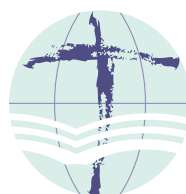# AGST Alliance

Assignment presentation
& writing style

AGST
ALLIANCE

www.agstalliance.org

Assignment presentation and writing style
A basic guide for AGST Alliance students

This is a *basic* guide to the presentation of your assignments.

For greater detail about assignment style and format, and some of the intricacies involved (e.g. in references to multi-author books, etc.), the key reference book is K. Turabian, *A Manual for Writers of Term papers, Theses, and Dissertations, 9th Edition.* 2018. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. Turabian has two styles and AGST Alliance uses the "Author-Date" style. It is well worth investing in a copy of this book – for the referencing information and also a wealth of research and writing hints.

As well, there are a number of websites which summarise the format expectations for the difference styles. Type 'citation style' into a web-browser. One such is: http://www.press.uchicago.edu/books/turabian/turabian_citationguide.html. (Make sure you click on the 'Author-Date tab.)

A. Assignment / page layout

- Standard assignment presentation is A4 size.

- Assignments must be type-written, unless you have prior permission from a module facilitator to handwrite your work.

  - Use 1½ -line spacing.

  - An acceptable common font to use is Times New Roman, 12 point size. [Avoid using fancy fonts except for occasional special effects.] Use 10 point size for footnotes/ endnotes.

  - Margins: Allow side margins of at least 3cm, and top/bottom margin of at least 2cm.

  - Line justification (alignment): generally, do not right-justify lines (to make all the lines the same width). Instead, leave the lines uneven ('ragged right').

  - If you print out your assignment as hard-copy, use white paper, and print on only one side of each sheet.

    [In the interests of conserving God's creation, your module facilitators may encourage you to use clean paper which has been used on one side, rather than new paper]

Default dictionary setting – Australian English
As a SE Asian regional venture, AGST Alliance appreciates that students and faculty come from backgrounds that represent a variety of forms of the English language.

For AGST Alliance assignments, we recommend that students set their computer default language setting to **Australian English** – as an acceptable compromise between UK and USA English.

B. Presentation

- Assignments will usually be presented with this sequence of items:
    1. A cover page, set out as per the example on p. 11.
       (If a module facilitator provides a cover sheet for you to append or attach to the front of your assignment do not produce a separate cover sheet).
    2. Title of assignment (in full) and your name
    3. The assignment contents
    4. The list of references
    5. Any appendix (or appendices).

- Number each page of your assignment (at the centre-top or in the top right-hand corner).

- ***If you are submitting a soft-copy of your assignment:*** email it as an attachment to the module facilitator **and** a copy to <assignments@agstalliance.org>.

- ***If you are submitting a printed (paper) copy of your assignment:*** staple the pages together in the top left-hand corner. [For longer assignments (e.g. 10+ pages) a clear-front plastic folder may be used.]

- Whatever medium you use to submit your assignment, ensure you keep a copy of it, in case your submitted copy is misplaced/damaged.

C. Quotations

Quotations are useful – indeed, necessary – when you are sure that they have a function in your assignment, and when you cannot express your ideas in another way. Remember it is primarily *you* the reader needs to hear from, not other writers!

- All quotations must appear *exactly* as in the original. You must not change words, punctuation, or grammar (except in one or two special cases).

- Length of quotations: Avoid long quotations unless they are quite necessary to your line of argument. It may be better to paraphrase what a writer is saying than have a lengthy quotation.

- Presenting quotations in your assignment:
  - Quotations of less than 40 words should be integrated into the flow of your text, between quotation marks ("…"), e.g.
      > On this point, Robert Banks suggested that, "It is not merely the extent of Paul's contribution that sets it apart from others in the first century, but its quality" (Banks 1998, 10). His views should be given adequate attention.

