony Weston defines "argument" as follows:
> "To give an argument" means to
> *offer a set of reasons or evidence*
> *in support of a conclusion*."*
> Or, less formally put: argumentation is about "making a point".

Such definitions seem clear and straightforward. But fairly often, while we think a claim or point is being made, upon closer scrutiny we may decide that all that is given is an explanation, or description. Or we think there is an argument, while someone is merely making a statement about something.

Characteristics of arguments

Helping to distinguish arguments from explanations and descriptions, it seems that all arguments have the following in common:

1. Arguments always *justify a claim* about something; they present a set of observations, assumptions, or facts that are used to justify a certain *conclusion.*
2. This way, arguments – no matter what they are about – can be broken down into smallest components, or 'singular sentences', each representing a fact, rule, observation, etc...
3. Some of these components merely assert something; others combine these assertions into a new assertion: they conclude something.
4. The assertions are called *premises*; the conclusions are called… *conclusions*.
5. There seem to be ways to get from premises to conclusions – there seems to be a certain underlying mechanism or structure for argument that works the same way no matter what the argument is about. In other words, when we look at arguments we can distinguish between *content* and *form* or *structure*. Whether we feel someone has made a satisfactory argument usually depends on both.

Standardizing arguments & visualizing the pattern of arguments

Arguments come in all kinds of forms. There are inductive, deductive, conductive arguments, arguments by analogy, etc.[*] These different types of arguments have different *structures or patterns* of reasoning we may find in an argument. If we want to assess whether or not the reasoning in any kind of argument is done properly, it will be of tremendous help if we can make the actual structure visible.

One way of doing this is "translating" the argument from common English into the completely formal language of logic, which employs *only* symbols. This is probably the best way to concentrate on structure. It may however also be useful to look at content. For this, we need a less formal approach, one that reveals the structure without entirely giving up on content.

Standardizing

No matter how formal we want to be, the first step towards a helpful exploration of arguments is always to identify the parts that "matter" from the parts that are only there for purposes of *style* or *rhetoric*. This allows us to see what the actual premises and conclusion of an argument are, and how they do or do not relate to each other.

The first step towards any kind of argument analysis is to ***find the separate statements that make up the argument***. Some of these may indeed only serve rhetorical purposes: "as you will probably all agree", "as everybody knows", etc. These need to go first!

Next, we need to find the premises and the conclusion. Here, "indicator words" can serve as powerful tools.

Indicator words:

- Identifying premises:

The difference between "if…, then…" and "therefore":
Looking for premises and conclusions we should distinguish expressions containing "if…, then…" from those starting with "therefore". Both seem to be leading from one statement to the next, so what's the difference?

(A) "If/then" is merely stating a relationship: "If it rains, I get wet", meaning: whenever it rains, I will get wet. Nothing is being inferred or concluded; rather, one might say a certain *rule* or *principle* is presented. If a second premise would be added, say: "It rains", the rule would allow us to draw a conclusion: "I (will) get wet".

"Therefore" introduces a conclusion, marks the *final product* of a deduction, inference, or any kind of structured reasoning. This implies that (B) "It rains, therefore I get wet", similar as it may seem to (A), is actually different from it in nature. In the case of (B) I actually *conclude* from the fact that it is raining, that I will get wet. This is why "if/then" indicates a premise, "therefore" a conclusion.

[*] Weston provides an overview about different types of arguments. If you are interested, the book can be found in the reading room: Weston, A. (2000). A rulebook for arguments, Hackett: Indianapolis/Cambridge

Since, because, for, follows from, as shown by, given that, on the grounds that, may be inferred from…

- Identifying conclusions:
  Therefore, thus, so, hence, consequently, it follows that, shows that, accordingly…

Some arguments may consist of only one premise and one conclusion ("I think, therefore, I exist"); many consist of several premises and a conclusion. More complex arguments may even be made up out of several smaller, *sub-arguments* that together support the final, main conclusion of the argument.

Once you have identified premises and conclusion, (and maybe some sub-arguments with their own premises and "sub-conclusions"), you write them down in the order in which they appear in the argument and number each sentence.

This procedure is called "standardizing" the argument.

EXAMPLE

"I can assure you that the Dean is going to be very angry!" "Oh, really, why is that?" "Because he always gets mad when people plagiarize and Bob has just been caught plagiarizing!" "Ah. I see..."

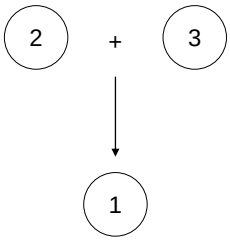
Standardized:

(1) The Dean will be very angry
(2) The Dean always gets angry when people plagiarize
(3) Bob has just been caught plagiarizing

Note that in this example the *first* sentence is the conclusion!

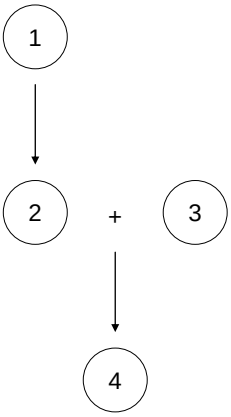
Making a pattern

In addition to this sentence-based analysis of the argument, we can make a visual representation of it. With a few simple symbols, we can reveal the structure or pattern of the argument. We symbolize each sentence from our standardization using circles, each with the number of one of the sentences. Connecting the circles by arrows, we indicate how one sentence (premise) leads to another, and eventually, to the conclusion. A pattern like this always reads top to bottom, with the conclusion at the bottom.

