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MW 622 Varieties of Islam and Christian Mission

A. H. Mathias Zahniser

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Varieties of Islam and Christian Mission

November 12, 2002
Dr. Mathias Zahniser

Spring 2003
102 Hunter Circle
Wilmore, Kentucky 40390-1071
MW622MZ_Office@asburyseminary.edu
(859) 858-2184

Office Hours: Mondays 9-11:30 ET; Other Times by Arrangement

This syllabus may be amended prior to the beginning of class.

Attention
The development of this extended learning syllabus is intended for distribution to members of the course and others by my permission. It is not intended for general distribution on the internet. Permission to copy, in whole or in part, must be requested from the professor (Mathias Zahniser). Thanks for honoring these instructions.

Welcome to MW622 ExL: Greetings and best wishes for a fruitful pilgrimage together. In the world today, Islam is a topic of uncontested significance. People influenced by Islam represent a major portion of the world’s people. They are present in a plethora of people groups, cultures, locations, and degrees of religious fervor and intensity. In addition to having been influenced by Islam, they have at least one other common reality: they are people whom God loves and for whom Christ died. This course focuses on the diversity of Islam and on the implications of that diversity for Christian response. Christians can cooperate in various ways with most people influenced by Islam, we can witness with confidence and wisdom to most of these people, with others we may need to make alliances with more moderate Muslims to resist them. I will suggest avenues for fulfilling the Great Commission among the variety of Muslims we will learn about, none of these suggestions will be final. All will be open to your scrutiny and input. It is my hope that this course will be an occasion for the operation of the “fellowship of the Holy Spirit” (2 Corinthians 13:13). Thank you for joining us!

Printing this Syllabus
As you read this document its format makes sense on a full screen (or at least it does to me). If you print the syllabus out, however, it will break sentences in funny places and look less organized. Even though we lose a little in "translation," you still may find it valuable to have a hard copy of the syllabus.

About Me
This is my first experience at teaching in the virtual classroom. I hope you will pray for me. I will be praying for you. I would ask that you extend some grace to me as we learn to communicate and work in this medium. I’m a dedicated Mac user, so for all you IBM buffs out there, we may have to do a little extra bit to make sure that our documents are all compatible. Let me know if you get documents from me that you can’t read, and I’ll let you know too. Also, I’ll
be looking forward to your comments on the class. Are the assignments and discussions working? Are you having problems? Let me know. Even though I am new at it, I am eager to embark on this journey because my way of teaching has always involved a good bit of written interaction with my students. I have always found students to be the most interesting feature of my teaching. I will tell you a little bit about myself on the video that accompanies your course materials. Here let me say that I majored in Islamic studies in my doctoral program at Johns Hopkins University (1967-73). I have been teaching courses on Islam since 1971, first at Central Michigan University, then at Greenville College, and finally here at Asbury. I also served as a missionary for a short term. You can find out more about me by looking up my resume. You should also post a resume and picture of yourself. If you want to know how to do that contact your technical resource person, Andy Adams (see below).

Office Hours
Mondays 9-11:30 ET; Other Times by Arrangement. This can be changed if it proves inadequate. I will be keeping virtual office hours on Monday mornings from about 9 am to 11:30 Eastern Time. During this time I will be logged into the system and will be responding to all of your postings (in the order in which they were received). I will also be checking on the class periodically throughout the week. However, Tuesday and Thursday are my writing days. I am not available to students on those days. I will let you know if I am going to be away during my office hours or for any extended time during the semester. Please let me know if you will be away for any extended periods as well. We can also arrange times to chat or to speak via telephone either during my office hours or by special appointment. Just let me know if you would like to set that up. If you have an urgent matter, please flag your email with the word Urgent in the subject line.

Please use your Classroom, Office, or other ExL connections to contact me. I give you my phone number in case of emergency. In some cases I will be out of town. I will let you know when these occasions arise. Usually I will be in touch with you from wherever I am. You can also contact your academic coach, Amy Jo Adams, or some other one of the ExL staff identified below.

