Vancouver School of Theology

VISION, MISSION, VALUES and GOALS

VISION

Vancouver School of Theology is called to educate and form thoughtful, engaged and generous Christian leaders.

MISSION

An education at VST invites:
1. Faithful discernment of the demands of Christian service.
2. Rigorous engagement with Christian tradition and contemporary learning.
3. Hospitable and respectful collaboration with Indigenous spiritualities and other cultures and faith traditions for the good of all creation.

VALUES

As a community of faith, we commit to:
1. Theological education (theological, biblical, pastoral, ethical, historical, Indigenous and inter-religious studies) and formation for the flourishing of God’s people.
2. Inspiring lives of discerning Christian discipleship within and outside this community.
3. Respect for the dignity of every person.
4. Learning and scholarship undertaken with diligence and openness.
5. Encouraging prophetic speech and just action for the love and welfare of creation.

GOALS

1. Formation for Leadership: Increase our commitment to educating and forming ministry-bound students for transformative leadership, while continuing to support existing research-oriented programmes.
2. Inspired Teaching and Learning: Inspire excellence in teaching and learning for God’s people, and share that learning in multiple venues.
3. Strengthened Church Relationships: Cultivate our relationships with denominations that currently support us and continue ecumenical expansion, locally and internationally.
4. Enhancing IT: Increase our capacity to use information technologies for teaching, and research and programmatic outreach with diverse external publics.
5. Strengthened Community Relationships: Build the VST reputation and nurture a greater community of relationships, e.g., with Indigenous peoples, other religious traditions, UBC, neighbourhood theological colleges.
6. ‘First Choice’ Destination for Students: Strengthen our recruitment of ‘first-choice’ applicants from Canada, the Pacific North West and draw students from diverse backgrounds.
7. Strengthened Financial Stewardship: Create long-term financial strength, stability and confidence in the school with responsible stewardship.
8. ‘First Choice’ Academic Environment for Faculty: Enhance full-time faculty through deliberate recruitment and retention, to complement our current faculty.
9. Living Out our Vision: Sustain and develop a staff, faculty and board who enthusiastically support the vision and mission of the school.

We believe we have a unique place in the world of theological education in Canada and North America. Church leaders across North America say that we are the ‘canary in the mine’. They want to know: what kind of witness and work can VST inspire in its graduates for the sake of God’s people and the world in a predominate secular situation because that’s where they are headed too.

All the recent changes in our school – faculty and facilities – are designed to answer this question. Our vision, our calling, is to educate and form thoughtful, engaged and generous leaders for this time and place.

Our graduates are thoughtful people, reflective about how to interact with the large challenges of our time on the basis of the deep resources of faith. We don’t rush to thin relevance, but linger with scripture, tradition, scholarship and in conversation with others to expand our imaginative repertoire. While we teach critical skills, we also equip our students for positive and constructive endeavour for the sake of the world God loves. We believe that to go deep with the triune God in spiritual formation and education results in Christian leaders that go wide in their embrace, interest and care for the world to which God sent Jesus Christ.

Our graduates are engaged people, willing to get involved in this world, not just wait for the next. Our theological ethos is designed to nurture practitioners who are making a difference in the world for God and the gospel.

We are convinced that God is already always at work in the world, we discern that movement and get with the flow of grace in the world – wherever we find it. And wow, it is spectacularly wonderful and surprising where it finds us.

Our graduates are generous people, able to find friends – across denominations, faith traditions and cultural differences with whom to collaborate for the love of God and the good of creation. Integrated into our school, our whole curriculum, is collaboration with folks of other faiths and our Indigenous friends. We want a future different from the past with these beloved neighbours for the sake of human fullness and God’s good world. And so we give place and space to voices other than our own. The root of our identity is living in multiple venues.

Our promise is to form and educate graduates who embody these virtues, who are thoughtful, engaged and generous and faithful and effective leaders in this time and place. It is our pleasure to welcome you.

Rev. Dr. Richard Topping, Principal
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ABOUT VST

Vancouver School of Theology (VST) is a theological graduate school that offers a wide range of degree, diploma, certificate and continuing education programs with sufficient flexibility to accommodate a variety of goals and personal circumstances.

Our History

VST has been part of theological education in British Columbia for over 100 years — a rich, pioneering tradition upon which to build. We are a direct descendent of a number of denominational institutions founded in Vancouver over the years.

The Anglican Church’s college, Anglican Theological College (ATC) moved into the Chancellors Building on the University of British Columbia campus in Point Grey, Vancouver in 1927. This building provided student residences and a home for the H.R. MacMillan Theological Library, was demolished in 2007 as part of VST’s land development and Iona Building renovation.

Also in 1927, Ryerson College, Westminster Hall, and the Congregational College of British Columbia amalgamated to form the United Church’s Union College of British Columbia, housed in the west wing of the Iona Building, constructed that year. In the 1930s, the tower section was added.

Throughout the 1960s, Union College and ATC held joint classes in several disciplines and began exploring the idea of a new ecumenical theological centre serving the Pacific Northwest.

Out of this exploration, Vancouver School of Theology was formed in 1971.

The 1970s and early ‘80s were exciting years of growth, with students coming from many denominations. With the affiliation of St. Andrew’s Hall, the Presbyterian Church in Canada officially became associated with VST.

The School established its partnership with First Nations more than 30 years ago, and offers the innovative Native Ministries Degree Program by extension, reaching out to distant parts of Canada and the western U.S.

Established in 2009, the Inter-religious Program at VST aims to enhance the school’s theological curriculum, raising awareness of multi-faith issues in ministry and communal life, and preparing leaders for working in Canada’s contemporary multi-faith environment.

VST Today

Today, the School continues its tradition of innovation, and is developing new courses and programs that explore an imaginative Christianity that actively engages the world.

To do this work, the School is organized into three streams of learning, reflection and action: Christian Studies develops a learned ministry in the service of Jesus Christ, and religiously educated leaders for service in the world; Indigenous Studies partner with First Nations and the global Indigenous community in Christian ministry. Spiritual growth and social justice initiatives; and Inter-Religious Studies furthers interfaith understanding and joint initiatives enhancing the quality of life for all.

Christian Studies

Based in the heart of the School’s mission of “rigorous engagement with Christian tradition and contemporary learning” and in keeping with the school’s vision, “to educate and form thoughtful, engaged and generous Christian leaders”, we are dedicated to providing theological education for a wide variety of pastoral and public leaders preparing for roles in the Church and public sphere. VST recognizes the kinds of leaders that are needed for the changing nature of Christian communities in congregations, lay ministries, and in various forms of leadership, such as social entrepreneurship, faith-based social services, NGOs, community-based development, mediation services and community-based justice practices.
Established in 2009, the Inter-religious Program at VST aims to enhance the school’s theological curriculum. Students from different traditions study together, as well as offering breadth and depth to students studying for Christian leadership. The Program supports student spiritual formation, raising awareness of multi-faith issues in ministry and communal life, and preparing leaders for working in Canada’s contemporary multi-faith environment. As educators and future leaders, VST aims to contribute to respectful interfaith collaboration in British Columbia and Canada.

VST implements the Program through a variety of activities:

- Masters degree in Indigenous and Inter-religious Studies
- Annual Inter-religious Studies conference
- Multi-faith worship events, led by students and faculty
- Public events in multi-faith education
- Courses on Judaism, Islam, Christianity, Indigenous traditions and multi-faith encounter
- Publication of multi-faith resources

The Inter-religious Studies Program in conjunction with the Indigenous Studies Program offers:

- Certificate in Indigenous and Inter-Religious Studies (Continuing Education)
- Diploma in Indigenous and Inter-religious Studies
- Master of Arts in Indigenous and Inter-religious Studies

The Indigenous Studies Program

The Indigenous Studies program at Vancouver School of Theology continues over thirty-one years of collaboration with Indigenous partners across North America to navigate through the shoals of colonization into a post-colonial spiritual harbor. By providing both academic and communal opportunities for Indigenous traditional religious leaders and Indigenous Christians to meet, teach and learn together, the program’s goal is a transformed religious and educational context that takes Indigenous culture and spirituality seriously. The Indigenous Studies program embodies VST’s commitment to “hospitable and respectful collaboration with Indigenous spiritualities . . . for the good of all creation.”

The Indigenous Ministries Consortium provides a consultative, cross-cultural focus for program planning and training between its Indigenous and non-Indigenous institutions in order to:

- provide an environment for Indigenous religious leaders, including Christians, to take counsel about issues facing their nations and communities
- foster, develop and encourage Indigenous peoples to carry forward their traditions into the future so tribal nations and societies can survive and flourish

The Indigenous Studies Summer School provides a two-week training opportunity each July in Vancouver so students can learn practical skills for dealing with rural and urban Indigenous contexts. Courses cover contemporary issues such as sovereignty and governance as well as spirituality, healthy community methods, youth ministry training and academic subjects.

The Indigenous Studies Program offers:

- Indigenous Studies Program Continuing Education Certificate
- Diploma in Theological Studies by Extension
- Master of Divinity Degree by Extension
- Master of Theology specialization in Indigenous Studies

Church Relations

VST offers educational opportunities in Christian leadership to students from widely varied backgrounds. VST has accountable relationships with the following churches in the preparation of students for ordered ministry: The Anglican Church of Canada, The United Church of Canada, The Presbyterian Church in Canada (through St. Andrew's Hall), and the Presbyterian Church (USA). Many Unitarians, Episcopalians and students from Lutheran Churches in Canada and the USA study here.

The graduates from our degree and other programs serve these churches and their organizations and many others in North America, Europe, Asia, Africa and the Pacific.

Coming to VST: Some aspects that you might want to consider:

- The members of our community represent different ages and experiences, different backgrounds and lifestyles, different cultures and religious heritages. This diversity enhances our programs,
Students come from all parts of Canada, the United States and Asia, as well as from other countries. Some come alone; some bring their partners and families with them. With such a range of people, you will find a place here to fit in.

- VST is a small school. You will get to know most of the other students, the faculty, visiting scholars from around the world and many of the staff. You will have an opportunity also to meet the people who support VST in many ways: the Board of Governors, donors and denominational leaders.
- VST graduates are employed across Canada, the US and elsewhere and provide outstanding leadership to churches, agencies and businesses.
- VST overlooks sea, forests and mountains. The views are magnificent; the beach is just down the hill; and nearby Pacific Spirit Park offers jogging, walking and cycling trails.
- VST’s location on the campus of the University of British Columbia (UBC) allows you to participate in the many recreational, cultural and learning activities of a large university. Also, all students participate in UBC’s Alma Mater Society (AMS) Healthcare Plan and have access to UBC’s libraries.
- From the VST campus, you can easily access the City of Vancouver by public transportation. Vancouver is a multi-cultural city in a beautiful setting beside the sea, near mountains and forests. It has a comparatively gentle climate year round. It offers festivals and art galleries, concerts and theatres, sporting events and parks, skiing, hiking and water sports and much more. (www.vancouver-bc.com)

Accreditation
Vancouver School of Theology is accredited by The Association of Theological Schools in The United States and Canada (ATS). The ATS Accreditation Standards can be seen on their website - www.ats.edu.

Vancouver School of Theology has also been approved for the Educational Quality Assurance designation by the British Columbia Ministry of Advanced Education. VST’s Designated Learning Institution number is O19407411913. Information about that designation can be found at www.aved.gov.bc.ca/education_quality_assurance/welcome.htm.

Governance
Vancouver School of Theology is governed by a Board of Governors who are responsible for the policies of the School. The members are appointed by VST’s sponsoring denominations.

Affiliation with UBC
The granting of affiliation means that VST meets the criteria for affiliation established by the Senate of the University of British Columbia but does not imply any scrutiny or approval of the course offerings of the affiliate by the University Senate. VST’s students participate in the AMS Healthcare Plan and use many university facilities including the library systems.

Associated Theological Schools
St. Andrew’s Hall (SAH) is a Presbyterian theological school located next to VST. VST, by its formal agreement with The Presbyterian Church in Canada and St. Andrew’s Hall, exercises SAH’s teaching charter. SAH has initiated a programme in the formation of effective leaders for the wider church, leaders who will serve either as ministers or elders. It also offers residence to students or faculty associated with the University of British Columbia or the theological colleges, offering worship, spiritual direction and community life. VST students are very welcome to apply for residence in SAH.

Other Theological Schools on the UBC Campus
Carey Theological College is adjacent to VST. This Baptist school is accredited by the Association of Theological Schools and offers a certificate and diploma in Ministry, as well as Master of Pastoral Ministry and Doctor of Ministry degree programs. Carey Theological College works cooperatively with Regent College.