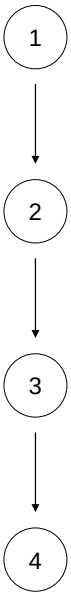


The arrow should be read as: “leads to”
The “+” indicates that the connected premises are both necessary; each by themselves would not be sufficient to logically lead to the conclusion.

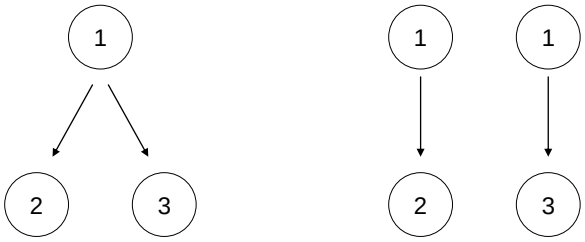
We could also have a simple argument with one **sub-argument** as a premise. This would be graphically reproduced as:



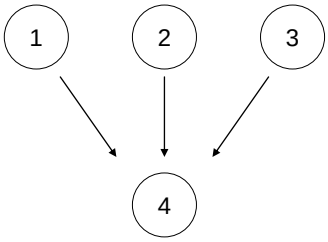
Premises can also be linked in a **linear** line of one supporting the next, supporting the next, and so forth to the conclusion:



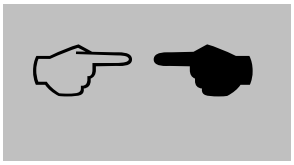
Or premises may support **more than one conclusion**:



Or **conductive/convergent support** (each premise supports the conclusion independently, although several are given):



Exercise



Read chapter 2 of: Govier, T. (2005). A practical study of Argument, Thomson Wadsworth, Belmont. *Afterwards, standardize and make the pattern for the arguments below:*

1. *Identify the indicator words.*
2. *Standardize into individual premises, and a conclusion.*
3. *Make a pattern, using the symbols (circles and arrows) as explained above.*

Taxation

When the government taxes citizens, it is taking the fruits of their labor without their consent. Slavery is the master taking the fruits of the slave's labor without their consent. So, really, taxation is relevantly similar to slavery. And since it is obvious that slavery is morally wrong, taxation is morally wrong.

Genetically modified food

It is obvious that the production of genetically modified food should be stimulated. This is due to the fact that genetic modification enables the production of healthy food. Food can be considered healthy if it is free of substances that are harmful for human health. It is obvious that genetically modified food is free of harmful substances for two main reasons. First of all, genetic modification can make plants resistant against insects. If plants are resistant against insects, they do not have to be treated with pesticides. Thus, genetically modified plants do not have to be treated with pesticides. Since it is obvious that plants treated with pesticides contain harmful substances, genetically modified food does not contain harmful substances. Secondly, genetic modification makes it possible to eliminate allergy-stimulating substances from food. Such substances are obviously harmful. Therefore it is again shown that genetically modified food is free of harmful substances. In summary, it can be concluded that the production of genetically modified

food should be stimulated, due to its health benefits, which can be traced back to the lack of harmful substances in such food.

Security Community

Germany and France are politically and economically very similar. Firstly, both countries have stable democratic systems; secondly, they cooperate on a daily basis within the EU; and thirdly; the Federal statistical office just published that France is Germany's most important trading partner. As Immanuel Kant already observed, and as historical evidence suggests, economically interdependent liberal democracies do not fight with each other. Therefore, it is very unlikely that France and Germany will ever go to war with each other again. So, it is safe to say that Europe is unlikely to be involved in a major war. After all, France and Germany have always been on opposing sides in major European wars.

Public Sector Wages

We want our politicians to understand the problems of the people they serve. After all, politicians are there to solve the problems of the people, and they cannot do so if they don't understand those problems. Also, in a democracy, we want politicians to belong to the people. In order to belong to the people, one must understand the problems the people face. Hence we must ensure that our politicians are not too well paid; this is the only way in which we will have politicians that understand the problems of the people. By ensuring that politicians live in the same economic conditions as the people do, they will live lives similar to most people. And if one lives a life similar to most people one will understand the problems of the people.

Part II: The ARG-Method and Fallacies

Task 2: Evaluating an argument: Acceptability, Relevance, Good Grounds & Fallacies

The ARG-Method

After we have revealed the structure of an argument, we are ready to evaluate it. As stated above, this can be done in very formal ways (as in logic), but also in a more informal way. "Informal" is not the same as "without a system", "intuitively".
Our evaluation should allow us to decide whether we are willing to go along with the reasoning presented to us, or not. Does the "point" that is being made, rest upon acceptable assumptions, and are these assumptions (=premises) used together in a way that makes sense to us and to others? Even if the conclusion of an argument seems to be true, that doesn't mean that we agree with the argument as a whole:

"The Moon is orbiting around the Earth" is true, but if it is presented as a conclusion to an argument with the following premises: "Blue is a primary color", "The Moon always makes me feel blue", "I am orbiting around the Earth", we will probably not be willing to accept the argument as an example of proper reasoning.