ExL Support Team
The following team members are here to serve you and me as we negotiate this course together. Please feel free to call on them for needs you may have.
For technical support contact Andy Adams, ExL_Support@asburyseminary.edu.
For questions related to the ExL program contact Kevin Osborn, ExL_Director@asburyseminary.edu, or Amy Jo Adams, ExL_Coach@asburyseminary.edu.
For library reference support contact Hannah Kirsch, Hannah_Kirsch@asburyseminary.edu. For interlibrary loans contact Dot James, Dorothy_James@asburyseminary.edu. Your local librarian may also be able to help you with interlibrary loans.

Obtaining Library Materials and Reference Assistance
All ExL students are encouraged to make use of their local library. However, if such services are unavailable or inadequate, ExL students may also obtain library books and journal articles through the mail from Asbury Theological Seminary’s B. L. Fisher Library. All requests for books and journal articles should be emailed to the ExL Reference Librarian, Hannah Kirsch
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(Hannah_Kirsch@asburyseminary.edu). Hannah is also available to assist ExL students with reference requests such as how to find citations for books and articles, how to use the various online databases available to ExL students, or how to begin looking for information on a specific topic.

To request material from the B.L. Fisher Library, begin by searching the library’s WebPac (online catalog of the library’s holdings) or one of the journal databases available on the ExL Virtual Library webpage (found in the Resource Center of your ExL classroom). Then send an email to Hannah citing the sources you need. If you require help searching the databases, do not hesitate to ask. Please allow 5-10 business days for all requests to be filled. ExL students are billed for the cost of photocopies (5 cents per page) and the cost of shipping. Express mail services (price varies according to weight) and faxing ($1.50 for the first page and 25 cents for each additional page plus photocopy charges) are also available, but material will generally take 1-2 days from the receipt of the request to be processed. Your local library and librarians may be able to help you with your needs for the kind of assignments you have in this course.

Plan ahead and make your requests early. I have included a supplementary bibliography among the resources for this course. It resides in the Course Center (see below). This in addition to the annotated bibliography included on the World of Islam CD and the bibliographical references in the three required books should give you adequate resources for any assignments you may have.

Windows and Icons

It is important for you to learn about the windows and icons that make up our classroom and my office. If you have questions about the use of these windows and icons, please contact one of the ExL team.

The Course Center

The Course Center will contain a copy of the syllabus as well as all class modules. All the modules will not appear in this window at the beginning of the course. I don’t want to deal with a number of modules at once. I will try to keep at least one ahead of where we are so that if you have extra time you can work ahead. Just keeping up will be enough of a chore for all of us!

The Discussion Center

The Discussion Center will be used for all public communications. Anytime you have a question or comment about the course, the modules, the assignments, or anything else of interest to your classmates and the professor, you should post it to the Discussion Center.

The Team Folder

The Team Folder represents a limited version of the Discussion Center. If the full complement of ten persons signs up for the class, we will divide into two teams. A team leader will handle the Team Folder in the way I will handle the Discussion Center. The Team Folder will be where a team can put together the work they do together. It will be shared with the other members of the class and the instructor only by consensus of team members. Most assignments will involve your Team Folder.

The MW622MZ Office

The MW622MZ Office is for private correspondence between you and me, the professor. It will contain items you do not want your classmates to read or need them to see.
The Prayer Folder

This is a folder that I have asked Jeremy Lucas to create for us. Any needs or prayer requests, praises, etc. can be placed into this folder so that we as a class can pray for each other, for our Muslims guides, and for any other concerns that emerge in relation to the class or our lives in general.

The Archives Center

The Archives Center will be used for storing conversations that have already taken place during the course of the semester. This keeps the Discussion Center from becoming too unmanageable.

The Chat Center

The Chat Center is intended primarily for real-time interaction among students. You can get together with other members to study, ask questions, or to explore topics. Remember: None of the conversations carried on in this location are ever saved. By highlighting the whole contents of the chat window and saving it in another First Class document after the chat, however, you can preserve what has been chatted.

The Resource Center

The Resource Center provides access to a number of specific tools available to all ExL students. These include access to the B.L. Fisher Library, chapel services in Estes Chapel, ExL Updates, Guidelines for Success, Helpful Hints, Interesting Links, a Powerpoint Viewer, and a Real Audio Player.

