I. Administrative
   A. Problem set #2 – due Thursday; will have this graded by next Tuesday
   B. Questions?

II. Finish Lecture 5 – Equivocation and Definitions

III. Fallacies of Relevance
   A. These arise when one makes a move in an argument—or more specifically, makes a supporting claim—that is not relevant to the conclusion in question. This can be done by one who is attempting to support that conclusion or by someone who wishes to reject it.

   1. How is this possible?

      a. Because we assume that the other participants in an argument are being cooperative and so relevant. As a result, we will work hard to find a way of regarding their claims as relevant, in accordance with Grice’s principles.

      b. In doing this, we introduce meaning into the argument that may have no business there because it does not support a view of the conclusion.

      c. Thus, we will often refrain from dismissing a contribution as irrelevant even when we should because we succeed in identifying an implicature that “makes sense” of it.
d. These fallacies can be employed intentionally, but often they are innocently employed.

2. **One key consideration:** these arguments *ad hominem* and appeals arguments are not always fallacious
   a. In certain circumstances (perhaps fewer with *ad hominem* than with appeals) the considerations adduced are in fact relevant and on point.
   b. This highlights the fact that you should be careful and cautious when evaluating pieces of reasoning that fit these profiles. Remember: context context context!

3. The book focuses on two types of fallacies that arise when one cashes in irrelevance for argumentative advantage: *ad hominem* fallacies and *appeals* fallacies.

B. **Arguments ad hominem**

1. An *argument ad hominem* is an argument directed against a participant in an argument and not against the reasoning they supply.
   a. These arguments can focus on denying the truth of a claim, their right to make the claims they make, or perhaps a person’s motives in arguing for their position.
   b. Our authors use these claims to frame consideration of *ad hominem* fallacies. These aims can also be understood as logically nested.
   c. **Logical Considerations:** What do these arguments have to do with truth? With evidence? With consistency?

2. When an *ad hominem* is employed for argumentative purposes, one must be on guard for *ad hominem fallacies*.
   a. An *ad hominem fallacy* is one where an argument is dismissed for reasons that have only to do with the speaker and not with the character of the argument itself.
   b. Arguments typically do not depend on what’s up with the speaker—validity and soundness are standards we apply in assessing the quality of an argument, and they do not involve
examination of the person who put forward the claim in question.

c. But it is good to be careful here: there are times when *ad hominems* can be employed effectively

   i. For example, if one can advance an argument that calls into question the integrity or expertise of the speaker

   ii. These challenges can provide at least inductive support for doubting the conclusion in this particular instance

   iii. Care must be taken when employing *ad hominems* for the purpose of dismissing another’s argument

d. Can we identify questions that could guide our consideration here?

3. Types of *ad hominem* fallacies

   a. **Deniers** – these deny the truth of a claim on the basis of some characteristic of the arguer (e.g., the truth of a charge leveled by a witness who one has good reason to believe did not see what he thinks he saw)

   b. **Silencers** – these deny a person’s right to say anything because they have no standing (e.g., if one of you spoke on behalf of Michigan State University without being sanctioned to do so)

   c. **Dismissers** – these dismiss the arguer not because they have no standing, but rather because of something about them that makes them unbelievable such as the lack of integrity (e.g., the truth of a charge leveled by a witness who is a convicted perjuror)

C. **Appeals arguments**

   1. There are appeals to *authority, popular opinion, tradition, emotion, pity,* and *ignorance,* to name six.

   2. Participants often make these in an attempt to prop up or *assure* their conclusions, and as before, they are not always bad. For example, an appeal to popular opinion would be admissible if the conclusion concerned someone’s popularity, and an appeal to the
Surgeon General would be admissible if the conclusion concerned the dangers of smoking.

3. Still, one must be careful when confronted with an appeals argument. It is a good idea to test the appeal relative to the following questions:

   a. Are the presuppositions of the appeal satisfied in this case? (E.g., is the person cited an authority on the topic? Is this the kind of question that can be settled by such an appeal?)

   b. Are the facts of the appeal in order?

   c. Why is an appeal of this sort being made at all?

4. If the appeal does not measure up relative to these questions, then we have reason to question its relevance to the argument at hand.