Corpus Christi College is a Roman Catholic liberal arts undergraduate college. It opend in 1999 and is housed at St. Mark’s.

Regent College is a graduate school of Christian studies that began as a centre for lay education. Since that time, other degree programs have been added, always with a concern for quality, evangelical theological training. VST students often take courses at Regent, such as summer language programs in Greek and Hebrew, and Regent students take courses of interest at VST.

St. Mark’s College is a Roman Catholic centre for theological education and chaplaincy. Found adjacent to VST, St. Mark’s offers a worship home for students and staff of that denomination. A small number of courses are offered every term, and some of these may be applicable as electives in VST programs.

Our Community
Our Students
VST is open to all who are qualified and interested in theological studies, both in the Christian traditions and in dialogue with inter-religious and Indigenous traditions, whatever their denominations or religious background. Students with different personal commitments, whether in Christian denominations, other faiths, humanist or secular approaches, and from all over the world study full and part time in VST’s academic programs. Our students represent a range of ages, experiences, cultures, backgrounds and stages of life. This diversity is essential to the learning experience, adding richness and depth to projects and discussions. Some students come to study at the VST campus, others study at home through extension programs, and still others study off-site through Adobe Connect and web-based classroom support through Moodle.

Each year, hundreds of students join those in degree programs to take courses and seminars for continuing education, particularly during VST’s Summer School and the Indigenous Studies Summer School.

Our Faculty
Faculty members at VST represent a variety of traditions and denominations. Core faculty are drawn from the Anglican, United, Presbyterian, Lutheran, United Methodists and Jewish traditions. Educated in the universities of Canada, Europe and the USA, they bring diversity of vision and a shared commitment to the educational mission of the School. We enjoy the added cultural perspectives of visiting scholars from around the world who teach for a semester in the degree programs. In addition, the Indigenous Studies Program and the Native Ministries Consortium bring scholars and teachers from around the world to teach courses in the summer schools. All programs draw from the broader church community for leadership.

Our Administrators and Staff
Our administrators and staff come from diverse backgrounds and perspectives, as is common in the wider VST community. Some find their roots in our supporting and affiliated denominations or from other denominations and religious traditions. Some have no faith affiliation. Many regard their work at VST as a ministry or calling and are involved in the extended life of the community in various ways through worship, participation in classes, committees and social activities as time and interest allow.

Our Extended Community
VST is blessed with a strong extended community that includes many people who offer their time, their talent, their experience and/or their financial support to the School. The Board of Governors spends many hours working to ensure the future of theological education at VST. Others give their time as program volunteers or to help with special projects. Many provide financial support in a variety of ways.
And members of our alumni—as well as students, staff and faculty—also participate in or support these activities. Our Development Office looks after organizing and nurturing this dimension of our community life.

**Serving a Global Community**

In the past, and in keeping with our strategic goal of developing relationships with theological institutions on a global stage, VST has been enriched by its relations with churches, organizations and institutions such as Youngnam Theological University in South Korea, Tainan Theological College and Seminary, Taiwan and Rippon College, Oxford in England. VST is committed to developing institutional relationships internationally so that we can better follow our call to Christ’s mission in the world, and is working to improve and increase such relationships in the near future.

**Our Worship Life**

Worship is at the heart of our community at VST. We believe our community life and our formation as Christian leaders is informed by the practice of prayer, reflection, praise and shared meals. It is both shared work and shared nourishment.

We are an ecumenical and inter-religious community. We worship as an ecumenical community once per week on Thursdays and as individual denominations once per week on Tuesdays. On Thursdays in the Epiphany Chapel we experience, and are challenged by, the rich diversity of traditions that make up our school. We share appreciation of and experience in varying worship styles of the participating denominations of the school. It is an opportunity to encounter God as part of community. Although the normative service of worship is Christian, presentations from other faith traditions are offered at least once per term.

**Language of Worship / Words We Choose**

The language used in worship at VST ecumenical services should be consistent with the mission and values of the school and reflect our theological diversity and ethos of the community. Worship leaders are encouraged to be thoughtful in their choice of language with attention to experiences of the gathered community. General principles to guide this include: Seeking balance between the historical and the new; finding words that include all the people of God and don’t exclude on the basis of gender, race, age, ability or social economic status; using a variety of metaphors to draw close to God; Mother, Father, King, Water, Wind, Spirit, Divine, Creator. This includes attention to gender-inclusivity, post-colonial interpretation, avoiding super-seccesionism, respect for all religious and multicultural sensitivity.

**Family Life**

Community life on campus is enriched by the presence of families with children. VST does not make formal arrangements for child-care; students organize this for themselves as needed. Children are always welcome at any of the worship services. A playground area is currently located at St. Andrew’s Hall, adjacent to VST.

**Students with Disabilities**

Students who have documented disabilities will be accommodated as a matter of policy to the extent possible within VST. The UBC Disability Resource Centre is available to VST students to review documentation and determine eligibility for academic accommodation. For more information, please contact VST’s Registrar at 604-822-9563 or registrar@vst.edu.

**VSTSA**

The Vancouver School of Theology Students Association (VSTSA) provides a forum where items of mutual interest and concern to students may be discussed. All students registered at VST are members of the Association and are required to pay membership fees each academic year. Each fall, the VSTSA elects a new executive that is responsible for calling monthly meetings and planning the agenda for the upcoming academic year. VSTSA is actively involved in the life and events of the School and has a voice at various levels of administration. Committees or task groups with student representation include: Faculty Council, Native Ministries Programs, and Worship.

**The Role of the Registrar**

The Registrar is the primary person to whom the student relates in working out a program of study. The Registrar is responsible in the first instance to facilitate the student’s understanding of the curriculum, its intentions and the possibilities it makes available.

Secondly, the Registrar assists the student in planning and executing his or her program of study. This involves meeting with the student before each registration period to plan that term’s work, reviewing with the student her or his progress in the program and, in general, overseeing the student’s completion of the degree.

Course changes, directed studies, and transfer credit requests must also be processed through the Registrar’s Office.

**Pastoral and Spiritual Support**

VST provides an environment and a network that offers each person support and encouragement in developing her or his spiritual life. Faculty, staff and students provide informal pastoral support. More formal pastoral support is provided by the directors of denominational formation in keeping with the differing expectations of our sponsoring denominations. If a student requests or requires Spiritual Direction or personal counselling, referrals will be made to appropriate agencies, services and professionals.

**Denominational Community Life**

Directors of Denominational Formation support students in the Anglican, United and Presbyterian denominations and others who are preparing for ministry. The School is entrusted with the formation of students for ministry in these denominations. This formation takes place in a variety of ways including denominational worship and community life in which students are expected to participate. Students from other denominations and non-affiliated students as well as students in programs other than the MDiv are welcome to all that takes place within the denominational community gatherings at VST.

**Covenant Groups and Covenant Groups**

It is the case that theological education is a deeply personal undertaking. However, it is also the case that we make our sojourn in the company of others. Faith and maturity contribute to competence in ministry as well as knowledge and skills. VST tends the work of community and spiritual formation in many ways. Praying together, eating together, and playing together are an integral part of the School. In close cooperation with the denomination from which a student comes, the community at VST seeks to be a centre for creative growth in the love and service of God.

As one of the ways to tend community life and spiritual formation, all students invited to participate in Covenant groups. These groups meet at least once per month, and each group will explore and practice one particular spiritual discipline (i.e. Lectio Divina, centering prayer, fasting, the spirituality of song, etc.).

**Recreation**

VST is situated in a wonderful area, especially good for running, cycling, walking, meditating and simply enjoying the beauty of nature on the beaches or in the woods. The School looks out on English Bay and Howe Sound.

All VST students pay a fee to the UBC Alma Mater Society, which permits them to use recreational facilities at the University of British Columbia, including swimming pools, hot pools and gymnasiums with weight rooms. Other cultural activities on campus include noon hour concerts, plays at the Frederic Wood Theatre, performances at the Chan Centre and public lectures.
OUR FACULTY AND ISP TUTORS

The Rev. Dr. Ross Lockhart
Director of Denominational Formation (Presbyterian)

The Rev. Dr. Patricia Dutcher-Walls
Dean, Professor of Hebrew Bible

The Rev. Dr. Jason Byassee
Butler Chair in Homiletics and Biblical Interpretation

The Rev. Brenda Fawkes
Director of Theological Field Education

Rabbi Dr. Laura Duhan Kaplan
Director of Inter-religious Studies Program

The Rev. Janet Gear
Assistant Professor of Public and Pastoral Leadership, Director of Denominational Formation (United Church of Canada)

Dr. Harry O. Maier
Professor of New Testament and Early Christian Studies

Dr. Sallie McFague
Distinguished Theologian in Residence

Dr. Janet Gear
Professor of New Testament and Early Christian Studies

The Rev. Dr. Robert (Bob) Paul
Dean of St. Andrew’s Hall, Professor of Mission Theology

The Rev. Grant Rodgers
Director of Anglican Formation

The Rev. Richard Topping
Principal, Professor of Studies in the Reformed Tradition

Adjunct Faculty
The Reverend Doug Longstaffe - Adjunct Professor of Public and Pastoral Leadership
The Reverend Dr. Brian Thorpe - Adjunct Professor of North American Church History

Professors Emeriti & Retired Faculty
The Reverend Dr. Terence R. Anderson
The Reverend Dr. Martin Brokenleg
The Reverend Dr. William R. K. Crockett
The Reverend Dr. Stephen Farris
Ms. Sheila Fodchuk

Research Affiliate
Ms. Nicola Hayward, Biblical Archaeology

Research Associates
Dr. Maryann Amor, Hebrew Bible
Dr. Jason Brown, Eco-Theology
Dr. Steven Chambers, Ecclesiology
Dr. Jungwa Choi, Jewish and Intertestamental Studies
Dr. Anne-Marie Ellithorpe, Practical Theology
Dr. Ashley Moyse, Theology and Theological Ethics
Dr. Terry Neiman, Inter-religious Communication
Dr. Paula Pryce, Anthropology of Religion
Dr. David Robinson, Theology
Dr. Mark Stein, Jewish-Christian relations
Dr. Syed Nasir Zaidi, Islamic Philosophy and Spiritual Care

Indigenous Studies Program Active Tutors
The Rev. Dawn Allen-Herron, Ketchikan, AK
The Rev. Glenn Ball, Winnipeg, MB
The Rev. Jack Belsom, Honolulu, HI
The Rev. Napua Burke, Kualapuu, Moloka‘i, HI
The Rev. Marty Garwood, Rapid City, SD
The Rev. Nani Hill, Hanapepe, HI
The Rev. David Hirano, Honolulu, HI
The Rev. Grant Lee, Honolulu, HI
The Rev. Rennie Mau, Anahola, HI
The Rev. Kara Madndryck, The Pas, MB
The Rev. Nancy O’Higgins, Skidegate, BC
The Rev. Carol Tookey, Farmington, NM
The Rev. Jay Olson, BC
The Rev. Neal MacPherson, Honolulu, HI
The Rev. Anne Morawski, Albuquerque, NM
The Rev. Kathryn Rickert, Shoreline, WA
The Rev. Barbara Shoomski, Winnipeg, MB
The Rev. Willard Martin, Greenville, BC
The Rev. Debbie Bentham, Smithers, BC

Visiting Scholars and Distinguished Lectureship Programs
VST has a visiting scholar program that hosts several events. The Somerville Retreat and Lecture series, and the G. Peter Kaye Lecture Series are hosted respectively in the fall and spring as continuing education events in a one-to-three-day format. The July Summer School hosts Distinguished Visiting Scholars Lectures providing an opportunity for the Vancouver community to be enriched by the work of internationally recognized scholars. In connection with graduation, VST holds a ‘Revitalizing the Church’ workshop funded through the Hugh and Helen Mogensen Foundation. Scholars from the global community are often invited to live in residence at VST, offering a course in her or his area of specialty. These scholars come from a variety of cultural backgrounds and represent a variety of theological perspectives. Also, VST welcomes other scholars who wish to take their research sabbaticals while living as part of the VST community and enjoying the many research resources on the UBC campus.
Diploma and Degree Programs

VST’s Theological, Educational, Curricular & Communal Commitments

Our Theological Foundations
1. God calls a people from and for the world to be a blessing for all creation.
2. The God revealed in the history of Israel and in Jesus Christ calls us to think together with tradition for the sake of the present and the future.
3. We meet God’s image in our neighbour and in all creation.

Our Educational Objective:
We are called to educate and form thoughtful, engaged and generous Christian leaders together with friends of other faith and cultural traditions.