Course Description

A survey of contemporary varieties of Islam and their historical, geographical, and cultural roots with reference to appropriate and alternative ways of witnessing to people influenced by the varieties of Islam. In addition to reading, writing, conferring with colleagues and your instructor, you will be asked to interview some Muslims with questions about interpreting passages of the Qur’an related eventually to the final exam. Other items that come up in the course of the semester you may want to ask your guide about. The guides represent a source for your learning and not opportunities for evangelism. A good discipline would be to reserve comments about your faith for points in your relationship where they fit nicely into a cordial conversation or when your guide asks you a question. By prayer we all will share in with you, God will open up opportunities. If God does not do so, we can all wait patiently and prayerfully. A timely word can be more fruitful than a forceful word.

Course Outcomes

As a result of this course, you, the student, will be able to identify distinctive features of the types of Islam studied. You will be able to suggest ways Christians can relate to each type and ways relevant to all types. You will be able to carry on a meaningful explanation of Christian faith to a Muslim in your context as God gives opportunity and help (See the last two sentences in the previous paragraph). You will be able to evaluate a public debate between Christians and Muslims as to what varieties of Islam surfaced and how effectively both the Muslims and Christians represented their positions.
Course Requirements

Modules

There are seven modules in this course: They cover 1) a short history of Islam; 2) an introduction to the Qur’an; 3) an introduction to “Mainstream” or “Moderate” Islam; 4) an introduction to Folk Islam; 5) an introduction to Shi’ite Islam; 6) an introduction to political Islam; and 7) an introduction to liberal Islam.

Assignments

During each module you will be assigned 4-MAT responses to some of the readings. I have posted guidelines for the 4-MAT responses in the Course Center. I also expect you to interact with each other and with me on the topics of each module. Often I will suggest how this is to be done. You will be evaluated on the basis of my assessment of the quality of your participation.

At the end of each module you will write an essay of from 6 to 10 pages (variable spaced font, double spaced, one inch margins, and 12 point type) entitled, for example, “Mission to Mainstream Muslims.” You will be expected to use correct documentation for the sources you cite. See Guidelines below about a standard form. A final exam will be based on the viewing of a video of a CSpan dialogue featuring Christians pressing Muslims to react to the September 11, 2001 terrorizing of the US. You will in this exam assess the positions of the several Muslim participants based on your knowledge of the variety of Muslims, suggest how the Muslims might better have responded, and how the Christians might have interacted with the Muslims more effectively.

You are required to find a Muslim to serve as a guide or host for the course of whom you can ask questions that arise throughout the semester. You will be asked to ask your host about themes and concepts in the Qur’an. You will not be examined over this relationship. It will, however, contribute to the value of your participation in written assignments and to the quality of your interaction with fellow students and the instructor. If you find this assignment impossible in your context, we will work with that together. One alternative would be to find someone to interact with through your internet connection. A face-to-face relationship including visits to a mosque surpasses in value an internet relationship, but the latter will suffice when the former escapes us.

Summary and Percentage of the Grade

1. 4-MAT Responses 25%
2. Class participation 25%
3. End-of-module Papers 25%
4. Final exam 25%

Grading Criteria

Asbury Seminary defines grades using the following criteria (Catalog, p. 24).

A= Exceptional work: outstanding or surpassing achievement of course objectives
B= Good work: strong, significant achievement of course objectives
C= Acceptable work: essential achievement of course objectives
D= Marginal work: minimal or inadequate achievement of course objectives
F= Unacceptable work: failure to achieve course objectives
A plus (+) or minus (–) indicates positions between categories (for example, B+ = very good; C– = slightly below acceptable, etc.).

Expectations

I pirated the following paragraph from my colleague Catherine Stonehouse’s syllabus for “The Pastor and Christian Discipleship” (CD511X).

“For some of you, learning through ExL is a new experience. In the pioneer spirit this course requires, let me share a quote from Kentucky’s own Daniel Boone: ‘I can’t say as ever I was lost, but I was bewildered once for three days.’ If we get by with only three days of bewilderment, I’ll be ecstatic! Let’s all just take a deep breath and expect the unexpected at times. To reduce any anxiety connected with this class (did someone say anxiety?), let me make clear to you what you can expect from me, and what I expect of you.”

On Expectations, see the devotional for Module 1 on the class CD.