All in all, we want to be able to assess the building blocks of an argument – its premises – and the way they are assembled together – the reasoning. Are the bricks of the wall of good quality? And are they the right ones for this particular purpose? And are they put together properly?

In *A Practical Study to* Argument (Wadsworth 2010), Trudy Govier introduces the so-called *ARG*-method, which allows us to evaluate arguments in a systematic, yet informal way. In this method we basically do three things:

- evaluating the premises,
- evaluating the relationship between premises and the conclusion,
- evaluating the reasoning from premises to conclusion.

For this evaluation we apply three criteria or conditions. If the argument meets all three, we call it *cogent*[*]. The three conditions are:

- the premises are **a**cceptable,
- the premises are **r**elevant,
- the premises provide **g**ood grounds for the conclusion.

[*] *Often the terms valid* and *sound* are used in argument evaluation. These terms related to formal logic: A valid argument follows the rules of logical deduction or reasoning, and a sound argument does so with true premises. However, argument evaluation this course is not confined to the criteria of formal logic. Therefore we use the term cogent.

Acceptability: applies to premises
Whether or not we want to accept certain premises varies from one argument to another. Acceptability may require some actual research into the subject matter, even for hypothetical situations and thought experiments: are we willing to accept certain conditions/contexts/variables, etc.?

Reason to accept a premise may be:

- Knowing it to be true ("the Moon is orbiting around the Earth")
- Assuming it may very well be true ("there is extra-terrestrial life")
- Knowing it is not true, but willing to accept it anyway ("there is intelligent life on Mars")
    - because the argument entails or is about a thought experiment that we are willing to engage in (e.g. about how Martians would look at our way of life);
    - because the argument involves a hypothetical situation (e.g. about what, given the actual conditions on Mars, would be necessary to sustain that kind of life).
    - Note that accepting a premise on these grounds requires further explanation. You cannot simply declare premises acceptable for the sake of argument and be done with it.

Relevance: applies to premises
A premise may be true, or acceptable in itself, but is it also relevant for the argument? This means: does it seem to support the conclusion? As we will see when we take a look at fallacies, many of them have to do with the relevance of premises. Is this particular premise indeed relevant to the issue, or is it merely used as a distraction, or to impress us, etc.? Particularly with elaborate sub-arguments we need to be certain that they actually "matter". After all, they may be convincing, or even *cogent*, but do they really work towards supporting the conclusion of the argument?

Good grounds: applies to conclusions
Obviously arguments all revolve around proper reasoning. Does the conclusion actually follow from the premises? Or: do the premises sufficiently support the conclusion?
It is possible to apply formal rules of logic when assessing whether a conclusion follows from the premises on good grounds. This is the case when we deal *with deductive arguments*. However, good grounds can also be a matter of degree, or *adequacy*: e.g. in *inductive arguments*: two or three black ravens may not justify a rule, but millions make reasonably good grounds. Also for *convergent arguments* and *analogies* good grounds might be a matter of degree.

Revealing the *pattern* of arguments can be a very powerful tool when evaluating arguments with the ARG method. Having a *pattern* first is especially useful for the evaluation of relevance and good grounds.

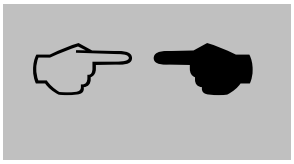
Fallacies

As you will notice by now, it is not always easy to apply the ARG-method; often it is debatable whether premises are acceptable or not, whether they are relevant or not and whether conclusions are on good grounds. In short, there is considerable room for discussion in the evaluation of argumentation. However, this does not mean that anything goes. Sometimes arguments are clearly flawed – intentionally or unintentionally. So, while there is no unequivocally right in this context, there is unequivocally wrong.

Some argumentative mistakes are so common that they have names (sometimes in Latin). Studying these so-called fallacies, can make us aware of some of the flaws we might encounter in the study of argumentation, but it might also help us understand the thin line between arguments that clearly do not work, and those that might, with a little good will and some argumentative ingenuity, be considered cogent.

Chapter X of Weston (E-reader) lists several classical *fallacies*. We will explore them and how they relate to the evaluation of argument by doing the second exercise below.