Our Curricular Goals:
1. Faithful discernment of the demands of Christian service
2. Rigorous engagement with Christian tradition and contemporary learning
3. Hospitable and respectful collaboration with Indigenous spiritualities and other cultural and faith traditions for the good of all creation

Our Educational Community commits to:
1. Theological education and formation (theological, biblical, pastoral, ethical, liturgical, historical, (indigenous and inter-religious) for the flourishing of God’s people
2. Inspiring discerning Christian discipleship within and outside this community
3. Respect for the dignity of every person
4. Learning and scholarship undertaken with diligence and openness
5. Encouraging prophetic speech and just action for the love and welfare of creation

Features of the Curriculum
• All diploma and degree programs at VST build theological, contextual, and academic competencies from introductory courses toward advanced, focused or specialized courses
• A number of degree programs include an initial group of core courses that provide an opportunity to explore biblical, historical and theological roots and to reflect on identity and vocation in contemporary contexts from a student’s own heritage and commitments, be that a Christian or other faith tradition or a secular stance
• An opportunity to study theology in an inter-disciplinary, inter-religious, inter-cultural context and take courses in these areas
• Opportunities to engage in field placements that build competencies of practice and integration for ministry in the church and other places of pastoral and public leadership
• Small class size and high quality faculty who are committed to caring for the individual learning needs of students
• Flexibility in program design allowing students optimum adult education opportunities, with the option of completing the degree without relocating to Vancouver
Historical Studies

A VST education exposes the learner to a solid grounding in the discipline of historical study. Set against the backdrop of an appreciation for the diversity inherent in historiography, students grapple with key themes in the Christian story. Through the reading of text and context, the learner is invited to engage both the story lived then and the story lived now. The acquisition of critical skills in historical interpretation and analysis accompany this journey as partner and intended outcome.

Theological Studies

Theology comes from the Greek words “Theos” (God) and “logos” (discourse, study), meaning informed discourse about God. The object of Christian theology is twofold: God the Holy Trinity and all other things relative to God. Christian theology presupposes revelation, that God makes God's self known in creation and in the history of Israel and in Jesus Christ through scripture in the power of the Holy Spirit. Courses in theological studies thus provide forays into the rich theological traditions of Christian talk about God, covering the history of Christian theology from the Bible and early church to the modern world, and considering key topics (God, Trinity, creation, Jesus Christ, salvation, Holy Spirit, hope) in relation to the contexts in which speech about them emerged and developed. Christian theological study is a critical and inter-disciplinary endeavor of the Church for the love of God, our global neighbours and God's world. At its best theological studies strives to repudiate its own colonial heritage, to reckon with religious pluralism, poverty and injustice, ecological degradation and our post-modern and secular contexts in its construction of an engaging, prophetic and faithful confession for this our time.

Among the theological disciplines, the study of Christian ethics seeks to further the student's understanding of the major elements of moral life and to explore ways to use the Bible and Christian tradition faithfully in making moral decisions. Given that religious pluralism is for us a local as well as a global reality, an understanding of religious diversity, world religions and different articulations of secularisms is encouraged. The goal of this integrative understanding and critical reflection is to become more able and charitable interpreters of Christianity's path of love and justice within the contemporary world.

Indigenous and Inter-religious Studies

Course work in Indigenous and Inter-Religious Studies provides students with the opportunity to engage the historical and contemporary roles of Judaism, Christianity, Islam and Indigenous North American spiritual tradition(s). Based in the unique resources of the Inter-religious Studies Program and the Indigenous Studies Program, in addition to VST’s core faculty, these studies prepare students to participate in an increasingly pluralistic world and equip them to meet the challenges of religious diversity.

Pastoral and Public Leadership (PPL)

The learning opportunities in this area of the curriculum are designed to cultivate the capacity for leadership in pastoral and public contexts. Competence in the practice of public and pastoral leadership stems from an integration of theological, contextual and experiential learning. Courses in this area provide study of biblical, theological, historical, ethical and spiritual foundations for leadership as well as intensive leadership development and field-based practicum. Reflection and integration takes place both in the classroom and in supervised field sites where students develop expertise in the practice of ministerial and public leadership.

Pastoral and Public Leadership competencies are specific to the following disciplines:

Pastoral Theology and Integrative Theological Field Education

Courses in this field of study use praxis (action-reflection) models and approaches to read the living texts of a diverse and intercultural church and society. First year courses involve classroom experiences to offer students theory and tools required to read the living texts of self and others, congregations and communities. Classroom experiences will include discernment of sites and mentors for future field education. Second year courses combine classroom (Studio) and sites with mentors focused on leadership capabilities and contextual assessment. Third year courses provide opportunity in a supervised field education site to acquire skills in social, cultural and theological realities of leadership in public and pastoral contexts.
Educational Ministries

In offering courses that examine the theories and practices of approaches to faith formation (or Christian education) in the contemporary global and multi-cultural context, the PPL program ensures that students are able to use a variety of teaching methodologies in both small and large group settings as well as identifying appropriate resources.

Spiritual Formation

Spiritual formation courses aim to aid the student in understanding the nature of spirituality by creating a familiarity with a variety of resources from Christian and other traditions for the nurture and development of spiritual life. Attention is also given to the small group experience as a resource for the nurture of spirituality.

Homiletics

The study of Homiletics seeks to develop in the student an understanding of the role and purpose of preaching in ministry, particularly as it relates to the authority of Scripture and the role of the preacher in the student’s own tradition. Various issues in communication are explored and models examined to enable the student both to prepare sermons that will engage responsibly the biblical text, the congregation and the social and pastoral contexts, and to analyze and evaluate preaching, his or her own and that of others.

Liturgical Studies

Foundational courses in Liturgical Studies build the student’s familiarity with the historical and theological development of the western liturgical tradition and its more significant denominational expressions. With this foundation in place, advanced Liturgical Studies courses help the student to formulate a personal theology of liturgical and sacramental praxis and to participate actively in sacramental preparation, liturgical planning, worship leadership and worship music, in the student’s own denomination and theology of liturgical and sacramental praxis and to participate actively in sacramental preparation, liturgical planning, worship leadership and worship music, in the student’s own denomination and ecumenically.

Denominational Studies

Denominational formation provide a context for students, particularly but not exclusively in the Master of Divinity degree program, essential knowledge of a denomination’s history and culture, practices of worship and faith formation, understanding of mission and governance, and a capacity to articulate and implement that knowledge in contextually appropriate ways.

Educational Objectives

Any curriculum has two sources for setting objectives. One of these is institutional, the other pedagogical. The institutional objectives are set by the degree-granting body and are subject to certain strictures. In VST’s case, the Faculty of the School, as well as our partners in the Inter-religious Studies Program and the Indigenous Studies Program set standards and guidelines of what constitutes exceptional theological education. Educational objectives are also impacted by expectations of our supporting denominations as well as those of The Association of Theological Schools, the School’s accrediting body.

Information Literacy and Research Skills Modules

All VST students are required to participate in 6–9 hours of Information Literacy Research Modules (non-credit), in which they will engage in hands-on as well as theoretical work intended to develop knowledgeable, disciplined and critically astute researchers. One session will focus specifically on developing a thesis proposal and thesis writing skills. Students may be able to test out of all or part of these workshops if they already have sufficient background in the areas covered.

Competence within Courses

Vancouver School of Theology provides a credit hour course-based framework within which intellectual and practical competence is pursued. In each course, VST sets standards for the competencies students are expected to achieve. These are outlined in the course syllabi.

Evaluation

VST places a high priority on meaningful evaluation of student work, and the School’s pedagogical philosophy is reflected in its evaluation mechanisms. Students are given extensive feedback on their work within courses as well as a designation signifying the level of quality they have achieved. Evaluation takes place all term in the context of courses. There are also major evaluation periods in December and April of each academic year.

Progress in Learning

People learn in different ways and at different rates. Faculty at VST aim to teach using a variety of methods in recognition of this fact. As well, a student may study part time and may work with the School to adapt courses and programs to his or her own interests within the limits of the program's requirements. The curriculum seeks to foster self-discipline and initiative in students. It is a student’s responsibility to see that his or her program conforms to academic and denominational requirements.

Academic Regulations and Policies

For a full statement of VST academic regulations and policies see the Supplementary Calendar and Student Handbook on the VST website.

Course Evaluations

Competency in a course is evaluated through:

• Attendance (at least 80% attendance is required) for 12-week classes, 100% for weekend, January or Summer intensives)
• Class participation and small-group work
• Papers
• Oral and written examinations
• Class presentations

VST has a historical commitment to narrative evaluation of competency objectives as the primary means of communicating meaningful evaluation. All narrative evaluations will be given both to the student, and kept in the student’s evaluation dossier—maintained by the office of Academic Records.

Grading Policy at VST

Course evaluations at VST combine a letter grade system with a competence model of assessment. Individual assignments within a course are given narrative evaluations, that is, APP (Approved) or INC (Incomplete) or NAPP (Not Approved) with narrative comments, based on the competencies and expectations set for that assignment. No number or letter grades or weights of assignments are calculated for assignments. One re-write is allowed on any assignment which is INC or NAPP within a course. The final evaluation for an assignment can be APP or NAPP after a re-write. The policy on appeals of a NAPP on a course assignment are stated in the Supplementary Calendar.

The final grade for a course is reported both as a letter grade and as a narrative evaluation on the basis of a student’s overall fulfillment of the competencies and expectations of the course, which are stated in the course syllabus. No number grades are assigned. On a student’s transcript, no points are assigned to letter grades and no grade point average is calculated. Both the final letter grade and narrative evaluation will be given to the student by the professor, as well as reported to the Registrar, and kept in the student’s permanent academic record.

Final grade designations are: A+, A, A-, B+, B, B-; NAPP and APP (as specified for particular program elements (see below)). Competency for VST graduate courses is defined as B- or better. No re-writes are allowed to improve a letter grade given as a final grade for a course.
For a course for which the student has not fulfilled the competencies and expectations of the course a grade of NAPP will be assigned. Students who receive NAPP in a course will be required to re-take the course if it is a required course, or substitute another elective course if it is an elective. Students have the right to appeal a final grade received in a course if there are discrepancies between the evaluations on assignments and the final grade.

Attendance policy is set out in the Supplementary Calendar. The following will receive only APP or NAPP final grades, with a narrative evaluation: Theological Field Education units, Clinical Pastoral Education units, internships, the Indigenous Studies Program (although an individual student can request a letter grade), and particular courses by agreement of Faculty Council.

Cross-registration at Regent College, St. Mark’s College and UBC

Many of the courses offered at Regent or St. Mark’s can be taken for VST credit. With the exception of Summer and on-line courses at Regent College (available only as transfer courses, if approved), VST students register and pay for the courses at VST rates and must acquire a cross-registration form from the Registrar’s office to be signed by the Registrar at Regent or St. Mark’s. For course listings see their websites (www.regent-college.edu or www.stmarkscollege.ca). Certain courses in the Classical, Near Eastern and Religious Studies department at UBC may also be available for transfer in your VST program.

Student Responsibilities

Responsibility for course selection to fulfill program and degree requirements rests with the student. The Registrar and all faculty members are available to give advice and guidance. It is the student’s responsibility, however, to read and understand the academic policies and procedures as set out in this Calendar and in the Supplementary Calendar and in the course descriptions and syllabi. Additional information about regulations and deadlines will be posted outside the Registrar’s office during the term.

Privacy

VST complies with all privacy laws. Personal information about students is handled confidentially and in the spirit of the provincial legislation. Please feel free to contact the Director of Finance for additional information or to present any concerns or questions.

Additional Policies and Procedures for Registered VST Students

The VST website and the Supplementary Calendar/Student Handbook contain the most current versions of VST’s policies and procedures. Please refer to the Supplementary Calendar/Student Handbook on the VST website for more extensive information. Students are responsible for knowing and abiding by the policies and procedures in these documents.

Admissions

Vancouver School of Theology seeks students eager to passionately, critically and constructively engage texts, traditions, and the contemporary theological, social, and political landscape. Students are expected to have a Bachelor’s degree and competence in English, demonstrated if needed by writing the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) or the International English Language Testing Service (IELTS) examination. Some students may be permitted to enter with a combination of education and experience.

See the Admissions section of VST’s website for more information.

Financial Aid

Vancouver School of Theology has a generous tuition support program which involves scholarships, tuition bursaries, and on campus employment. Please visit the Financial Aid section of the VST website for more information.