What you can expect of me

1. Prompt replies to questions and postings (i.e., usually generated during my next office hours after receiving the posting).
2. Interaction, participation, and direction in the ongoing discussions that will occur over the course of the semester.
3. Prompt feedback and assessment on assignments.
4. Occasional bloopers as I learn this mode of teaching and interact with the class.
5. My energy and excitement as we engage in studying and learning the material at hand.

What I expect of you

1. Participation in online discussion both in the Discussion Center, in your Team Folder, and in our online chats.
2. On time completion of assignments.
3. Your honest questions when you don’t understand the material or the instructions.
4. Your patience as we work together in this medium.
5. Your willingness to engage in issues you may find stretching and challenging.

What I expect us to get personally from the class

1. A new, different, and expanded understanding of the Islam and people influenced by it.
2. Some possible witness and relationship procedures that will give us more confidence and effectiveness in our relationships with Muslims.
3. Insight into how mission to Muslims of several varieties could be fruitfully carried out.
4. A team of prayer supporters and colleagues in the endeavor of reaching Muslims that may last beyond the boundaries of this class.

Guidelines

1. Assignments. All assignments are due by the stated due dates. These are outlined below for your reference. Late assignments will be penalized one third of a letter grade per day late. For example, a B paper turned in one day late becomes a B-.
2. Postings. Postings in the Discussion Center and in your team folder should be limited to between 50 and 75 words.
3. Grammar. I expect us (myself included) to use proper English grammar at all times. This includes complete sentences, punctuation, capitalization, and spelling. For assistance in this area, consult a standard style guide such as Carole Slade, *Form and Style: Research Papers, Reports, and Theses* (11th ed., Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1999). If you use poor grammar you can expect it to be reflected in your final grade.

4. Discussion. A crucial element of this course is the dialogue we enter into with each other. All discussions will be characterized by encouragement, gentleness, patience, persistence, and hope. This does not mean that we will not challenge, confront, or question each other. It does mean that these things will be undertaken for the purpose of growth and stimulation to think and understand the subject at hand more deeply and more intimately. Love of God and neighbor enhances learning.

**Required Reading**

Required reading will be taken from the following resources in accordance with the schedule of modules identified below. Notice the annotated bibliography in *The World of Islam* CD-ROM. I have posted an additional bibliography in the Course Center. The CD also contains the Qur’an we will read in Module 2. If you want to buy a copy of the Qur’an, go to [www.islamicmedia.com](http://www.islamicmedia.com). You can order a Qur’an by going to “browse” on the left of their web page and clicking on “Qur’an.” Several options show up on the Qur’an page. I recommend the A. Yusuf Ali translation. An English only edition is available for $4.95, though that is not shown #BYAE). If you even dream of learning Arabic, I recommend you get either the $19.95 or the $14.95 edition. This edition is same as the one in your CD. Because of its King-James-Bible English, you can tell whether it addresses Muhammad (singular “thou/thee”) or a group (plural “you/ye”).” American Muslims recognize this edition. If you already have a Qur’an, you may certainly make use of it rather than the translation on the CD. If your edition is published by the Ahmadiyyah sect, check with the translation on the CD, if your response hinges upon a particular verse. The Ahmadiyyah sect is to Islam as the Mormon church is to orthodox Christianity.

**Items to Purchase**


A video from CSPan of a Christian-Muslim dialogue in Washington, DC.

**Required Reading by Module**

For assignments see the specified modules.

Perceptions of Islam: Threat, Challenge, or Misunderstood Ally?” from Nichols, Bruce, ed. *The Evangelical Review of Theology* in the “Books and Articles” section.

**Assignments**
Due dates for the assignments are indicated in blue. Find detailed guidance for the assignments in the guidelines for Module 1.
1. Send a personal introduction message to others on your team. Due by 5:00 p.m. on Wednesday, February 12.
2. Respond to at least two other students’ personal messages. Due by 9:00 a.m. on Monday, February 17.
3. Using the 4-MAT response form, respond to Colin Chapman’s article, “Christian Perceptions of Islam,” in your *World of Islam CD* and post one personal observation and one question by 5:00 p.m. on Friday, February 14.
4. Respond to at least two others of your colleague’s postings by 9:00 a.m. on Monday, February 17.

*The World of Islam CD.* *Survey of Islam.* Read all 15 chapters!