  - Quotations longer than 40 words (about three lines) should start on a new line, be indented, and without quotation marks, e.g.
      > This point has been developed further by Robert Banks, who wrote:
      > > It is not merely the extent of Paul's contribution that sets it apart from others in the first century, but its quality. We find here the most clearly developed and profound understanding of community in all the early Christian writings. (Banks 1998, 10)

  - If you need to leave some words or lines of text out of a quotation, indicate this with '…', e.g. (from the above quotation): "It is not merely the extent of Paul's contribution … but its quality."

D. Plagiarism

Plagiarism is the practice of borrowing from the work of another persons without acknowledging the source. Within the academic world, intentional plagiarism is treated very seriously. At your level of study you need to pay special care with it.

E. Footnotes/endnotes

Footnotes (at the bottom of a page) and endnotes (at the end of an assignment) may be used to provide the reader with information which is related to the main line of discussion in the text, but does not fit readily in the flow of the text.

- In general, use footnotes sparingly. Work on the principle "if something is worth saying, it is worth saying in the text." Thus, instead of using a note, reorganise your text to include the material there.

  Note: Footnotes/endnotes are usually included in the total word count, so you don't gain extra words by having lengthy notes.

- Where footnotes/endnotes are used, number them consecutively (1... 2... 3... etc.) from the beginning to the end of the assignment. Ensure that footnotes appear at the bottom of the same page with the text to which they refer.

F. Appendices

When you have a detailed table or chart, a long quotation, or other data to which you refer in your assignment, place this in an appendix at the end of your assignment – and refer to it in the text with the phrase "See Appendix (A… B… etc. if there is more than one appendix)".

However, use appendices with discretion. They are not intended to be an extension of the argument or discussion of your assignment.

G. References

It is essential that you are careful to acknowledge the source of your data and information clearly and accurately. This is done in two areas of your assignment:
   1. In the text of your assignment, acknowledge when you use material which is not original to you.
   2. At the end of your assignment, you give fuller bibliographical details of the references you have used in the text.

There are conventions to use for both these areas.

1. In-text references

A number of referencing styles are available. The preferred one is the ***author-date style,*** which has been traditionally used in the physical and natural sciences, but is now gaining popularity in the humanities because of its simplicity. [See especially Turabian, chs 18-19.]

[The main alternative style, often used by writers in theology, literature and the arts, is the *'footnotes style'* (or *'documentary-note' style*), which is used especially if there is a need for additional footnoted material.]

Author-date reference style

- Sources are indicated in brackets in the text with the author's name, the year of the publication, and the page(s) cited – and then full details are given in the list of references at the end of the assignment. Example:

    With the growth of Christianity came threats (Hill 1985, 32).

    Note: there is no comma between the author's name and date; and no 'p' for the page number.

- If the author's name occurs naturally in the text, it does not need to be repeated in the brackets, e.g.

    Hill (1985, 32) suggested that with the growth of Christianity came threats.

- If you are citing more than one work written in the same year by a particular author, use 'a' and 'b' after the date, e.g.

    Astley (1992a) was concerned about Christian worship, while he also expressed concerns for Christian growth (1992b).

- No abbreviations (e.g. *ibid, op. cit. etc.)* are used in this style.

- If more than one author is cited in the parentheses, list in alphabetical order (by author's surname) – and all appear in the same set of parentheses, e.g.

    This theory was widely known (e.g. Boldy 1998, Hill 1985, Symons and Raus 1993).

2. Reference list
A full list of all the references you have quoted from and/or referred to in your assignment must be included at the end of your assignment.

[NB a reference list differs from a *bibliography*, which provides a comprehensive list of all the sources you have consulted for your assignment. Most frequently you will use a *reference list*.]

List your references in alphabetical order, using the following sample formats. (For more details and many more examples, see Turabian, chs. 18-19.)