Exercise 1



Read chapter 3 of: Govier, T. (2005). A practical study of argument, Thomson Wadsworth, Belmont. *Afterwards, evaluate the following standardized arguments:*

All bachelors are unmarried
I am a bachelor
Thus I am unmarried

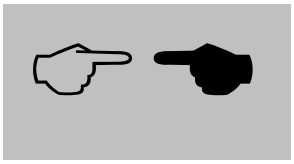
All bachelors are married
I am a bachelor
Thus I am married

All bachelors are unmarried
I am a bachelor
Thus I am married

All bachelors are unmarried
I am from London
Thus I am unmarried

All bachelors are unmarried
I am from London
I am a bachelor
Thus I am unmarried

Exercise 2



During this week's lecture a list of fallacies is presented. The suggested literature to work on this task also lists fallacies. Acquaint yourself with these lists.
Afterwards, search for arguments in "real-life" discourse. Here are some suggestions where you can look for arguments:

- *You could visit the websites of a few respectable newspapers of your choice (e.g. nytimes.com). You could go to the comment section of the respective articles and read the comments of other people. You can either try to find fallacies in the articles themselves (probably more difficult) or in the comments by other people (probably easier).*
- *You could check out blogs online and see whether you can detect fallacies (the blogs should deal with a reasonably serious topic).*

- *You could check out parliamentary debates (usually it is also possible to find them online) or other statements/interviews by politicians and try to find fallacies.*

Once you found a few arguments/statements, use (one of) the lists of fallacies to detect three to five fallacies committed in the arguments/statements.
To be prepared to report your results in class, you should:

- *be able to briefly present the context in which the fallacy is committed (i.e. what was the newspaper article/blog/political debate about),*
- *know the name of the fallacy,*
- *be able to explain why it is a fallacy,*
- *and be able to indicate whether the fallacy relates to acceptability, relevance or good grounds.*

During the tutorial session we will have a (hopefully entertaining) discussion about the mistakes people make who did not take this course.

… but don't forget to keep on thinking and don't overdo it:
http://existentialcomics.com/comic/9

Suggested reading:
Shulman, M. Love is a Fallacy (to be found in the course material section on Student Portal, not in the e-reader section)

Weston, A. (2000). Fallacies. In: A rulebook for arguments, Hackett, Indianapolis/Cambridge

In class exercise:
The four arguments standardized last week, will be evaluated using the ARG method.

Part III: Applying ARG

Task 3: Into the Wild: Academics

Arguments are everywhere. They are central to academe, politics, social relationships and many other forms of human interaction. However, they do not always come in the neat, easily analyzed packages that we have encountered until now. To make practical use of our argumentation analysis skills we must apply them to arguments in the wild, i.e. arguments as we encounter them in real life.

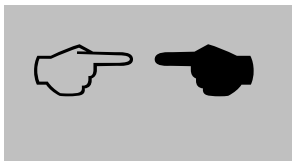
Real life arguments are often more difficult to analyze than their constructed counterparts; they are more difficult to standardize, and often have a less explicit structure. However, if we can successfully apply the ARG-method to these arguments we will have a powerful tool with which to evaluate them.

Hence the coming two weeks of the course will be devoted to examining arguments 'in the wild', and applying the ARG method to them. During this week we will scrutinize two academic arguments. For next week you will have to analyze an argument of your own and we will have a look at a political argument.

Academics

The academic texts that are the bread and butter of a UCM education also elaborate arguments; they seek to convince us of certain conclusions, and they do so by presenting evidence and reasons. As critical thinkers, we must decide whether or not the arguments that we encounter are good arguments. However, doing so is often difficult. Academic texts tend to be long and boring, and are sometimes not well structured and not well written. The ARG method can help us here. By reconstructing the argument a text is making, we can pin down its structure and evaluate it as we would do with any argument. In this way, the ARG method gives us a powerful tool for our academic toolkit.

Exercise 1



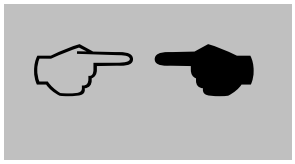
In the course material section on Student Portal, you can find a position paper written by a former UCM student (Position Paper – Contra Selective Abortion). Read this paper, and try to isolate the main premises and the conclusion of the argument (this will require some abstraction and simplification). Based on that produce:

- *a standardization,*
- *a pattern,*
- *an evaluation.*

Further instructions:

- *You do not need to include the part of the introduction that argues for regarding fetuses as human beings. We will take this assumption for granted, so you do not have to include it in the standardization and the pattern.*
- *You do not have to analyze the counterargument. That means that you only have to analyze the paper until page 4.*
- *Please try to keep the number of premises limited to a maximum of 15. (As mentioned above, this will require simplification and abstraction, but is the only way we can get an easily comprehensible overview of the structure of the paper)*

Exercise 2



Read the Introduction to Francis Fukuyama's "The End of History" (available as an E-reader). While reading, ask yourself the question which main premises Fukuyama provides for his conclusion that Capitalist Liberal Democracy is the ultimate form of government (again, this will require abstraction and simplification).

Task 4: Assignment I & Reverse Engineering: From Pattern to Paper

Instructions on first assignment

Assignment I: Argumentation Analysis

Evaluate a paper you have written yourself (of about 3000 words), and make recommendations for improvement, using the ARG model:

1. Give a short summary of your paper, explaining the research question and the way you answered it.
2. Standardize your paper by listing the premises, sub conclusions and conclusion in an abbreviated manner. (Try to limit the number of premises to a maximum of 15.)
3. Make a pattern.
4. Evaluate the argument using the ARG Model.
5. Make recommendations for improvements.
6. Attach a copy of the paper that you have analyzed for this assignment to the hard-copy of the assignment (do NOT attach it to the soft-copy, to avoid a high match on safe assignment).