**Assignments**
1. Using the 4-MAT response form, respond to 4 chapters of the “Survey of Islam” and post one question and one response to your Team Folder by 5:00 p.m. on Friday, February 21.
2. Respond to at least two others of your colleague’s postings by 9:00 a.m. on Monday, February 24.

**Module 2 (February 24-March 10).** The place of the Qur’an in Islamic faith and of some of its themes relevant to the varieties of Islam and Christian Mission among Muslims.

**Connection with Muslims**

**Assignment** due February 28 by 5:00 p.m. Find the details in the guidelines for Module 2.
By Friday, February 28 at 5:00 p.m., send me a memo, telling me about the attempts you have made to contact a Muslim or group of Muslims to serve as guide(s) or host(s) for your journey this semester.


**Assignment** due by 9:00 a.m. on Monday, March 3. Find the details in the guidelines for Module 2.
Post a 4-MAT response to my office (MW622ExL) for these readings. Then post one question and one personal response from the second page of your 4-MAT response to your Team Folder.

**End-of-the Module Essay**

**Assignment** due Monday, March 24 at 5:00 p.m.
Write an essay of from 6 to 10 pages entitled, “The Qur’an and Christian Mission,” featuring primarily your own conclusions from your reading of the Qur’an about its importance for Christian mission and witness among people influenced by Islam. The following resources may help you with this task.


Module 3 (March 10-March 24). “Mainstream” or “moderate” Islam and its drive for religion as a way of life.


Resources (Not required) for your end-of-module paper.


The World of Islam CD. Course: John Elder, The Biblical Approach to the Muslim, Lessons 1, 4-9.

Module 4 (March 24-April 7). “Folk Islam” and Sufism and their focus on practical life issues.


Assignment due, March 31 by 5:00 p.m.

By Monday, March 31 by 5:00 p.m. post a 4-MAT response to my office (MW622ExL) for this reading. On the first page, summarize the main themes of Sufism relevant for Christian witness found in Schimmel’s book. Then post one question and one personal response from the second page of your 4-MAT response to your Team Folder. If you have been able to ask questions of your Muslim guide or host, indicate in this posting at least one question you asked and what the answer was.

Assignment due by 9:00 a.m. on Wednesday, April 2.

Respond to at least two postings from other members of your team.


Assignment due Monday, April 7 at 5:00 p.m.

Write an essay of from 6 to 10 pages (variable spaced font, double spaced, one inch margins, and 12 point type) entitled, “Popular Islam and Christian Mission.”

Resources (Not required) for your end-of-module paper.


Spring Break (April 7-11). If you have heavy Holy Week duties next week, you might try to get your course work done this week. I’ll be in my office on April 7 as usual.

Module 6 (April 21-May 5). Political Islam and its concern for a divine order for human society.


Resources (Not required) for your end-of-module paper.


The World of Islam CD. Books and Articles: Evangelical Review of Theology, John D. C. Anderson, “Does the Church Make it Difficult for Muslim Enquirers?”

Module 7 (May 5-May 19). Liberal Islam and its desire for congruence and relevance in the contemporary global context. (204 pages).


Mehdi Bazargan, “Religion and Liberty,” 73-84.


Benazir Bhutto, “Politics and the Muslim woman,” 107-111.


Resources (Not required) for your end-of-module paper.


Final Exam (May 19-22).

4-MAT Reflections

A 4-MAT reflection, named for Bernice McCarthy's 4-MAT system (McCarthy 1987), consists of two single-spaced typed 8 1/2 x 11 pages. You will use 12 point font and the margins will be 1 inch all around. You can turn these in as attachments to email or post them as First Class documents in my office when they are due. For due dates see the syllabus. The first page must contain one heading, while the second page contains three. When laid out next to each other they will look something like this:

| 1st Page: Abstract Summary | 2nd Page:
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Concrete Stories/ Memories Evoked by reading</td>
<td>Reflection Expressed in Questions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Action: What I Must Do with what I learned?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1st Page:
Abstract Summary

2nd Page:
- Concrete Stories/ Memories Evoked by reading
• Reflection Expressed in Questions
• Action: What I Must Do with what I learned

Here are some guidelines adapted from a colleague of mine, Dr. Donald Joy, to help you get a better grasp of the four elements in the 4-MAT system.

