The document that I have chosen to analyze is the welcoming statement written by Young-A Jo, Director of the Asian Pacific American Coalition (APAC), found on the fourth page of the *2005-2006 Asiantation Handbook*. In order to agree/follow Jo’s message, the reader must first believe that Asian American issues are important and that having Asian American facilities and institutions at the University are things that are both necessary and worth fighting for.

His welcoming statement begins by addressing incoming freshmen and welcoming them to an “exciting time.” He goes on to announce the opening of an Asian American Culture Center and the establishment of an Asian American Studies Program for the upcoming year. His use of language throughout his statement is straightforward, but at the same time, rather vague. It is clear that his message is geared specifically towards conveying the struggle of the few for the greater good of many (namely, those who were able to successfully secure an Asian American Culture Center for the rest of the student body) as well as towards encouraging the reader to take similar action—to “get involved and be active in whatever [he or she] feel[s] passionate about (implying similar Asian American issues but not limiting the reader to them).” The greatest fault in Jo’s welcoming message, however, lies in his lack of substance.

While Jo’s first two paragraphs are adamant about the importance Asian American issues and the sacrifice of students who fought for them, he fails to ever mention why such issues are important or worth fighting for. Furthermore, his argument for refuting what he views as a general indifference towards Asian American issues is to simply argue that such issues are important. His third paragraph, encouraging incoming freshmen to get involved in “whatever [they] feel passionate about” and to simply “fight for what [they] believe in” also seems to detract from his original point about the importance of Asian American issues.

Rereading Young-A Jo’s statement again as a whole however, reveals, strangely enough, that his weaknesses are also his strengths. What really struck me most about this welcoming statement is how ambiguous it is. Depending on the reader, it can really be
taken a number of different ways. A student like myself who has taken courses from the Asian American Studies Program and used the Asian American Cultural Center will immediately see the importance of fighting for these institutions while other students, perhaps those with no knowledge of Asian American Studies, may never make that connection and simply see the welcoming statement as yet another opportunity to get involved socially and academically.