A softcopy of this assignment needs to be handed via Student Portal and a hardcopy via the Office of Student Affairs. The exact date and time of the deadline will be announced on Student Portal during the course.

Grading Policy

In essence the grade of the analysis is based on three main aspects of the assignment:

1. the clarity of the standardization and pattern;
2. the quality of the analysis;
3. the specificity of the recommendations for improvement.

10-8.0 Excellent: The assignment introduces the context of the argument concisely, i.e. brief but clear. The standardization and the pattern are done correctly and are clear enough, i.e. the reader gets a good overview of the analyzed paper without having read the paper. In case the standardization and pattern lacks clarity, due to the fact that the low quality of the analyzed paper does not allow for a very clear pattern and standardization, the ARG analysis points out these weaknesses accurately. In general, the ARG criteria are applied correctly and the analysis is intellectually honest, critical, conducted thoroughly and in depth. Recommendations for improvement are specific and clearly follow from the preceding analysis.

7.9-7.0 Good: The context in which the argument is made is presented in a reasonably clear way. The standardization and pattern provide a good overview of the main argument of the analyzed paper, but entail minor flaws. The ARG-criteria are mainly applied correctly. The analysis is intellectually honest, critical, but could have been more rigorous and specific. Recommendations for improvement are provided clearly, follow from the preceding analysis, but could be more specific.

6.9-6.0 Satisfactory: The reader gets a rough idea about the context of the argument. The standardization and pattern present an overview of the argument in the analyzed paper, but the actual argument is not entirely clear without having read the original paper (and the ARG analysis does not rectify this). The standardization, pattern and application of the ARG-criteria entail some technical flaws. The ARG analysis is conducted in a relatively shallow way. Recommendations are given, but do not entirely follow from the preceding analysis and lack specificity.

5.9-5.5 Pass: The context of the argument is presented, but not very clearly. It is rather difficult (but not impossible) to get an overview of the argument without reading the analyzed paper. Technical flaws in the standardization, pattern and ARG analysis occur regularly. The analysis is superficial and recommendations for improvements are very vague.

5.4-0.0 Fail: The context is presented. The standardization and pattern are very unclear. Standardization, pattern and ARG-analysis entail so many (technical) flaws that it can be doubted whether the main concepts taught in the course have been understood. Recommendations for improvement do hardly make sense or are absent.

Some tips and suggestions for doing well on the first assignment

Regarding the selection of the paper it is essential to use one of your own papers, as it is far more educational for you to think about your own work than that of a stranger. The point is, after all, for you to write better arguments. The length of the paper is less important; 2500-3000 words is ideal, but the paper may be a bit shorter or longer. Also, the paper does not have to be good. It is important to keep in mind that the assessment of the assignment does not depend on the quality of the paper, but on the quality of the analysis.

In terms of length, no word limit is specified (on purpose). You should use as many words as you need to thoroughly evaluate your own argument. This does not mean that more is better. Nevertheless, it is likely that one could do very well with this assignment in about 2000 words, so you may take this as a guideline.

It follows from the grading criteria that when writing this final assignment, there are three categories of questions to keep in mind

1) Are the logical connections of premises, sub-conclusions and conclusions represented correctly in the pattern? Is the standardization done correctly? Have I succeeded in making a set of premises and a pattern that give readers a good overview of the paper without having to read the whole paper themselves? Can they make sense of what is going on, or do they not see the forest because of the trees? In this context it is important to reduce your paper to the smallest number of premises possible, ideally about 10 to 15. Go for the bare essentials to expose the inner logic of your argument.

2) Does the ARG-analysis rectify possible parts of the standardization and pattern that are unclear? Have I used the ARG method in an intellectually honest way to evaluate the paper? Am I really criticizing myself in a meaningful way? Readers will be wary of people who claim that their arguments are perfectly cogent. Not that you have to burn yourself down, but you should aim for serious engagement.

3) Am I using the ARG analysis to make sensible suggestions for improving my paper? Ideally, these suggestions should engage with the ARG analysis. Again, readers are looking for intellectual honesty and engagement, and not just for going through the motions.

Final Remarks

Often students have trouble composing patterns of their arguments in MS Word. While digital patterns are preferred it is also possible to hand in hand drawn patterns, provided they are neat. Just indicate in your digital copy that you will insert a hand drawn pattern in the hard copy you hand in.

You are relatively free in the form of the assignment, so please use that freedom to make something rigorous, clear and intellectually honest.

In-class exercise

During today's meeting, we will take the first steps towards constructing arguments and practicing how the tools introduced in the course can be used for paper writing. You will receive the standardized form of an argument and the corresponding pattern. In class you are supposed to come up with an outline for a possible paper, based on the materials you have received. You will also practice to summarize the argument in a written out paragraph. This will hopefully enable you to see how the tools introduced in this course can potentially be used for writing papers.