[Note where italics are used in these formats]

* * * * * * *

Sample references and citations[*]

*[Each example of a reference list entry is accompanied
by an example of a corresponding parenthetical citation in the text]*

1. **Books [printed]**
- **One author:**
   Hill, Brian V. 1985. *The Greening of Christian Education*. Sydney: Lancer Books.

   (Hill 1985, 32)

- **Two-three authors**
   Morey, Peter, and Amina Yaqin. 2011. *Framing Muslims: Stereotyping and Representation after 9/11*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

   (Morey and Yaqin 2011, 52)

- **For four or more authors**, list all of the authors in the reference list; in the text, list only the first author, followed by "et al." ("and others"):
   Bernstein, Jay M., Claudia Brodsky, Anthony J. Cascardi, Thierry de Duve, Aleš Erjavec, Robert Kaufman, and Fred Rush. 2010. *Art and Aesthetics After Adorno*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

   (Bernstein et al. 2010, 276)

- **Editor or translator instead of author**
   Lattimore, Richmond, trans. 1951. *The Iliad of Homer*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

   (Lattimore 1951, 91–92)

- **Editor or translator in addition to author**
   Austen, Jane. 2011. *Persuasion: An Annotated Edition*. Edited by Robert Morrison. Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press.

   (Austen 2011, 311–12)

- **Chapter in an edited book**
   Strommen, M. 1993. "Rethinking Family Ministry." In *Rethinking Christian Education*, edited by D. Schuller, 57-72. St. Louis, MI: Chalice Press.

   (Strommen 1993, 62)

- **Preface, foreword, introduction, or similar part of a book**
   Cronon, William. 2012. Foreword to *The Republic of Nature*, by Mark Fiege, ix–xii. Seattle: University of Washington Press.

   (Cronon 2012, ix)

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[*] Material this section has been adapted from
http://www.press.uchicago.edu/books/turabian/turabian_citationguide.html/.

- **References to multiple works by the same author (books and/or articles)**
  List in order of date of publication (from oldest to most recent). For all entries after the first, replace the author's name with a short line (6 hyphens).

  Harkness, A. 1998. "{Education in Local Churches: Is it Really 'Education'?" *Journal of Christian Education* 41, no. 1: 39-52.
  -------. 2001. "The Media: Help or Hindrance for Christian Faith Formation?" *Church and Society* 4, no. 2: 67-80.
  -------. 2003. "Educational Indoctrination in Christian Faith Communities." *Journal of Christian Education* 45, no. 3: 33-47.

2. **Books [published electronically]**
   If a book is available in more than one format (print and e-version), give a reference for the version you consulted.
   Wilkerson, Isabel. 2010. *The Warmth of Other Suns: The Epic Story of America's great migration*. New York: Vintage. Kindle.

   (Wilkerson 2010, 183–84) *[Note: Use Kindle location #: e.g. 1862]*

- **For books consulted online**, include an access date and a URL.
  Kurland, Philip B., and Ralph Lerner, eds. 1987. *The Founders' Constitution*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. Accessed October 15, 2011. http://press-pubs.uchicago.edu/founders/.

  (Kurland and Lerner 1987, chap. 10, doc. 19)

- **For books consulted in a database**, you may give the name of the database instead of a URL. If no fixed page numbers are available, you can include a section title or a chapter or other number.

  Quinlan, Joseph P. 2010. *The Last Economic Superpower: The Retreat of Globalization, the End of American Dominance, and What We Can Do about It*. New York: McGraw-Hill. Accessed December 8, 2012. ProQuest Library.

  (Quinlan 2010, 211)

3. **Journal articles**
- **Journal article in print**
  Andersen, William. 1999. "Self-esteem, Self and Sin." *Journal of Christian Education* 42, no. 1: 25-36.

  (Anderson 1999, 31)

- **Article in an online journal consulted online,** include an access date and a URL.
  Brown, Campbell. 2011. "Consequentialize This." *Ethics* 121, no. 4 (July): 749–71. Accessed December 1, 2012. http://dx.doi.org/10.1086/660696.

