Identify the flawed logic in the sentences below by selecting one of the following logical fallacies:

- Ad Hominem (Personal Attack),
- Hasty Generalization,
- Begging the Question,
- False Analogy, and
- or Either/Or Simplification (False Dichotomy).

To help you in this process, visit the Writing Center’s resources on How to Support an Argument and Avoid Logical Fallacies and How to Avoid Hasty Generalizations and Other Logical Fallacies. Then, check your answers on the next page.

**Identify the Logical Fallacy Below**

1. The people who favor the tax-increase bill will give you lots of reasons why they think it should be passed. But, in fact it is a lousy bill that should be defeated because it Senator Whitney Berton supports it. You know him, the guy who is widely suspected of being guilty of tax evasion.

2. Students from Jefferson High School are all so friendly and helpful. I’m sure of this because just last week I got lost and a very helpful and friendly student got me all straightened out.

3. Despite the women’s movement in the 1970s, women still do not receive equal pay for equal worth. Obviously, all such attempts to change the status quo are doomed to failure.

4. We could improve the undergraduate experience with co-ed dorms since both men and women benefit from living with the opposite gender.

5. It should be against the law to fire a woman because she gets pregnant. They don’t fire a man for fathering a child.

6. Legalization of abortion will lead to murder of the old and the physically and mentally handicapped.

7. We may support this petition for a Gender Studies major, or we may turn our backs on progress, reject the petition and suffer the consequences.

To check your understanding, please go to the next page for the answers and rationale.
1. **Ad Hominem** – The assumption made in this example is that if the speaker (Senator Whitney Berton) proves to be unacceptable (suspected of being guilty of tax evasion) in some way, then his statements must also be unacceptable. Attacking the author of the statement is a technique to shift the attention from the true issue (tax-increase bill).

2. **Hasty Generalization** – This statement is very dangerous because the writer draws a conclusion (all students from Jefferson High School are friendly and helpful) based on insufficient evidence (only one student was helpful and friendly).

3. **Hasty Generalization** – This statement is also illogical because the writer draws a conclusion (all attempts to change the status quo are doomed to failure) on the basis that “women still do not receive equal pay for equal worth.” Does the writer know if every woman still does not receive equal pay?

4. **Begging the Question** – Here the writer makes a statement that assumes the very question being argued (Can we improve the undergraduate experience with co-ed dorms?) has already been proven. The writer does not prove that both men and women can benefit from living together in co-ed dorms. Instead, the writer uses his/her claim as a reason.

5. **False Analogy** – Many analogies are merely descriptive and offer no proof of connection between the two things being compared. For example, the circumstances that surround a woman’s pregnancy are not the same circumstances that surround a man when he fathers a child.

6. **Slippery Slope** – This arguer is clearly guilty of a slippery slope fallacy because he/she claims that legalizing abortion will inevitably lead to murdering the elderly and so on. The arguer does not provide evidence that this will happen but makes an assumption based on just taking the first step (legalizing abortion).

7. **Either/Or Simplification** – The arguer suggests here that only two options exist: one can support the petition or one can reject it and suffer the consequences. What about the other explanations or solutions to this problem? If the reader does not support the petition, is he/she really turning their backs on progress? Aren’t there other ways for the reader to support gender equality and gender studies even if he/she does not support a Gender Studies major?