Part IV: Constructing Arguments

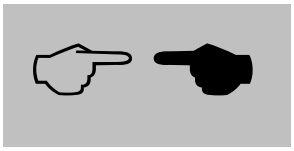
Task 5: From ARG to Argument

So far we have looked at existing arguments and evaluated them using the ARG method. But we can also do it the other way around. Rather than going from Argument to ARG, we can go from ARG to argument and from argument to paper. This is helpful when you write a paper. By planning your argument before you write, setting out the premises, making an elegant pattern and checking it for the ARG conditions , you are practically guaranteed a 9. All you need to do is write around the argument you have laid out, and add some footnotes. During this week's meeting we will experiment with using what we have learned to make good arguments.

Simply start by deciding what your conclusion will be. This is your thesis, the answer to your research question. From this you figure out what supports that conclusion. Are there many reasons, leading to the conclusion in a convergent pattern? What are they, and how do those reasons work? Or is this a case of a general regularity, principle or rule, applied to a particular case. What's the regularity, and how do you know it's really true, and how does it apply to this particular case? Once you have the general structure out there, start thinking about what evidence supports it. Make sure that all premises are acceptable, and that your paper makes clear why they are acceptable. Make sure everything is relevant and that all conclusions are on good grounds.

However, before we use the ARG-method as a tool to structure the argument of an entire paper, we should practice on a smaller scale.

Exercise



Create a short argument (maximum 10 premises; maximum 300 words) that could be the core reasoning of an academic paper. Try to create cogent argument. Prepare the argument in the following three formats:

- *Standardize, make a pattern and evaluate the argument yourself at home, so you can check if your argument is a good one. You do not need to make extra copies of the standardization and pattern, since this will not be distributed to your peers.*
- *Briefly note in bullet points how the argument you came up with could serve as an outline for a written text, e.g. create an outline. You do not need to make extra copies of the outline.*
- *Write the argument down as a short text. Make 4 copies of the text. The text will be handed out to your peers in class.*

During the tutorial it will be you peer's task to standardize your argument, make a pattern and evaluate it, based on the text you provided. The resulting pattern and standardization can eventually be compared to the one you prepared at home. This enables you to assess how well you can communicate the argumentative structure you had in mind in a written text.

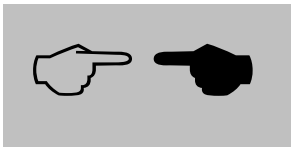
Some further, optional suggestions:

- *Try to draw the pattern first and write the outline and the paragraph afterwards. Reflect whether that helps structuring the paragraph.*
- *You can try to use different kinds of reasoning consciously (i.e. challenge yourself by consciously trying to include deductive structures, analogies, inductive structures and/or conductive structures). Can different, but similar versions of the argument be build when using different kinds of logical reasoning? If so, which one is preferable?*

Task 6: Preparing the Final Assignment

During this weeks meeting we will use the ARG-method as a tool to structure one of your papers, this will also help you prepare for the final assignment.

Exercise



During this period at UCM you will all have to write at least one paper. To help you do well, prepare an ARG pattern for the paper you intend to write. Pick a topic and decide what your research question and thesis/conclusion will be. From there, design a 10-15 premise argument. Make sure you can explain why the premises are acceptable and relevant, and that the conclusions and sub-conclusions are on good grounds. We will randomly select a few students to present their arguments for critical discussions. Please make enough copies of the standardization of the argument for your fellow group members. This task provides the basis for the final assignment!

Instructions on second assignment

Assignment II: Build and Argument

Use the feedback of meeting 6 to improve the assignment above. Put the assignment in a written from, in which you:

1. Give a short description of the context in which the paper is to be written.
2. Standardize the argument by listing the premises, sub-conclusions, and conclusion in an abbreviated manner. (Try to limit the number of premises to a maximum of 15.).
3. Make a pattern.
4. Optionally, you may add a section in which you explain why certain premises (conclusions) are acceptable and/or relevant (on good grounds), in case you think that explanation of these criteria is needed for the respective premises (conclusions).

A softcopy of this assignment needs to be handed via Student Portal and a hardcopy via the Office of Student Affairs. The exact date and time of the deadline will be announced on Student Portal during the course.

Grading Policy

In essence the grade of the analysis is based on two main aspects of the assignment:

1. The academic level and specificity of the argument;
2. The quality of the argument.

10-8.0 Excellent: The context in which the argument is made is clearly explained. The argument is made on a high academic level, is sophisticated and specific. Premises are perfectly formulated. No technical flaws in the standardization and premises can be detected. The reasoning is perfectly logical. The argument is self-explanatory and no flaws could be detected if the argument would be exposed to an ARG-analysis. If the argument is not entirely self-explanatory, a section is included that clarifies why possibly doubtful parts of the argument would nevertheless meet the ARG-criteria.

7.9-7.0 Good: The context in which the argument is made is presented in a reasonably clear way. The argument is made on a high academic level, but could be more specific. Premises and conclusions could also have been formulated more accurately. Minor flaws in the standardization and premises can be detected. The argument is not entirely self-explanatory and possibly doubtful parts are not sufficiently justified to rectify this. A possible ARG-analysis would find minor mistakes.

6.9-6.0 Satisfactory: The reader gets a rough idea about the context of the argument. The complexity of the argument could be higher and the argument (and formulations of premises/conclusions) could be more specific. The standardization and pattern entail regular flaws. Logical connections are not entirely clear. If an ARG-analysis would be applied to the argument mistakes in reasoning or doubtful acceptability/relevance of premises would occur regularly.