Housing

Full-time students in Diploma and Degree programs at Vancouver School of Theology are invited to apply for housing at St. Andrew’s Hall, located beside VST on the UBC campus. Information and applications can be found on the St. Andrew’s Hall website at www.standrews.edu

Continuing Education

Certificate in Theological Studies

Overview of Program

The Certificate in Theological Studies is for all who are interested in deepening their understanding of contemporary theological thought through active engagement with the topics and theological disciplines explored in VST workshops and courses. An undergraduate degree is not required.

Length of Program

The Certificate is granted at VST’s Convocation ceremony to students who successfully complete 12 continuing education credits of study. The Certificate program is generally undertaken part-time, although the program can be completed full-time in one term of study. All course work must be completed within 8 years of beginning in the Certificate program.

The Continuing Education Certificate can be completed in the following concentrations:

General Theological Studies: Courses from the foundations of each discipline in theological studies, including biblical study, the history of Christianity, theological studies, Christian ethics, Indigenous and inter-religious studies and spirituality can be taken to complete the Continuing Education Certificate in Theological Studies.

Indigenous and Interreligious Studies: IIS studies at VST provide students with the opportunity to engage learning in a context where Jewish, Christian and Islamic faith traditions meet North American Indigenous traditions and vice versa. For those desiring a concentration in Indigenous and Interreligious Studies, this Continuing Education Certificate is made up of the following:

- 3 credits in Inter-religious studies or studies in one of the monotheistic traditions
- 3 credits in Indigenous Studies
- 6 additional credits in IIS courses or through the Indigenous Studies summer school

Note: Workshop - Indigenous Issues

All non-indigenous certificate students who enroll in ISP summer school are required to participate in a 3-hour workshop on Indigenous issues, normally held on the first day of ISP summer school. There are no fees associated with the workshop.

Indigenous Studies: The Indigenous Studies Certificate is a non-degree program for students who are interested in deepening their understanding of Christianity and theological thought framed by the Indigenous context in which the learner is rooted. All 12 continuing education credits in this concentration are taken through study in the Indigenous Studies Summer School or Indigenous Studies M.Div extension courses delivered where extension students are living.

Programs
Charlotte Sullivan Certificate in Designated Lay Ministry (by extension)

For United Church of Canada students pursuing Certificate courses through the Indigenous Studies Program Summer School and the Indigenous Studies Degree Program Extension courses towards Designated Lay Ministry, the certificate is named “The Charlotte Sullivan Certificate in Designated Lay Ministry. See the Diploma in Theological Studies (by Extension) for information about additional courses available.

Courses: Certificate courses are taught by VST faculty and visiting scholars from around the world, and most are courses in which Diploma and Degree students are also participating. VST Academy courses are also eligible for Certificate credit.

One (1) Credit is equal to approximately 10 hours of teaching time. Certificate credits can be completed through weekend classes (1 credit each); January Interterm and Summer School intensives (1.5 or 3 credits, depending on length); and 14-week Fall and Spring term courses (3 credits).

Some restrictions may apply as to which courses may be taken for the Certificate program. Normally, any course numbered in the 100’s or 500’s can be taken to fulfill one or more credits in the Certificate program.

Transfer into a VST Diploma or Degree Program: Certificate Credits may not be transferred directly into VST’s Diploma or Degree programs.

Transfer of external coursework: The Continuing Education Certificate program assume that all credits are taken at VST or through the Indigenous Studies summer program. No continuing education courses or workshops from other institutions can be used in this program.

Application and tuition fees:

All interested learners are invited to consider study in VST’s Certificate program. The application procedure is predominantly a way to gather information for our records, and to assure that the potential student understands what is involved in the Continuing Education Certificate program.

Persons interested in pursuing a Continuing Education Certificate should submit the following to the Admissions Office (or the Indigenous Studies Program office for the ISP Certificate):

1. Certificate Application Form and $25 application fee
2. 200-400 word reflection on goals for study
3. Two letters of reference attesting to readiness for study

Application into the Certificate in Theological Studies can take place at any time throughout the year, as long as both the application form and reference letter are received no later than the student’s actual registration into a specific course. Application and reference forms are available on line or from the Admissions office. Admission is confirmed through the Registrar.

Tuition is charged based on regular auditing rates, plus a $50 administration fee per credit of study.

Certificate course work expectations:

- All reading as assigned by instructor
- Class participation and group work (at least 80% attendance for 12-week classes; 100% attendance for intensives and workshops)
- 3-4 pages of writing per credit. For the Indigenous Studies Certificate, an equivalent oral presentation can be used to meet the writing expectations.

Written and oral assignments should:

- Demonstrate the ability to thoughtfully engage the material and reading for the class
- Give a personal reflection on the reading and material covered

Due dates for papers and assignments are the same as those for degree students. Certificate courses will be evaluated on an Approved (APP) /Not Approved (NAPP) system. No letter grades will be given for the completion of Certificate courses.
Indigenous Studies Diploma in Theological Studies (by extension)

Overview of Program
This is a 24-credit program consisting of eight courses developed by VST faculty for the Indigenous Studies Master of Divinity degree program. It is designed to be delivered by extension with the assistance of a VST-trained tutor in the student’s locale and some student attendance at the Indigenous Studies Program summer school. Course work is evaluated by VST faculty.

This Diploma is designed primarily to provide and/or augment local training for ordained ministry, but it would also provide an ample foundation for lay ministry. Depending on the course configuration and delivery method selected, it could also provide seminary-transferable credits for students who later decide to obtain a Master of Divinity degree.

Length of Program
It is anticipated that a student could complete the program in three to four years, based on our current experience that most, if not all, students work part time.

Course offerings
Courses are chosen from among the following. Courses marked with an “S” are only presently available at summer school. All the rest are in extension mode, and several are also offered at summer school on a rotation basis. All courses are three credits, with the exception of the Indigenous Studies Program summer school courses, which are one and a half credits each.

Required Courses
- THX 512 *Indigenous Theologies S
  * At least four of the courses highlighted in red:

Scripture
- HBX 500 Hebrew Bible (Pentateuch)
- HBX 600 Hebrew Bible (Prophets)
- NTX 500 Synoptic Gospels
- NTX 501 Paul
- NTX 540 John

History of Christianity
- HISX 500 Early Christian Studies
- HISX 600 Missionization: A New History

Christian Theology
- THX 500 Int. to Christian Theology
- THX 600 Christology
- THX 571 Religious Pluralism S
- THX 550 21st Century Theology S
- THX 512 Indigenous Theologies S

Christian Ethics
- ETHX 500 Intro. to Christian Ethics S

Indigenous Spiritualities
- NMC courses S

Christian Worship
- LSX 500 Intro. to Christian Worship
- LSX 610 Sacraments
- HOMX500 Preaching S

Ministry theory & practice
- PTX 551 Pastoral care

Admissions
The Indigenous Studies Program Committee is the admissions committee for the Diploma and M.Div by extension. There is a $75 application fee. Based on transcript information, credit may be given for prior work at other institutions.

In addition to the courses above, all Diploma students will be required to complete 6 hours of non-credit, no-fee research modules in Information Literacy. The modules will engage students in hands-on as well as theoretical work intended to develop knowledgeable, disciplined and critically astute researchers. See the Supplementary Information Literacy for more information.

Diploma in Indigenous and Inter-religious Studies

Overview of Program
Increasingly, North American spiritual, pastoral and public leaders are called to work with diverse publics. Through the Inter-religious Studies Program and the Indigenous Studies Program, VST has developed resources for multi-faith literacy. This diploma makes these resources available to lay leaders and others interested in improving civic literacy in the area of cultural and religious diversity.

Goals:
- To equip people for engagement in indigenous and inter-religious community life
- To develop integrative faith-based knowledge and skills which address critical local and global needs
- To acknowledge the historical and contemporary role of the Indigenous North American spiritual and intellectual tradition(s) as a world religion

Length of Program
This is a 24-credit hour program. The Diploma may be completed part-time over two or three years, but must be completed by the end of the third year. For those who would like to study full-time and complete the program in one year, study must begin in the Summer term with the Indigenous Studies Program Summer School, and some course substitutions may be required where courses are only taught in alternating years. Some Dip IIS requirements can be completed off-site, but this Diploma does require onsite course attendance for at least 9 credit hours.

Course Requirements for Diploma in Indigenous and Interreligious Studies

Required Courses: (15 credits)
- IPT512 Sacred Texts and Oral Traditions (3)
- THS14 Indigenous Theologies and Epistemologies (3)
- IPI 510 Encountering the Other (3)
- One of: IPS/LS 510 – Ritual, Liturgy & the Sacred (3)
  IPS 500 – Spiritual Formation in Communities (3)

Plus:
- 9 credit hours of elective courses (may be taken from any discipline for which the student has the prerequisites)

Required Workshops:
1. Indigenous Issues
   All non-indigenous diploma students who enroll in ISP summer school are required to participate in a 3-hour workshop on Indigenous issues, normally held on the first day of ISP summer school. There are no fees associated with the workshop.

2. Information Literacy and Research Skills Modules
   All Diploma students are required to complete 6 hours of non-credit, no-fee research modules in Information Literacy. The modules will engage students in hands-on as well as theoretical work intended to develop knowledgeable, disciplined and critically astute researchers. See the Supplementary Calendar/Student Handbook for more information.
Diploma in Denominational Studies

Overview of Program
The Diploma in Denominational Studies is a program that takes two forms: 1) a course of studies set by the judicatories of a particular student’s denomination that is designed to meet the needs of the particular student or 2) a course of studies designated by the School that provides a general theological background with courses in the history, theology, polity, and ethos of the historic denominations of the School.

1. Diploma in Denominational Studies: Designated by Denominational Judicatory

Overview of Program
The Diploma in Denominational Studies: Anglican/United/Presbyterian is designed to recognize accomplishment by a student who has completed a program of study set for them by their respective denomination. The Anglican Church of Canada, The United Church of Canada or The Presbyterian Church in Canada. Normally, the Diploma is given for a program of 18 credit hours or more. A student who accomplishes more than 12 and fewer than 18 credit hours of work that has been set by a denomination will be awarded a Recognition of a Program of Studies.

Length of Program
The Diploma in Denominational Studies: Anglican/United/Presbyterian varies in length depending on the program of study set by the denomination for a particular student. However, any program that consists of 18 credit hours or more will be recognized by the School with the granting of the Diploma.

Course Requirements
Course requirements for the Diploma in Denominational Studies: Anglican/United/Presbyterian are set by the respective denomination. The judicatory may ask the School to determine specific course work for the student, taking into account previous academic work the student has accomplished. Depending on the requirements, many if not all of the courses may be completed off-site, without relocating to Vancouver.

2. Diploma in Denominational Studies: Designated by VST

This is an 18 credit hour program that combines several introductory courses in the history, theology, polity, and ethos of the three respective denominations, as follows:

Diploma in Denominational Studies: Anglican
TH500 Christian Theology I (3)
PT500 Theological and Spiritual Foundations in Public and Pastoral Leadership (3)
LS500 Introduction to Christian Worship (3)
H1500 Christianity & Judaism in Antiquity (3)
H1560 Anglican History, Theology, & Spirituality (3)
DS500 Anglican Polity (1)
DS501 Anglican Liturgy (1)
DS601 Anglican Mission and Ministry (1)

Diploma in Denominational Studies: United
TH500 Christian Theology I (3)
PT500 Theological and Spiritual Foundations in Pastoral and Public Leadership (3)
H15600 Canadian Church History (3)
H15640 Reformation History (3) or TH6/750 Reformed Theology (3)
D521 UCC Intercultural Education and Ministry (1)
D522 UCC Worship and Music (1)
D523 UCC History and Ethos (1)
D525 UCC Polity and Governance (1)
D5624 UCC Theology and Doctrine (2)

Diploma in Denominational Studies: Presbyterian
TH500 Christian Theology I (3)
PT500 Theological and Spiritual Foundations in Public and Pastoral Leadership (3)
H15640 Reformation History (3) or TH6/750 Reformed Theology (3)
D510: Presbyterian Heritage, Polity & Practice (3)
D515: Confessing the Faith: Worship, Creeds and Subordinate Standards in the PCC (3)
D5580 Presbyterian Church History (3)

VST-Regent College Joint Program for PCC Candidates for Ministry
Candidates for the ministry of The Presbyterian Church in Canada may choose to enter a joint Regent College-Vancouver School of Theology Program. Students choosing this option would apply concurrently for the Master of Divinity Program at Regent College, and the Diploma in Denominational Studies at VST. During their time at Regent College, they will take up to 15 courses (45 credit hours) at VST and may transfer a significant number of those credits to the Regent College M.Div. Those courses include Denominational Studies, Field Placement in a Presbyterian Church in Canada congregation and at least one course with all PCC professors at VST. Candidates who successfully complete this program will be qualified academically to enter the ministry of The Presbyterian Church in Canada. Students in this program generally take a little longer to complete their studies than those enrolled only in the M.Div program at VST.