  (Brown 2011, 752)

- **Article in a database**, you may give the name of the database instead.
  Kurylo, Anastacia. 2012. "Linsanity: The Construction of (Asian) Identity in an Online New York Knicks Basketball Forum." *China Media Research* 8, no. 4 (October): 15–28. Accessed March 9, 2013. Academic OneFile.

  (Kurylo 2012, 16)

- **References from internet sources**
  Wong, Albert. 2006. The Age of Transformation. *NAE Online,* 20 May. Accessed 18 March 2015. http://www.better-learning.org.

  (Wong 2006)

4. **Magazine article**
   Lepore, Jill. 2011. "Dickens in Eden." *New Yorker*, August 29.

   (Lepore 2011, 52)

5. **Newspaper article**
   Newspaper articles may be cited in running text (e.g. "As Elisabeth Bumiller and Thom Shanker noted in a *New York Times* article on January 23, 2013, …") and they are commonly omitted from a reference list.

   A more formal version of a newspaper citation is:
   Bumiller, Elisabeth, and Thom Shanker. 2013. "Pentagon Lifts Ban on Women in Combat." *New York Times*, January 23. Accessed January 24, 2013. http://www.nytimes.com/2013/01/24/us/ pentagon-says-it-is-lifting-ban-on-women-in-combat.html.

   (Bumiller and Shanker 2013)

6. **Book review**
   Mokyr, Joel. 2011. Review of *Natural Experiments of History*, edited by Jared Diamond and James A. Robinson. *American Historical Review* 116, no. 3 (June): 752–55. Accessed December 9, 2011. http://dx.doi.org/10.1086/ahr.116.3.752.

   (Mokyr 2011, 754)

7. **Thesis or dissertation**
   Soh, Davina. 2015. "The Motif Of Hospitality In Theological Education: A Critical Appraisal with Implications for Application in Theological Education." PhD(Ed) diss., AGST Alliance.

   (Soh 2015, 101)

8. **Paper presented at a meeting or conference**
   Adelman, Rachel. 2009. " 'Such Stuff as Dreams Are Made On': God's Footstool in the Aramaic Targumim and Midrashic Tradition." Paper presented at the annual meeting for the Society of Biblical Literature, New Orleans, Louisiana, November 21–24.

   (Adelman 2009)

9. **Website**
   A reference to website content can often be limited to a mention in the text (e.g. "As of August 28, 2015, AGST Alliance listed six strengths of its programs…").

   A more formal version of a website citation is:
   AGST Alliance. 2015. "Our strengths." Accessed August 28, 2015. http://agstalliance. org/index.php /about-us/our-strengths.

   (AGST Alliance 2015)

10. **Blog entry or comment**

Blog entries or comments may be cited in running text (e.g. "In a comment posted to *The Becker-Posner Blog* on February 16, 2012, …"), and they are commonly omitted from a reference list.

A more formal version of a blog citation is:

Becker, Gary. 2012. "Is Capitalism in Crisis?" *The Becker-Posner Blog*, February 12. Accessed February 16, 2012. http://www.becker-posner-blog.com/2012/02/is-capitalism-in-crisis-becker.html.

(Becker 2012)

11. **E-mail or text message**

E-mail and text messages may be cited in running text (e.g. "In an email to the author on July 21, 2015, Sunny Tan suggested…"). They are rarely listed in a reference list.

A more formal version of the in-text email or text message reference is:

(Sunny Tan, e-mail message to author, July 21, 2015)

* * * * * * *

H. Headings

It is often helpful to include headings in your assignment. Certainly they are important in theses/dissertations.