5.9-5.5 Pass: The context of the argument is presented, but not very clearly. The argument is not made on a particularly high academic level and premises/conclusions are rather broad. Standardization and pattern entail serious mistakes, but it is still possible to follow the reasoning with some good will. Nevertheless, an ARG analysis would detect serious mistakes, if it would be applied to the argument.

5.4-0.0 Fail: The context is presented. The academic level and complexity of the argument is very low. It is extremely difficult to follow the reasoning. Standardization, pattern and a hypothetical ARG analysis clearly show that the main concepts taught in the course have not been understood.

Appendix: Additional Exercises

Possible solutions to these additional exercises can be found in the course material section on Student Portal.

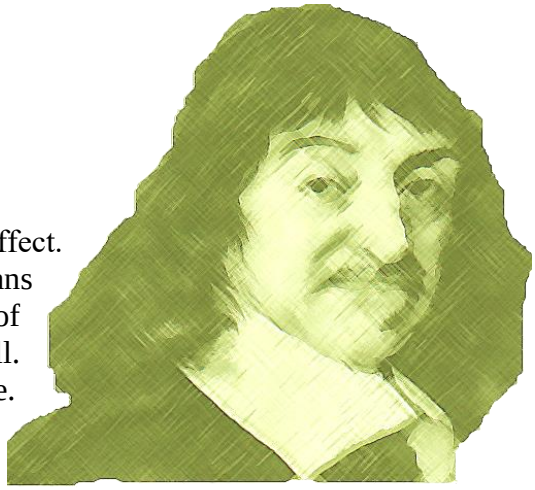
Additional Exercises: Task 1 & Task 2

The arguments below serve can be used to practice standardization & extracting patterns (task 1). Of course you can also try to evaluate them with the ARG-method and to practice detecting fallacies (week 2).

Possible Exercise

Analyze the arguments given below. Try answering the following questions:

- *How is it constructed or: what are its* **premises**, *what is its* **conclusion***?*
- *How can we* ***standardize*** *the argument; break it down into "singular statements": statements that contain only one bit of information?*
- *What are the indicator words?*
- *What is the* ***pattern*** *of this argument?*
- *What happens if we apply the ARG-method?*
- *Any Fallacies?*



Descartes' Proof of the Existence of God*

"Any cause must be at least as perfect as its effect. The idea of God is of a perfect being. This means the idea of God is perfect, as the idea of something that is perfect, is perfect itself as well. Now even this perfect idea must have a cause. Since I am far from perfect, I cannot be the cause of my idea of God – which means something else must exist that is the cause of my idea of God. Given what I said about causes and effects, this thing must be at least as

* A rather particular example of making a point is a category of arguments that used to be quite popular amongst philosophers, until it went out of fashion.
From the early days of Christianity on, the so-called "Proof of the Existence of God" provided many great thinkers with an opportunity to show their intelligence in general and mastery of logic in particular.
We should not overestimate the importance of these proofs in terms of their persuasive significance. The philosophers composing the proof never doubted the existence of God. But we can also hardly overestimate their importance as an expression of various theological and philosophical positions.
Even though philosophers and theologians seem to have lost interest in a Proof of the Existence of God in modern times, it happens to be the very herald of modern thinking. Rene Descartes (1596-1650), the very father of modernity, has formulated one of the most famous examples.

perfect as my idea of God. And since only God is at least as perfect as my idea of God, God must exist.

Bailing out the banks
The government should bail out banks on the verge of collapse. Doing so protects our savings, in a number of ways. First of all, if these banks go bankrupt their savers will loose their money. Secondly, any bankruptcies will cause other banks to go under as well, causing their clients to loose their money. Thirdly, such bankruptcies will cause the value of stocks to decline and devalue people's investments. The government has a duty to protect our savings, as the citizens have an interest in protecting their savings and the government has a duty to protect the interests of citizens.

National Gallery
If a painting is in the National Gallery it must be a great work of art. After all, the National Gallery has an expert staff, has been collecting for over 200 years and is visited by more than 18 million people a year. But my painting is not in the National Gallery, so it clearly isn't a great work of art. And as I also have bad taste in wine, for both these reasons, I am not a great artist.

Bored Roman Artists
A civilization is either in decline or gaining in prominence. And we know that Rome was not gaining in prominence around 400 AD. They hadn't conquered any new territory in decades and their sexual morals were getting decadent. So Rome was clearly in decline. And so it's safe to say that much bad art was produced. Countries produce bad art only if their artists are bored, and so we know that Roman artists must have been pretty bored around 400 AD.

Nationalism
Students at UCM are a close-knit community, as they spend a lot of time together, are all going through a similar experience and have many of the same goals and ambitions. Close-knit communities develop special attachments to each other, and since these attachments are constitutive of their identities, members of such communities have special moral responsibilities towards each other. Hence UCM students have special moral responsibilities towards each other. Nations are, of course, relevantly similar to UCM; their members share a common identity and spend a lot of time together. Hence members of nations also have special moral responsibilities towards each other.