Information Literacy and Research Skills Modules
All diploma students are required to complete 6 hours of non-credit, no-fee research modules in Information Literacy. The modules will engage students in hands-on as well as theoretical work intended to develop knowledgeable, disciplined and critically astute researchers. See the Supplementary Calendar/Student Handbook for more information.

Graduate Diploma in Theological Studies

Overview of Program
The Graduate Diploma in Theological Studies is a post-graduate diploma designed to provide opportunities for interested persons to complete a focused program of advanced studies in a given area supportable by the School of Theology. The program may serve to prepare a student for work in a Master of Theology (ThM) program; provide scholarly enhancement of ministerial practice; or provide disciplined focus in an area of theological study for personal interest. This program may be of particular interest for those who may not be able to undertake a full graduate degree program but who wish an organized program of studies culminating in certification.

Length of Program and Course Requirements
The Graduate Diploma is a 12-credit hour program, consisting of four 3-credit hour courses at the 700-level or above. At least three of the four courses must be in one chosen area of concentration.
Generally, the guidelines for ThM level work apply to the Graduate Diploma. All work for any course undertaken as a part of the Graduate Diploma program must be completed within one month of the end of the term in which the student registered for the course.

Courses completed in the Graduate Diploma program can be transferred into another VST degree at the advanced level, and may be eligible for transfer into other graduate programs.

**General Areas of Study**
Currently, studies for the Graduate Diploma in Theological Studies may be undertaken in:

- Hebrew Scriptures
- New Testament
- Homiletics
- History
- Hermeneutics
- Theology
- Jewish Studies
- Indigenous Studies

**Information Literacy and Research Skills Modules**
All Diploma students are required to complete 6 hours of non-credit, no-fee research modules in Information Literacy. The modules will engage students in hands-on as well as theoretical work intended to develop knowledgeable, disciplined and critically astute researchers. See the Supplemental Calendar/Student Handbook for more information.

**Admission**
Persons who hold an MA in theological studies or an MDiv or their equivalents are eligible to apply for admission to the Graduate Diploma in Theological Studies. At the time of application, the applicant will declare his or her area of interest. Where applicable, reading knowledge of an ancient or modern language may be required.

If eventual application to a ThM or other graduate program in undertaken, additional language requirements and/or application materials may apply.

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**Master of Divinity Degree Program (M.Div.)**

**Overview of Program**
The Master of Divinity degree program is for those seeking an academic program with practical applications within which to explore the depth of their faith and prepare for a variety of lay or ordained congregational ministries. VST's Master of Divinity program is accepted for ordination by the Anglican, United and Presbyterian denominations in Canada and by the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America. Many other denominations accept all or part of this degree program, though some require at least a year in their denominational schools. Students should check with their denomination for specific ordination requirements.

A graduate of the MDiv program at VST will be equipped and prepared to exercise a vocation of theological scholarship in the service of the flourishing of God's people:

**Self and Contextual Knowledge**
1. Articulate critical knowledge of self, one's own denominational or faith traditions, and contemporary cultures, communities and contexts both locally and globally

**Bible, Preaching and Worship**
2. Demonstrate knowledge of biblical texts and their contexts in order to integrate biblical vision with contemporary realities in varied expressive formats such as preaching, teaching, and social ministry that witness effectively the mission of the church
3. Demonstrate theoretical and practical knowledge of worship traditions and lead worship celebrations that interpret divine agency and hold space where God and people meet

**Pastoral and Public Leadership**
4. Evidence spiritual maturity to care effectively for the pastoral and spiritual well-being of individuals, congregations or communities
5. Demonstrate deep formation within the student’s own denominational tradition
6. Practice effective leadership in pastoral and public situations amidst a climate of change, being a sign of Christ’s presence while making use of and possibly going beyond current models of ministry

**Indigenous and Inter-Religious Studies**
7. Demonstrate awareness of a variety of Indigenous ways of knowing and being and show willingness to engage the Indigenous community locally and advocate for Indigenous issues globally
8. Demonstrate knowledge of and sensitivity to religious traditions other than one's own and show ability to identify and engage in areas of ‘overlapping consensus’ for the good of the world

**Theology and History**
9. Demonstrate knowledge of theology and history in the service of the flourishing of the church
10. Demonstrate integration of knowledge drawn from scripture, history and theology with spiritual and practical insights to analyze and respond imaginatively to contemporary challenges in the practice of ministry

**Recommendation of Readiness for Ministry**
The granting of a Recommendation, i.e., the certification that in the opinion of the members of the Faculty and M.Div. graduate of the School is suitable for the exercise of ordained ministry, is the end of a process that begins early in a student's program of studies. The full text of the Board Policy on Readiness for Ministry can be found in the Supplemental Calendar/Student Handbook.

**Length of Program**
This 90-credit hour degree may be completed in three years of full-time study or it may be completed on a part-time basis. There is a limit of seven years from the date of initial enrolment to the completion of this degree. Up to 2/3 of the M.Div degree can be completed via Adobe Connect distance courses, with attendance in the remaining 1/3 on campus through Fall, January, and Spring intensives.

**Information Literacy and Research Skills Modules**
All diploma students are required to complete 6 hours of non-credit, no-fee research modules in Information Literacy. The modules will engage students in hands-on as well as theoretical work intended to develop knowledgeable, disciplined and critically astute researchers. See the Supplemental Calendar/Student Handbook for more information.

**Course Requirements for the Master of Divinity Degree**

**Biblical Studies: 21 credit hours**
- HB500 – Introduction to Hebrew Bible I (3)
- HB600 – Introduction to Hebrew Bible II (3)
- NTS200 – Synoptics (3)
- NTS201 – Paul (3)
• BIBL500 – Language Tools for Exegesis (3)
• 6 additional credits in Bible (3 credits in each Testament)

Plus: HB/NT698 Major Exegetical Paper – see below

Historical and Theological Studies:
24 credit hours
• HIS500 – Christianity and Judaism in Antiquity (3)
• 6 additional credits in History
• TH500 – Christian Theology (3)
• 6 additional credits in Theology
• ETH500 – Christian Ethics (3)
• 3 credits in Inter-religious studies

The Practice of Public and Pastoral Leadership: 33 credit hours
• LS500 – Introduction to Christian Worship (3)
• EDS500 – Catechesis and Community in Post-Christendom (3)
• PTS500 – Theological and Spiritual Foundations in Public and Pastoral Leadership (3)
• PTS501 – Personal Foundations for PPL: Self as Leader (1.5)
• PTS502 – Practical Foundations for PPL: Leadership and Awareness of Self and Others (1.5)
• PTS51 – Pastoral Identity and Practice (3)
• PT651 – Public and Pastoral Leadership Studio 1 (3)
• PT652 – Public and Pastoral Leadership Studio 2 (3)
• PT610 – Integrative Seminar: Practical Theology & Practice of Ministry (1.5)
• PT653 – Leadership Here and Now (1.5)
• 9 additional credits in the Practice of Public and Pastoral Leadership:
  • (Pastoral Theology; Education; Liturgy; Homiletics; Denominational Studies)

Plus: Theological Field Education – see Course Descriptions for more information

Integrative Ministry Position Paper – see PT698 for details

Christian Spirituality: 6 credit hours
• 6 credits in Spirituality

Open Electives: 6 additional credit hours in any area of study

Note: At least one course in a student's program will include significant engagement with Indigenous perspectives and issues

DENOMINATIONAL REQUIREMENTS WITHIN THE M.DIV PROGRAM

VST’s sponsoring denominations have designated courses that their candidates for ordination must take as part of a VST M.Div program. These courses fulfill all or part of the elective area requirements in the 90 credit-hour M.Div listed above.

Anglican Church Requirements:
• D500 Anglican Polity (1)
• D501 Anglican Liturgy (1)
• D601 Anglican Mission and Ministry (2)
• HOM500 – Preaching (3)
• HIS500 – Canadian Church History Seminar (3)
• H560 – Anglican History, Theology and Spirituality (3)
• NT640 – John (3)
• 5 teaching retreats on spiritual practice and sacramental ministry (5)

Presbyterian Church Requirements:
• Either:
  • – BIBL500 plus 3 credits of Greek or Hebrew, OR
  • – 6 credits of Greek or Hebrew
  • D510: Presbyterian Heritage, Polity & Practice (3)
  • D515: Confessing the Faith: Worship, Creeds and Subordinate Standards (3)
  • HIS600 – Canadian Church History Seminar (3)
  • HIS640 – History of the Reformation (3)
  • HOM500 – Preaching (3)
  • ST650 – Reformed Theology in the 19th/20th Centuries (3)
  • Advanced Preaching Elective (may be waived by Homiletics instructor) (3)

United Church Requirements:
• D521/522/523/525/624– UCC Denominational Studies (6 credits total)
• HOM500 – Preaching (3)
• HIS500 – Canadian Church History Seminar (3)
• HIS40 – History of the Reformation (3) or TH6/750 – Reformed Theology (3)
• Elective covering Christology (Theology or New Testament) (3)

Major Exegetical Paper

Master of Divinity and M.A.T.S. students with a concentration in Biblical Studies are required to complete a major exegesis paper as a part of their program. In addition to the Core Courses in each testament (HB500 and 600, NT500 and 501), the exegesis requirement is normally met by: 1) taking BIBL500 Biblical Language Tools for Exegesis (3 credit hours) or a basic Hebrew or Greek course (6 credit hours), 2) taking a Hebrew Bible or New Testament upper level exegesis course that uses the respective language and 3) producing a major exegetical paper that meets the criteria of the Biblical Division. Note: Students must also complete one additional upper level biblical course in the testament not chosen for the exegetical paper.

Students who elect to do their Major Exegesis Paper in New Testament will write it in NT640 (John). Students who elect to do their Major Exegesis Paper in Hebrew Bible will write it within an upper level Hebrew Bible exegesis course (the courses will be clearly designated each year). The purpose of the major exegetical paper is for students, reflecting on their own social location as readers and interpreters of the Bible, to demonstrate exegetical ability by considering a selected passage with particular attention to its social and historical background, its literary structure and narrative context, its textual and grammatical properties, its history of interpretation, its theology and ideology and its meaning in our contemporary context. Full details of the paper requirement will be given in class.
Overview of Program
The purpose of the Master of Divinity (Honours) degree is to give an enhanced preparation to students who are considering doctoral study and a teaching career in one of the areas of VST’s program of theology, but who also want the full scope of preparation offered by the M.Div degree. The M.Div (Honours) program will also provide the church with pastors and other leaders who have highly developed skills in specific areas of ministry, theology, spirituality, history, or bible.

Admission to the M.Div (Honours)
Application into the Honours M.Div is normally submitted after the completion of 30 credit hours, and is made to the Public and Pastoral Leadership Committee through the committee chair. Applicants must submit the following:
• One letter of recommendation from a VST faculty member
• 250 word statement of intent delineating the applicant’s study interest and concentration
• VST transcript to date

Length of Program
The M.Div (Honours) degree program adds an additional 15 credit hours to the regular M.Div program for a total of 105 credit hours. Students entering this program should plan carefully in advance and should be aware that, in some cases, it may not be possible to complete the program in three years of study.

Requirements for Master of Divinity (Honours) degree
• All requirements for the M.Div program
• Three additional elective courses (9 credit hours) in the area or areas of concentration.
• Interdisciplinary projects are encouraged.
• HON689: this 3-credit hour directed study reading course will provide the preparation and readings necessary for the writing of the major paper. Readings will be done in the area in which a student is concentrating. The Readings Course is typically supervised by the faculty advisor for the Honours Major Paper and the student will typically register for their readings course in the Fall term of their final year of study
• HON699: A major research paper, for which a student is given 3 credit-hours, is the final evaluation for the Honours M.Div degree program. A student will typically register for their major paper in the Spring term of their final year of study

Major Paper Guidelines:
The major paper will be approximately 12,500 words (50 pages) in length and will have two readers, the primary faculty person working with the student on their readings course, and a second to be chosen by the primary faculty person in consultation with Public and Pastoral Leadership Committee. The major paper is due by the 10th week of the final term of studies, and must be approved by both readers. Any revisions required must be submitted by the last day of term prior to graduation.

Integrative Ministry Position Paper:
Students in this program will incorporate in the Ministry Position Paper (a requirement in the M.Div program) some reflections on how this particular concentration relates to their sense of call and understanding of ministry.
Indigenous Studies Master of Divinity by Extension Degree Program (M. Div.)