If you use sub-headings also, use this hierarchy of heading levels:

CHAPTER TITLE CENTERED IN FULL CAPITAL LETTERS
[If a multi-chapter assignment, like a thesis/dissertation]

THE MOTIF OF HOSPITALITY IN THEOLOGICAL EDUCATION

First-level Headings:
Centered, Upper and Lower-case, Bold Font

The Emotional and Relational Dimensions

Second-level Headings:
Centered, Upper and Lower-case, Not Bold

Shifting Trends in Higher Education

Third-level Headings:
Against the Left Margin, in Bold Font, Upper and Lower Case

From Teaching to Learning

Fourth-level headings:
Against the left margin, not bold, lower case

Reality – then and now

I. Appropriate language
In your writing, you are attempting to convey ideas clearly and appropriately. Sometimes the language you use may be unclear, or it may arouse negative emotions in the reader – and so distract from the case you are seeking to make.

To avoid this, be alert to changes in the use of language in culture, and pay attention to possible areas as:

1. Inclusive language
- Instead of 'men' or 'man'(meaning 'everybody') – use 'people' or 'humans'.
- Instead of 'layman' – use 'lay person' or 'the laity'.
- Instead of the pronoun 'he', 'his', 'him' to refer to 'any individual' – use either the plural ('they') or remove the pronoun. For example:

  ➥ A typical sentence is, *"God wants each Christian to work hard at his* [or *his/her*] *family relationships."*
  ➥ This could be changed to *"God wants Christians to work hard at their family relationships."*
  ➥ Or *"God wants Christians to work hard at family relationships."*

2. Discriminatory adjectives and labels
Avoid labelling people according to stereotypes, e.g.
- Instead of 'a woman theologian' – say 'a theologian'
- Instead of 'kids' – use 'children'
- Instead of 'gays' – use 'homosexual people'
- The use of colour ('blacks', 'whites') to refer to racial groups

* * * * * * *

Details in the assignment presentation and writing style guide have been drawn and adapted from these sources:

- Asian Theological Seminary, *Catalog 1997-98.* Manila: ATS.
- L. Marshall and F. Rowland, *A guide to learning independently, 3rd edition.* Melbourne: Addison Wesley Longman. 1999, ch.15, "Using conventions".
- School of Education, *Assignment format in the School of Education.* Perth: Murdoch University. 1995.
- K. Turabian, *A manual for writers of term papers, theses, and dissertations, 8th Edition.* Chicago: University of Chicago Press. 2010.

Revised August 2015

Sample assignment cover page
(prepare on a full page, without the box border)

AGST Alliance

MTh(Theol) MTH3-5

<Module Assignment Title>

<Name of participant>

Submitted to <name of module facilitator>

on <dd/mm/yyyy>

Plagiarism: a caution†

Plagiarism is the practice of borrowing from the work of another persons without acknowledging the source. Within the academic world, intentional plagiarism is treated very seriously.

Why is it an important matter? Because of the nature of academic institutions, with their function of seeking and advancing knowledge. It is assumed that students are mastering the skills of intellectual enquiry, and if this is called into question, it brings disrepute to both the students and institutions involved.

There are various forms of plagiarism:
- *Idea plagiarism:* changing the order of words but keeping the same idea, and not giving the source;
- *Key term plagiarism:* using key terms or terms coined by someone, but not giving the source;
- *Word for word plagiarism:* copying the exact words of a source, but not using quotation marks and failing to identify the source.

To avoid being accused of plagiarism, try to accurately acknowledge all sources you use. In this way, it will be clear to the reader which ideas are yours, and which ideas have come from a source you have found. **If in doubt, acknowledge your source!**

Examples of plagiarism

Three students are writing assignments on the subject of Christian education. Each discovers B. V. Hill's book, *The Greening of Christian Education* (1985), and this sentence: "My contention will be that we have allowed certain cultural trends to draw us away from the Bible's representation of what our teaching ministries should be like" (p. 17).

This is what the students wrote:

Student A: *Our changed culture has drawn the church away from the Bible's ideas of what our teaching ministries should be like.*

This, with some changes, has been copied directly from the original sentence. It is poor writing, because it does not accurately portray the original sense. But it is also dishonest, because it is clearly plagiarism.