(a) **ABSTRACT: Reader’s Digest Summary.** Simply summarize the content of the assigned reading in your own words. Avoid just indicating the topics. There should be NO personal commentary or attempt to evaluate the content of the materials. Just summarize what the author or authors say. Include as many of the key concepts and ideas as you can. Strive to be both comprehensive and intensive. Your summary should be stylistically correct, coherent and clear. The abstract should be one single-spaced page in length. Sorry, no type fonts below number 12 please! Some assignments include more than one chapter and some more than one author. Summarize the whole reading assignment. The readings are all related, so you can integrate the readings into one summary on page one.

Remember that meaning making requires first that you transform the reading materials into your OWN words. Effective "note taking" is more than capturing another person's words; it requires transforming a communication into your own language and symbols. Use explicit and visible QUOTE marks to identify the author's words. All other written material not clearly cited should be your own constructions and abstracted summaries of what you read.

(b) **CONCRETE STORIES and MEMORIES EVOKED BY READING: Get Vulnerable!** Describe one or two personal experiences which reading this material reminded you of. Here is your chance to be a storyteller. Tell it here in “first person,” describing action, quoting exact words you remember hearing or saying. Be as specific and concrete as you can, including who, what, when, where details. Make sure, however, that your personal anecdotes are clearly grounded in the concepts of the reading assignment. The “Concrete” section should not exceed half a page.

If you can connect what you are reading and hearing with what you have previously lived or observed, you will be profoundly changed by the class. If you cannot connect the semester with past and present personal realities, you will never be able to teach or use what you are learning with any conviction and effectiveness.

(c) **REFLECTION EXPRESSED IN QUESTIONS: What questions popped up** as you read this material? Keep a rough note sheet at hand as you read so you can write them down. Then simply list three or four of them. Your questions may be critical or grounded in spontaneous curiosity or naive yearning for solutions. Make sure, however, they relate directly to the MATERIAL CONTENT of the reading materials NOT to the experience(s) you have just described in b. This section should take up about one fourth to a third of a page.

(d) **ACTION: WHAT I MUST DO WITH WHAT I LEARNED. So What Are You Going to Do about it?** All ministry-related learning MUST lead to acts of ministry—whether through transformation of your inner person or your acquiring of useful knowledge or skills. Here describe what you simply must DO if you keep faith with what you have now discovered as a result of reading this material. Ideally, your actions will comply with the acronym MAST. They
will be **Measurable, Attainable, Specific and achievable within a given Time frame.** For example, after reading about Islam’s concern about God’s order for human life, you might commit yourself as follows: “For the next month during my quiet time, I will explore passages in the New Testament related to God’s order for human life.” Do not report reflective responses like “I need to learn or read more about the Kingdom of God.” This section should comprise one fourth to one third of a page.

**Application reflections.**

Part of your task is to apply the reading material—even though it is all about Islam—to the life of the church and the practice of Christian ministry in your anticipated or actual setting. For this reason, it is important that the reflections on the second page of your 4-MAT INTEGRATE with what you have already experienced in ministry. Even though you have no Muslims in your context and little opportunity to interact with them, you can reflect on the dimensions of your ministry, theology, or Christian practice relating to what Muslims are struggling with. For example, you may run across the statement by a Muslim that God does not reveal Himself in the Qur’an, He only reveals his will. You may decide to read the Bible for a period of time starting with a particular book, looking for evidence that God reveals himself in the Bible. You could also then commit yourself to read a portion of the Qur’an looking for evidence that God reveals himself. Maybe the Qur’an will turn out to be more revealing of God than Muslims believe it is. This could provide you with some good questions to ask your Muslim guide. Taking this important integrative function of your reflections seriously will prevent you from simply making "off the cuff" responses. I have specified the length of these application reflections partly to nudge you in the direction of selecting the most essential dimensions of the reading material. You may not include any commentary or evaluation on page one of your 4-MAT Reflection because one of the most basic tasks of ministry involves accurate discernment of what others are saying. Always understand the “Other” before reflecting and responding. Page one will therefore contain only a summary in your own words of what the author or authors of the reading material have written.

McCarthy, Bernice