Overview of Program
The Indigenous Studies M.Div. by Extension Program is the only degree program in North America for persons engaged in ministry in First Nations communities that is accredited by The Association of Theological Schools in the United States and Canada. At the present time, the program includes students from the Anglican, Presbyterian and United churches in Canada and from several denominations in the United States, including Alaska and Hawaii.

Partnership with First Nations Peoples and the Churches
This innovative degree program was developed in partnership with First Nations people. The primary location and context for learning is the community in which the student lives and serves. This context is crucial for the student’s effective engagement with the social, cultural, political and religious values of First Nations communities. Denominational authorities are also indispensable partners. They nominate candidates and provide the necessary infrastructure for the delivery of the degree program. This infrastructure includes the identification of tutors, the allocation of suitable meeting places for course and seminar sessions and the arrangement of a suitable ministry location for the student. Certain tutor and student costs are also borne by the sponsoring denomination. The guidelines and standards for this infrastructure are established by the School.

Throughout their enrolment in this degree program, students normally continue to exercise some congregational ministry. In this fashion, students need not leave their cultural context, and their communities are not deprived of individuals who are already providing congregational leadership.

Indigenous Ministries Consortium
The members of the Indigenous Ministries Consortium are: Anglican Council of Indigenous Peoples, BC Conference (United Church of Canada), Episcopal Diocese of Alaska, Henry Budd College for Ministry (The Pas, MB), Hummingbird Ministries (Vancouver), Sandy Saulteaux Spiritual Centre, and Vancouver School of Theology. The purpose of the Consortium is to develop, under Indigenous direction, community-based training programs for Indigenous ministries, both lay and ordained. The Consortium appoints members to the School’s Indigenous Studies Program Committee, which has primary responsibility for the M.Div. by Extension program.

Length of Program
It usually takes a minimum of five years to complete the Indigenous Studies Master of Divinity Program. Students are expected to attend the Indigenous Studies Program Summer School as an essential part of their academic and community formation.

Curriculum
The Extension curriculum encourages its students to reflect on the cultural vessel in which the Gospel came to their people and how the Gospel applies in their own culture. Students are asked to reflect theologically on the nature and calling of the Church and the understanding and significance of the Gospel to their own tradition and to the history of their people. This reflection takes place in a curriculum that uses a variety of educational media and approaches, including:

- audio-visual materials
- texts
- lectures
- self-directed projects
- tutor-assisted studies
- seminars.

This course of study takes place in the student’s own community, in tutorials and seminars conducted by tutors and the School’s permanent faculty at regional sites and in courses taught during the annual Indigenous Studies Program Summer School.

Members of the School’s permanent faculty offer instructional resources that provide tools for historical research, biblical interpretation, theological reflection and social analysis. With these tools, students rooted and living in their own communities apply their knowledge and skills to ministry amongst Indigenous people.

The Indigenous Studies Program Summer School
The Indigenous Studies Program Summer School is offered annually during two weeks in July. This is an opportunity for students who are often isolated from one another to gather, learn and worship together. It is also an opportunity for intensive course work. In addition to students in the Indigenous Studies Programs, the Summer School serves people from a wide variety of educational backgrounds.

For More Information
A more complete description of the Programs’ courses and evaluation is available through the Indigenous Studies Program Office. This guide identifies the content of each course and the means by which students demonstrate their competency in the various knowledge and skill areas. The Office can be reached by telephone at 604-822-9480 or by e-mail: isp@vst.edu.

Inquiries can also be made through the School’s website at www.vst.edu.

Master of Arts in Public and Pastoral Leadership (MA-PPL)

Overview of Program
The Masters of Arts in Public and Pastoral Leadership recognizes the kinds of leaders that are needed for the changing nature of Christian communities and supports persons engaged in various forms of leadership, from congregations to social entrepreneurship, faith-based social services, NGOs, community-based development, mediation services and community-based justice initiatives. A unique specialization in Spiritual Care prepares students for a variety of chaplaincy ministries (see following description).

This degree is anchored in practice-based learning, action-reflection, and contextual analysis. Attention is given to developing religious literacy for working in pluralistic contexts, honing the theological intellect for forming public theologians and leaders, providing biblical, ethical and spiritual foundations for inspiring the visionary capacities of organizers and ecclesial change agents, and practicing ritual, rhetorical and communitarian skills needed for offering vital, artful, generous leadership in both inherited and emerging pastoral and public contexts.

A graduate of MA PPL program at VST will know, articulate and integrate aspects of religious heritage, cultural context, and public and pastoral leadership:

1. Demonstrate Masters level knowledge of biblical, theological, and historical traditions and contexts, including the student’s own denomination or faith tradition
2. Analyze the relationship between religious faiths and contemporary culture, and demonstrate how engagement with both impacts one’s contribution to the public and pastoral leadership
3. Analyze and interpret various cultural, congregational, and organizational contexts where ministry is practiced
4. Demonstrate positive growth in self-knowledge, emotional maturity, and spiritual vitality necessary for leadership in community
5. Articulate and practice an ethical and theological framework for decision-making and action
6. Articulate the student's own purpose or call within their community of faith and wider society, making use of and possibly going beyond current models of ministry

7. Demonstrate integration of the knowledge, reflection and skills described above in theological reflection on the practice of ministry and leadership, in relation to major challenges facing contemporary religious communities and society

8. For those in the Spiritual Care concentration, demonstrate skills as a practitioner in spiritual care, working with a care team in a clinical institutional setting

Suitability for Particular Vocations and Occupations

- An MA-PPL prepares people for offering theologically informed leadership in community organizations and institutions such as NGOs, non-profits, para-church initiatives, and community-based development organizations. This is especially the case when a student includes in their program courses from VST's offerings in Indigenous and Inter-Religious Studies.

- In the face of shifts in ministerial preparation in the churches, an MA-PPL, with a credit load of half of the MDiv, may be more achievable preparation for a variety of types of ministry leadership. An MA-PPL may meet denominational competencies for a variety of ordered ministries in some denominations, in some cases with the addition of denominational courses.

- The degree is preparation for various forms of ministries and emerging models of Christian community.

- The MA PPL specialization in Spiritual Care is designed for those intending to pursue vocations as spiritual care practitioners in settings such as health care facilities, prisons and correctional facilities, pastoral counselling centres, and congregations.

- An MA is recognized as preparation for graduate work should a person at some point decide to move to advanced study.

Readiness for Ministry Guidelines for MA PPL Students Preparing for a Vocation in Ministry

VST has the expectation that students preparing for a vocation in pastoral and public leadership will undertake personal and spiritual formation through which the student may grow in personal faith, emotional maturity, moral integrity and public witness.

The granting of a Recommendation, i.e., the certification that in the opinion of the members of the Faculty a graduate of the School is suitable for the exercise of the ministry to which they are preparing, is the end of a process that begins early in a student's program of studies.

If a student in the MA PPL, or that student’s denominational judicatory, requires a Recommendation for Readiness for Ministry, that request will be allowed by the Faculty Student Review Committee upon receipt of the student's application for the Recommendation submitted as part of the student's registration process. The full text of the policies and procedures pertaining to the granting of this recommendation can be found in the Supplementary Calendar/Student Handbook.

Information Literacy and Research Skills Research Modules

All diploma students are required to complete 6 hours of non-credit, no-fee research modules in Information Literacy. The modules will engage students in hands-on as well as theoretical work intended to develop knowledgeable, disciplined and critically astute researchers. See the Supplementary Calendar/Student Handbook for more information.

Length of Program

The Master of Arts in Public and Pastoral Leadership degree is a 48 credit-hour program, and can be completed in two years of full-time study. However, if a student wishes to study part time, all courses required for this degree must be completed in seven years from the date of first registration. Up to 2/3 of the MA PPL can be completed via Adobe Connect distance courses. The remaining 1/3 is completed on campus through Fall, January and Spring intensives.

Course Requirements for the MA in Public and Pastoral Leadership

Foundational Core:

a) TH500 – Christian Theology (3)

b) HB500 – Introduction to Hebrew Bible (3 credits)

c) One of NT500 – Synoptics or NT501 – Paul (3 credits)

d) One of HIS500 Christianity and Judaism in Greco-Roman Antiquity or HIS600 Canadian Church History Seminary (3)

e) IPS10 – Encountering the Other (3)

Public and Pastoral Leadership will be anchored in 7 courses (15 credit hours) and 3 terms of theological field education:

a) PT500: Spiritual and Theological Foundations for Public and Pastoral Leadership (3credits);

b) PT501: Leadership and Awareness of Self and Others (1.5)

c) PT502: Practical Foundations for PPL: Leading in Context (1.5)

d) PT651/652: Public and Pastoral Leadership Studio I & II (6)

e) PT611: Leadership Skills for Community Ministry (1.5)

f) PT653: Leadership Here and Now (1.5)

g) Theological Field Education (see Course Descriptions for more information)

Representative Electives

Students will be required to take 3 courses (9 credits) that pose critical religious reflection in relation to social context. These electives are intended to be representative of the core commitments of VST’s curriculum, such as feminism and gender studies, post-colonial awareness, interfaith and multicultural dynamics, and ecological justice. The courses include those which relate to inter-disciplinary study (such as economics, education, sociology, political science, physical sciences) with an aim to develop capacity for public and/or practical theology in inter-religious and inter-cultural contexts. These electives should include opportunity to develop post-colonial analysis and an understanding of the impact of globalization.

Open Electives: 3 courses (9 credit hours) in any mix of disciplines

Culminating Assignment – PPL698: Capstone Project

The final requirement for graduation in the MA-PPL will be a capstone project and presentation. The Capstone Project is an opportunity for students to complete their MA-PPL degree by addressing a practical, real world leadership challenge or opportunity using the skills and knowledge they have gained throughout their program of study. It provides opportunity for students to synthesize and apply their knowledge and experiences from their whole program, as well as helps them to negotiate successfully the transition to the next stage of their career, whether to the workplace or further study. The Capstone Project includes a 15 page paper and a presentation, normally completed in the final term of the student’s year.

Two further options are available to students under particular circumstances:

- Students completing an MA-PPL toward congregational ministry may, with support from their Director of Denominational Formation, petition the PPL Committee to write an integrative ministry position paper (see MDiv requirements) in place of a capstone project and presentation.

- Students wishing to continue academic study after completing the MA-PPL may petition the Research Studies Committee to write a thesis in lieu of 6 elective credits and a capstone project and presentation.

The final requirement is normally completed in the student’s final year or semester of study.
Master of Arts in Public and Pastoral Leadership (M.A. PPL) Specialization in Spiritual Care

The concentration in Spiritual Care is designed for those intending to pursue vocations as spiritual care practitioners in settings such as health care facilities, prisons and correctional facilities, pastoral counselling centres, and congregations. This specialization has been designed to be in sync with the BC provincial government framework standards as well as the Canadian Association for Spiritual Care certification requirements. Within 24 months students can meet the BC standards requirements for a spiritual health practitioner. An additional Advanced Unit and residency is required by CASC for certification as a specialist. These are normally completed post-degree.

This program provides an integrated approach to learning in which theological and pastoral studies are intentionally integrated with clinical experience in therapeutic methods. Student/interns are immersed into the modern health care team context and learn the pastoral leadership skills essential to ministering within an institutional setting. All students must pass a readiness interview with one of the VST adjunct faculty CPE supervisors prior to being accepted into the program. Persons wishing to enroll should be aware of the emotional rigor that is part of CPE and be prepared for focusing full time on their studies if they wish to complete the program in the time framework outlined below.

Length of Program

As a concentration within the larger MA PPL degree, this program likewise carries 48 credit-hours of study. The concentration can be completed in two full-time years of academic and practical study (24 months), which includes a full-time Clinical Pastoral Education Unit over the summer months following a student’s second full-time year of theological studies. If a student wishes to study part-time, all courses required for this degree must be completed in seven years from the date of first registration.