Student B: *Cultural trends have "drawn us away from the Bible's representation of our teaching ministries".*

The quotation marks ("...") indicate correctly that the definition has been borrowed. But note that the quotation is not exact - and the source of the quotation has not been given. The student is not demonstrating clarity of thought – and is open to being accused of plagiarism.

Student C: *Hill (1985, 17) has suggested that "... we have allowed certain cultural trends to draw us away from the Bible's representation of what our teaching ministries should be like". While his views are credible, there are other reasons which can also be suggested for the changed style of teaching ministries today.*

"Well done, Student C!" This student has quoted accurately, and acknowledged the source appropriately. The student has also demonstrated her ability to think critically by raising other perspectives on the problem. She has not assumed that just because it is published in a book, it is beyond question.

* * * * * * *

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† This material has been adapted from School of Education, *Plagiarism and Collusion: A Caution.* Perth: Murdoch University. 1995.

Old Testament (OT) / Jewish Bible

Traditional:	Shorter:	Full Name:
Amos	Am	Amos
1 Chron.	1 Chr	1 Chronicles
2 Chron.	2 Chr	2 Chronicles
Dan.	Dn	Daniel
Deut.	Dt	Deuteronomy
Eccles.	Eccl	Ecclesiastes
Esther	Est	Esther
Exod.	Ex	Exodus
Ezek.	Ez	Ezekiel
Ezra	Ezr	Ezra
Gen.	Gn	Genesis
Hab.	Hb	Habakkuk
Hag.	Hg	Haggai
Hosea	Hos	Hosea
Isa.	Is	Isaiah
Jer.	Jer	Jeremiah
Job	Jb	Job
Joel	Jl	Joel
Jon.	Jon	Jonah
Josh.	Jo	Joshua
Judg.	Jgs	Judges
1 Kings	1 Kgs	1 Kings
2 Kings	2 Kgs	2 Kings
Lam.	Lam	Lamentations
Lev.	Lv	Leviticus
Mal.	Mal	Malachi
Mic.	Mi	Micah
Nah.	Na	Nahum
Neh.	Neh	Nehemiah
Num.	Nm	Numbers
Obad.	Ob	Obadiah
Prov.	Prv	Proverbs
Ps. (plural Pss.)	Ps (plural Pss)	Psalms
Ruth	Ru	Ruth
1 Sam.	1 Sm	1 Samuel
2 Sam.	2 Sm	2 Samuel
Song of Sol.	Sg	Song of Solomon (Song of Songs)
Zech.	Zec	Zechariah
Zeph.	Zep	Zephaniah

New Testament (NT)

Traditional:	Shorter:	Full Name:
Acts	----	Acts of the Apostles
Apoc.	----	Apocalypse (Revelation)
Col.	Col	Colossians
1 Cor.	1 Cor	1 Corinthians
2 Cor.	2 Cor	2 Corinthians
Eph.	Eph	Ephesians
Gal.	Gal	Galatians
Heb.	Heb	Hebrews
James	Jas	James
John	Jn	John (Gospel)
1 John	1 Jn	1 John (Epistle)
2 John	2 Jn	2 John (Epistle)
3 John	3 Jn	3 John (Epistle)
Jude	----	Jude
Luke	Lk	Luke
Mark	Mk	Mark
Matt.	Mt	Matthew
1 Pet.	1 Pt	1 Peter
2 pet.	2 Pt	2 Peter
Philem.	Phlm	Philemon
Phil.	Phil	Philippians
Rev.	Rv	Revelation (Apocalypse)
Rom.	Rom	Romans
1 Thess.	1 Thes	1 Thessalonians
2 Thess.	2 Thes	2 Thessalonians
1 Tim.	1 Tm	1 Timothy
2 Tim.	2 Tm	2 Timothy
Titus	Ti	Titus