Nobel Peace Prize
If you win the Nobel Peace Prize, you must be a good person. After all, the Nobel Peace Prize is given to people who have made a contribution to world peace, and people who make contributions to world peace are good people. Also, it's given out by the Norwegians, and they are excellent judges of character. As Henry Kissinger won the Nobel Peace Prize in 1973, he is a good person. Now, if you have never harmed anyone you should be regarded as a good person. Harming people is, after all quite evil. Hence it's fair to say that Henry Kissinger never harmed anybody.

Douglas Gasking's Proof of the Non-Existence of God

God does not exist. This is easy to see. After all, the creation of the world is the most marvelous achievement imaginable. Now the merit of an achievement is the product of (a) its intrinsic quality, and (b) the ability of its creator. And I think you'll agree that the greater the disability (or handicap) of the creator, the more impressive the achievement. The most formidable handicap for a creator would be non-existence. So, if we suppose that the universe is the product of an existent creator we can conceive a greater being — namely, one who created everything while not existing. And as God is the greatest being imaginable, he does not exist.

Additional Exercises: Task 3

Another place where we encounter argumentation in daily life is journalism. Most newspapers feature daily editorial and opinion pages, in which editorial boards and individuals of standing and intelligence seek to convince us of their opinion. These articles are often highly influential in shaping public opinion and even policy. Because they seek to convince as many people as possible, they often include elaborate arguments and the occasional fallacy. For this reason they are an interesting object of study for those interested in argumentation.

Possible Exercise
Below is an editorial from. The New York Times. See if you can isolate the most important parts of the argument the argument, standardize it, make a pattern and evaluate it using the ARG method.

From: The *New York Times, June 19, 2008*

Editorial
The Big Pander to Big Oil
It was almost inevitable that a combination of $4-a-gallon gas, public anxiety and politicians eager to win votes or repair legacies would produce political pandering on an epic scale. So it has, the latest instance being President Bush's decision to ask Congress to end the federal ban on offshore oil and gas drilling along much of America's continental shelf.

This is worse than a dumb idea. It is cruelly misleading. It will make only a modest difference, at best, to prices at the pump, and even then the benefits will be years away. It greatly exaggerates America's leverage over world oil prices. It is based on dubious statistics. It diverts the public from the tough decisions that need to be made about conservation.

There is no doubt that a lot of people have been discomfited and genuinely hurt by $4-a-gallon gas. But their suffering will not be relieved by drilling in restricted areas off the coasts of New Jersey or Virginia or California. The Energy Information Administration

says that even if both coasts were opened, prices would not begin to drop until 2030. The only real beneficiaries will be the oil companies that are trying to lock up every last acre of public land before their friends in power — Mr. Bush and Vice President Dick Cheney — exit the political stage.

The whole scheme is based on a series of fictions that range from the egregious to the merely annoying. Democratic majority leader, Senator Harry Reid, noted the worst of these on Wednesday: That a country that consumes one-quarter of the world's oil supply but owns only 3 percent of its reserves can drill its way out of any problem — whether it be high prices at the pump or dependence on oil exported by unstable countries in Persian Gulf. This fiction has been resisted by Barack Obama but foolishly embraced by John McCain, who seemed to be making some sense on energy questions until he jumped aboard the lift-the-ban bandwagon on Tuesday.

A lesser fiction, perpetrated by the oil companies and, to some extent, by misleading government figures, is that huge deposits of oil and gas on federal land have been closed off and industry has had one hand tied behind its back by environmentalists, Democrats and the offshore protections in place for 25 years.

The numbers suggest otherwise. Of the 36 billion barrels of oil believed to lie on federal land, mainly in the Rocky Mountain West and Alaska, almost two-thirds are accessible or will be after various land-use and environmental reviews. And of the 89 billion barrels of recoverable oil believed to lie offshore, the federal Mineral Management Service says fourth-fifths is open to industry, mostly in the Gulf of Mexico and Alaskan waters.

Clearly, the oil companies are not starved for resources. Further, they do not seem to be doing nearly as much as they could with the land to which they've already laid claim. Separate studies by the House Committee on Natural Resources and the Wilderness Society, a conservation group, show that roughly three-quarters of the 90 million-plus acres of federal land being leased by the oil companies onshore and off are not being used to produce energy. That is 68 million acres altogether, among them potentially highly productive leases in the Gulf of Mexico and Alaska.

With that in mind, four influential House Democrats — Edward Markey, Nick Rahall, Rahm Emanuel and Maurice Hinchey — have introduced "use it or lose it" bills that would force the companies to begin exploiting the leases they have before getting any more. Companion bills have been introduced in the Senate, where suspicions also run high that industry's main objective is to stockpile millions of additional acres of public land before the Bush administration leaves town.

This cannot be allowed to happen. The Congressional moratoriums on offshore drilling were put in place in 1981 and reaffirmed by subsequent Congresses to protect coastal economies that depend on clean water and clean coastlines. This was also the essential purpose of supplemental executive orders, the first of which was issued by Mr. Bush's father in 1990 after the disastrous Exxon Valdez oil spill the year before.

Given the huge resources available to the energy industry, there is no reason to undo these protections now.