Concentration Requirements

Foundational Core: (students from religions other than Christianity may substitute some of these courses for courses in their own tradition. It is up to the student to find these substitutions and have them approved through the Registrar’s office)
- TH500 – Christian Theology (3)
- ETH500 – Introduction to Christian Ethics (3)
- HB500 – Introduction to Hebrew Bible (3 credits)
- One of NT500 – Synoptics or NT501 – Paul (3 credits)
- One of HIS500 Christianity and Judaism in Greco-Roman Antiquity or HIS600 Canadian Church History Seminar (3)
- One course in a tradition other than one’s own (3)

Pastoral Identity, Leadership, and Spiritual Care Practice:
- PT500: Spiritual and Theological Foundations for Public and Pastoral Leadership (3)
- PT501: Leadership and Awareness of Self and Others (1.5)
- PT502: Practical Foundations for PPL: Leading in Context (with TFE1) (1.5)
- PT651/652: Public and Pastoral Leadership Studio I & II (with TFE2a&b) (6)
- PT611: Leadership Skills for Community Ministry (1.5)
- PT653: Advanced Leadership Skills: Leadership Here and Now (1.5)
- ETH630: Professional Ethics (3)
- CPE Basic Unit 1 (3)
- CPE Basic Unit II (3)
- CPE Advanced Unit 1 (3)

Plus:
- 3 Units of Theological Field Education:
  - TFE1: Exploration (taken alongside PT502 in preparation for the Studio course)
  - TFE2a: Studio Part 1 (taken alongside PT651) in a faith-community setting
  - TFE2b: Studio Part 2 (taken alongside PT652) in a faith-community setting

Notes about Theological Field Education in the specialization in Spiritual Care:

The field based practice placement found in the Studio course is one way of providing a pastoral base for those entering into a clinical education setting. Through the Studio, students become at least partially prepared for their future task of integrating the pastoral and clinical poles of spiritual care practice into their personhood. The Studio helps students to acquire a sense of pastoral role and, identity within community that later becomes the basis for how they develop their role as a humanizing agent within the health care system. The ability to embrace pastoral role and identity is also conducive to learning certain aspects of how one can hold the present moment with another human being so as to experience a healing mutual mindfulness. Such factors are a large part of what the Spiritual Health Practitioner brings to the health care team and the hospital/institution as a whole that is valued as distinct to the profession.

Open Elective: 3 credits in any area of study (a 4th CPE unit can be completed here for those desiring certification as a Specialist with CASC)

Additional tuition fees for CPE units:
The total cost of this program is higher than the other streams due to the 6–1 student/CPE supervisor ratio and other factors associated with the costs of running a clinical program. Some bursaries are available.

Culminating Assignment
See the PPL698 – Capstone Project description under the general MA PPL degree.

Master of Arts in Theological Studies Degree (M.A.T.S.)

Overview of Program

The Master of Arts in Theological Studies degree program is for those seeking further development in their spiritual journey in relation to other professions, for those interested in further academic study or for those wishing to develop further perspectives in theological thought for personal or professional enrichment. This program allows students to concentrate their studies in one of five areas. Students will choose one of the following areas before beginning their courses:

Biblical Studies – This concentration is intended for those seeking an in-depth and rigorous analysis of Scripture from various perspectives along with biblical language training. Students choosing the Biblical Studies concentration are required to complete 6 credit-hours of either Biblical Hebrew or Biblical Greek as part of their coursework, and write the Major Exegetical Paper (see the M.Div description for more details.)

History and Theology – For those with a passion for history and theology, this program offers an opportunity to explore historical, ethical and constructive dimensions of the contemporary theological imagination. Students within this concentration are required to take at least 3 credit hours of advanced coursework in both historical and theological studies.

Practical Theology – A Practical Theology concentration requires students to take 12 credits of the ‘core’ stream in Public and Pastoral Leadership, including the associated field education. A Criminal Record Check is required prior to beginning this placement

Integrative Studies – A generalist’s choice, this concentration allows study in all of the above subject areas and equips the degree-holder with a broad base of knowledge in theological studies. Those doing an Integrated Studies program must take 3 credit hours in each of the 3 concentrations, beyond the foundational core.
A graduate of MATS program at VST will equipped and prepared to exercise a vocation of theological scholarship:

1. Demonstrate Masters level knowledge of theological disciplines,
   a) Describe central topics in theology and engage in theological reflection on selected issues and topics
   b) Apply appropriate hermeneutical methods to accomplish an introductory level interpretation of a biblical text in its ancient context and contemporary contexts
   c) Analyze historical data and demonstrate historiographical understanding using appropriate skills such as use of primary and secondary source materials
   d) Demonstrate introductory level awareness of the content, methods, issues, and contexts of inter-religious studies and Indigenous studies
2. In the student's discipline of concentration, identify the basic working concepts in the critical and constructive study of the discipline, offer discussion of the basic content of the discipline, and deploy research skills sufficient to present the basic content of the discipline
3. For an Integrative Studies concentration, demonstrate intermediate level familiarity with the content, methods, issues and contexts of two or more theological disciplines, and ability to make comparative and integrative judgements between or among the fields chosen
4. Demonstrate proficiency in clear and effective communication in both oral and written forms, the construction of a logical argument, the making of informed judgements on complex issues, and the use of appropriate conventions of style for scholarly writing

Length of Program
The Master of Arts in Theological Studies degree is a 48 credit-hour program, and can be completed in two years of full-time study. However, if a student wishes to study part time, all courses required for this degree must be completed in seven years from the date of first registration. Up to ¾ of the MATS can be completed via Adobe Connect distance courses. The remaining ¼ is completed on campus though Fall, January, and Spring intensives.

Information Literacy and Research Skills Research Modules
All diploma students are required to complete 6 hours of non-credit, no-fee research modules in Information Literacy. The modules will engage students in hands-on as well as theoretical work intended to develop knowledgeable, disciplined and critically astute researchers. See the Supplementary Calendar/Student Handbook for more information.

Course Requirements for Master of Arts in Theological Studies Degree
Core Required Courses (24 credit hours):
- HB500 – Introduction to Hebrew Bible I (3)
- HB600 – Introduction to Hebrew Bible II (3)
- HIS500 – Christianity and Judaism in Late Antiquity (3)
- INT500 – Research Methods and Theological Disciplines (3)
- NT500 – Synoptics (3)
- NT501 – Paul (3)
- TH500 – Christian Theology 1 (3)
- 3 credits in Indigenous and Inter-religious studies

Additional Coursework:
24 credit hours of additional coursework, with at least 12 credits within the student's chosen area of concentration.

Master of Arts in Indigenous and Inter-Religious Studies (M.A. IIS)

Overview of Program
This degree program provides students with the opportunity to engage in study, research and writing in a context where three major monotheistic faith traditions and North American Indigenous traditions meet. By making available VST’s unique resources in Indigenous Studies, and ecumenical Christian Studies, the program offers a distinctive academic experience, both intellectual and spiritual. The degree will prepare students to participate in an increasingly pluralistic world and equip them to meet the challenges of religious diversity.

Information Literacy and Research Skills Research Modules
All diploma students are required to complete 6 hours of non-credit, no-fee research modules in Information Literacy. The modules will engage students in hands-on as well as theoretical work intended to develop knowledgeable, disciplined and critically astute researchers. See the Supplementary Calendar/Student Handbook for more information.

Primary goals of the program:
- To enhance theological expertise that is interdisciplinary in nature and cross-cultural in expression.
- To foster innovative theological research, transcending comparative study, to develop integrative faith-based knowledge and skills which address critical local and global needs in such areas as ecology, conflict, colonialism and globalization.
- To acknowledge the historical and contemporary role of the indigenous North American spiritual and intellectual tradition(s) as a world religion.
- To equip people for engagement in indigenous and inter-religious community life.

A graduate of MA IIS program at VST will be able to:
1. Demonstrate basic knowledge of four traditions (Indigenous traditions, Judaism, Islam and Christianity) and awareness of commonalities, complexities and varieties of approach among them
2. Demonstrate Masters level knowledge about the following aspects of Indigenous traditions and at least one of Judaism, Islam or Christianity
   - Ways of Knowing
   - Definitions of authority
   - Cultural identities
   - Sacred texts or narratives and canon
   - Performative practices
   - Spiritual formation
3. Describe practices and strategies for intercultural communication, understanding and peacemaking
4. Demonstrate respectful communication, capacities for inter-religious dialogue, and leadership skills in interactions with communities and organizations related to religious traditions
5. Demonstrate awareness of tensions between the traditions on issues such as power, appropriation and assimilation

Program content
The program will enable students to study the heretofore largely unexplored interface among indigenous traditions, Judaism, Islam and Christianity and their application in the world. A student in the MA IIS program will be able to accomplish appropriate competencies in depth for two of the four traditions of the IIS program and with some degree of familiarity for the other two traditions. Through course work, Supervised Field Experience, and an integrating seminar, students will treat pedagogically matters which cross a number of spiritual and intellectual boundaries areas. Most courses will engage two or more of the religious traditions. 48 credit hours will be allocated among:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Foundational core courses</th>
<th>Credits</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>THX 571 - Religious Pluralism (taught in ISP summer school)</td>
<td>3 credits</td>
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<tr>
<td>IPI 510 - Encountering the Other</td>
<td>3 credits</td>
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<tr>
<td>IPS/SP 510 - Liturgy, Ritual &amp; the Sacred</td>
<td>3 credits</td>
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<tr>
<td>IPS/SP 500 - Spiritual Formation in Communities</td>
<td>3 credits</td>
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<tr>
<td>6 credits in the study of sacred texts and oral traditions</td>
<td>6 credits</td>
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<tr>
<td>6 credits in the study of religious traditions</td>
<td>6 credits</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IP/INT 500 - Research Methods</td>
<td>3 credits</td>
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<tr>
<td>IPI 500 - Integrating Seminar</td>
<td>3 credits</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supervised field experience in Indigenous,</td>
<td>6 credits</td>
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<tr>
<td>Christian, Jewish or Muslim communities</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Open Electives in any area of study</td>
<td>6 credits</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Culminating Assignment</td>
<td>6 credits</td>
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Students will have two options for their culminating evaluative exercise:
- A Directed Studies project and oral examination
- A 75-90 page thesis (see the Supplementary Calendar/Student Handbook on the VST website for details and requirements of the thesis-www.vst.edu)

Supervised Field Experience for MA IIS
Normally, a Supervised Field Experience for a student in the MA IIS program is set up by the School in conjunction with the Iona Pacific Centre or the Indigenous Studies Program. The SFE includes the following elements:
- Agreement between the School, the student, and an approved Supervised Field Experience site with appropriate mentorship in an Indigenous, Christian, Jewish or Muslim community or organization, or in an inter-religious organization
- The equivalent of 13-15 hours per week at the Field site over one or two semesters or in intensive format, totally 260 – 300 hours
- Naming of a mentor who can appropriately guide and evaluate the experiential and academic aspects of the Experience, or of two mentors for those components respectively who agree to coordinate their supervision of the student
- Establishment and reading of a relevant bibliography, averaging 50 pages/week

- Establishment and accomplishment of evaluative exercises—written, oral, or per-formative, with a guideline of 12–15 pages per semester or the equivalent
- Specification of a Learning Covenant at the beginning of the Field Experience, setting out the learning goals and agreements between the student and the mentor(s)
- A mid-term evaluation by the student and mentor(s)
- A final evaluation by the student and mentor(s)

Duration
This degree is a 48-credit hour program and can be completed in the equivalent of two years of full-time study, including at least one summer. However, if a student wishes to study part time, all courses required for this degree must be completed in seven years from the date of first registration. Students admitted may be credited for courses of up to fifty per cent of credits already completed elsewhere in satisfaction of the core requirements.

Location
At least one-quarter of the degree courses must be taken at VST’s main campus. It is anticipated that students will also be engaged in learning and research projects at off site locations which have the appropriate instructional, research and peer community resources consistent with and supportive of the student’s course of study. Completion of course requirements will include at least some course work through the Indigenous Studies Program Summer School.

Workshop on Indigenous Issues
All non-Indigenous Diploma students who enroll in ISP Summer School are required to participate in a 3-hour workshop on Indigenous educational practices, normally held on the first day of ISP Summer School. There are no fees associated with the workshop.

Master of Theology (Th.M.)

Overview of Program
The Master of Theology degree is a post-graduate degree designed to provide the student with:
1) an advanced understanding of one area or discipline within the general context of theological study, and
2) the development of research methods and resources appropriate to the area or discipline chosen.
The program may serve to prepare a student for further graduate study at the doctoral level, preparation for some forms of teaching, the scholarly enhancement of ministerial practice, or disciplined focus in an area of theological study for personal interest. Two streams of study are available: One option requires the writing of a scholarly thesis; this is the option generally recommended for those preparing for doctoral work. The other option, the General Research Option, requires additional course work and a significant project. The program requires specialization in the area of study in which the thesis is written but allows for diversity in the selection of courses. It is offered in any field in which a student’s interests and the School’s resources coincide.

General Areas of Study
Currently, studies for the ThM may be undertaken in:
- Hebrew Scriptures
- New Testament
- Hermeneutics
- Homiletics
- History
- Indigenous, Judaic and Christian traditions
  (see following for a more detailed description of this concentration)
- Theology
Length of Program and Course Requirements

The Th.M. degree is a 27-credit hour program. The normal course of study involves the following:

- 3 credits Research Methodologies
- 12 credits Courses in the area or discipline of study
- 6 credits Courses in theological fields outside the area of study
- 6 credits Either: Th.M. thesis preparation and writing OR one additional course and preparation of a Th.M. project; and an oral examination on the thesis or project

All work for any course undertaken as a part of the Th.M. program must be completed within one month of the end of the term in which the student registered for the course.

In addition to the language(s) required for admission, each candidate must demonstrate a sufficient mastery of any other ancient or modern language required for the thesis topic before the thesis is undertaken. Note: Additional credit hours may be required for language requirements in certain disciplines depending on the student’s background and interests.

It is recommended that a student studying full-time take no more than 9 credit hours per term. All work for the Master of Theology degree must be completed within five calendar years from date of admission.

Information Literacy and Research Skills Research Modules

All Th.M students are required to take Basic Research Modules A & B, as well as all Advanced Modules required as part of the INTS/700 - Research Methodologies course. The Research Modules will engage students in hands-on as well as theoretical work intended to develop knowledgeable, disciplined and critically astute researchers. See the Supplementary Calendar/Student Handbook for more information.

Th.M Thesis or Project

If the thesis option for the Th.M program is chosen by the student, this requires that the student successfully complete a thesis demonstrating scholarly competence, including the formulation of a research topic or question relevant to the field of study, critical understanding of primary and secondary sources in the field, demonstration of appropriate research methods, and the ability to make a sustained and critical scholarly contribution to the field. The Th.M thesis should be 22,500 - 30,000 words (90 – 120 pages). The Th.M project option will likewise show scholarly competence in a more delimited area of study in a paper of 11,250 – 12,500 words (45 – 50 pages). The project may include alternate media (performance, video, etc) in addition to a paper of 7,500 – 8,750 words (30 – 35 pages).

For more information on Th.M thesis and project guidelines, see the Supplementary Calendar/Student Handbook on the VST website: www.vst.edu

Th.M: Specialization in Indigenous, Judaic and Christian Traditions

Overview of Specialization

The purpose of this specialization within the Th.M post-graduate degree is to provide students with the opportunity to engage in advanced research and writing at a singular nexus where two major monothestic faith traditions meet Indigenous traditions of the Americas and other locations. By making available VST’s unique resources in Indigenous Studies, including the Native Ministries Consortium Summer School; Inter-religious Studies, and ecumenical Christian Studies, the program offers a distinctive academic experience, both intellectual and spiritual. The degree will provide students the opportunity to develop research methods and resources which could lead to further study at the doctoral level in this emerging field and prepare them to teach and/or minister in an increasingly pluralistic world. A student in the specialization will be able to accomplish the research competencies of the degree in depth for two of the three traditions and with some degree of familiarity for the other.

Primary goals of the specialization:

1. To enhance advanced theological academic expertise that is interdisciplinary in nature, cross-cultural in expression and engages with a world of religious complexity.
2. To foster innovative theological research, transcending comparative study, to develop integrative faith-based knowledge and skills which address critical local and global needs in such areas as ecology, conflict, colonialism and globalization.
3. To further develop or become conversant with Indigenous methodologies and epistemologies.
4. To acknowledge the historical and contemporary role of the Indigenous spiritual and intellectual traditions of the Americas and other locations as world religions.

Specialization content, duration and location:

Content:

The specialization will enable students to study the largely unexplored interface among Indigenous religions, Judaism, and Christianity. Through course work and integrating seminars, students will treat pedagogically matters which cross a number of spiritual, cultural and intellectual boundaries. 27 credit hours will be allocated among:

| Research Methods | 3 credits |
| Integrating seminar | 3 credits |
| Advanced textual or oral narrative study | 3 credits |
| Language | 3 credits |
| Indigenous epistemologies | 3 credits |
| Senior electives, including independent study options | 6 credits |
| Culminating assignment | 6 credits |

All electives must be in related fields.

In the case of language studies, if a scriptural language is chosen, credit will be given only for courses that involve reading of texts (second year of study or greater). For the study of an Indigenous language, one year of study of the language within its cultural context is expected.

Each candidate must demonstrate a sufficient mastery of the Indigenous, ancient or modern language required for the Culminating Assignment before that assignment is undertaken.

All work for any course undertaken as a part of the Th.M. program must be completed within one month of the end of the term in which the student registered for the course.
we are not able at this time to offer a specialization in Islam within the ThM degree program. Given that currently we do not have a full-time faculty member specializing in Islam, however, *At present courses, course units, and lectures on Islam are offered regularly at VST and nearby institutions. In meaningful financial analysis, to make strategic decisions in the face of complexity and uncertainty, institutions. Taking these courses alongside students from the business community will expand the world of our students and engage them with other leaders in Vancouver. The cost for registration is $200.00 per course since they are subsidized at about 90% from generous donors.

**Length of Program:**
The Diploma in Entrepreneurial Leadership is completed in 2 years of study, alongside studies at VST.

**Course Requirements:**
- Financial Statement Analysis for the Non-Accountant
- Achieving Administrative Excellence
- Facilitation Skills for Leaders
- Coaching and Mentoring

**Criteria for selection to the program:**
- Students enrolled in a program in preparation for pastoral or public ministry leadership, normally from at least one of the other two religious traditions of the IIS concentration.
- In good standing with their denominational judicatory
- Must have completed at least 12 credit hours in courses at VST with a B+ or better average
- Must have time in their program to complete the four courses in two years

**Application procedure:**
Submit the following to the Coordinator of Admissions (admissions@vst.edu) no later than July 1st:
- a cover letter stating in some detail your interest in the program and how you expect that it will help you maintain your personal integrity and community standards.
- a copy of your transcript with the cover letter. This must be requested by you and a hard copy attached to your application.
- a letter from your Director of Denominational Formation that confirms that you are in good standing with your denomination.

**For more information contact:**
Your Director of Denominational Formation at VST or, if from another denomination, the Principal.

**VST at Huron University College**

**Master of Divinity**

United Church of Canada students in the London Conference pursuing the M.Div degree now have the option of studying locally (in London, ON) while enrolled at Vancouver School of Theology. VST has partnered with Huron University College to deliver pastoral theology and field education courses at Huron, which are taught or supervised by Huron’s United Church faculty of theology members.

**Overview of Program**
The VST program at Huron is a 90 credit degree, with a minimum of 45 credits taken through VST. It may be completed in three years of study or up to seven years part-time. The M.Div program combines:

**Sauder Entrepreneurial Initiative • Vancouver School of Theology**

VST Partnerships

Vancouver School of Theology has a growing number of strategic partnerships with institutions across the country. The partnerships are chosen for the support they bring to the fulfillment of the vision and mission of our school. Whether Sauder School of Business, Huron College or schools that grant degrees at the advanced level, we desire to leverage resources to form and educate thoughtful, engaged and generous Christian leaders.

**Overview of Program:**
The Vancouver School of Theology educates and forms Christian leaders for the 21st century. Leadership in the contemporary church requires administrative and managerial excellence. The ability to engage in meaningful financial analysis, to make strategic decisions in the face of complexity and uncertainty, to raise funds and to build alliances for world engaging ministry are all crucial for thoughtful, engaged and generous leadership. This strategic partnership with the Sauder School of Business will help our graduates to be better prepared for ministry in this time.

In the 2018-2019 academic year a cohort of ten Vancouver School of Theology students will take a series of four courses at the Sauder School of Business. The courses will be in addition to their course work at Vancouver School of Theology.

**Admission**

Admission requires a Master of Arts or Master of Divinity degree from an accredited institution that shows competence in one of the religious traditions of the IIS concentration and academic or equivalent work that shows some familiarity with at least one of the other two religious traditions of the IIS concentration.

**Educational Evaluation**

Students will have three options for their culminating evaluative exercise:

- A Directed Studies project and oral examination
- A 90 – 120 page thesis (22,500-30,000 words)
- A publishable article

*At present courses, course units, and lectures on Islam are offered regularly at VST and nearby institutions. Given that currently we do not have a full-time faculty member specializing in Islam, however, we are not able at this time to offer a specialization in Islam within the ThM degree program.

**Information Literacy and Research Skills Research Modules**

All diploma students are required to complete 6 hours of non-credit, no-fee research modules in Information Literacy. The modules will engage students in hands-on as well as theoretical work intended to develop knowledgeable, disciplined and critically astute researchers. See the Supplementary Calendar/Student Handbook for more information.

**Duration**

This degree is a 27-credit hour program. Due to course scheduling and the necessity of meeting a number of course requirements during the Native Ministries summer school, it is anticipated that this degree will be delivered on a part-time basis. Normally, all courses required for this degree must be completed in five years from the date of first registration. Students admitted may be credited for courses of up to fifty percent of credits already completed elsewhere in satisfaction of the core requirements.

**Location**

In most cases, at least one-half of the degree courses will be provided on VST’s main campus. It is anticipated that students will also be engaged in learning and research projects at off site locations which have the appropriate instructional, research and peer community resources consistent with and supportive of the student’s course of study.

**Admission**

Admission requires a Master of Arts or Master of Divinity degree from an accredited institution that shows competence in one of the religious traditions of the IIS concentration and academic or equivalent work that shows some familiarity with at least one of the other two religious traditions of the IIS concentration.

**Educational Evaluation**

Students will have three options for their culminating evaluative exercise:

- A Directed Studies project and oral examination
- A 90 – 120 page thesis (22,500-30,000 words)
- A publishable article
• Off-site (online through Adobe connect) courses through Vancouver School of Theology. Courses are accessed as synchronous (real time interaction with class and instructor) or asynchronous (recorded and listened to online later).
• In-class courses at Huron University College
• Field education opportunities in the London area

**Recommendation of Readiness for Ministry**

The granting of a Recommendation, i.e., the certification that in the opinion of the members of the Faculty an M.Div. graduate of the School is suitable for the exercise of ordained ministry, is the end of a process that begins early in a student’s program of studies. Student progress and readiness for ministry is assessed and reported jointly by VST and Huron’s United Church faculty group.

**Information Literacy and Research Skills Modules**

All VST degree students are required to complete 9 hours of non-credit, no-fee research modules in Information Literacy. The modules will engage students in hands-on as well as theoretical work intended to develop knowledgeable, disciplined and critically astute researchers. Modules are available via Adobe Connect and are normally taken within a student’s first year of studies.

**Course Requirements for the VST @ Huron Master of Divinity Degree**

(VST Requirements in Bold)

**Biblical Studies: 21 credit hours**
- HB500 – Intro to Hebrew Bible: I (3)
- HB 600 – Intro to Hebrew Bible: II (3)
- NTS00 – Synoptics (3)
- NTS01 – Paul (3)
- BIBL500–Language Tools and Exegesis (3)
- Advanced Elective in Hebrew Bible (3)
- Advanced Elective in New Testament (3)
- HB/NT698 – Major Exegetical Paper (non-credit)

**Historical and Theological Studies: 21 credit hours**
- HIS500 – Xnty/Judaism in Antiquity (3)
- HIS640 – Reformation History (3)
- HIS600 – North American Church History (3)
- THS00 – Constructive Theology 1 (3)
- Advanced Elective in Theology (3)
- HUC - SYSTHEO5206 – Christ Salvation & Trinity (3)
- ETHS00 – Christian Ethics (3)

**Public and Pastoral Leadership: 36 credit hours**
- HUC - RES203 – Intro to Christian Education (3)
- HUC - LIT5204 Liturgical Theology (3)
- HUC - HOMS204 – Theology & Practice of Preaching (3)
- HUC - HOMS305 – Communicating the Gospel in Contemporary Cultures (3)
- HUC - PT5200 – Cong. Development & Leadership (3)
- HUC - PT5231 – Pastoral Care/Counselling (3)
- HUC - FES110 – Introduction to Ministry (3)
- HUC - FE5211 – Parish/Community Practicum (3)
- HUC - FE5212 – Parish/Community Practicum (3)
- HUC - PT5305 – Ordained Ministry/Theological Reflection (3)

**United Church Requirements: 6 credit hours**
- HUC - CPT Seminar: Youth Ministry (1)
- HUC - CPT Seminar: UCC Worship Leadership (1)
- HUC - UCCan Studies: United Church Polity Studies (1)
- DS524 – UCC History and Ethics (1)
- DS624 – UCC Theology & Doctrine (2)

**Other Electives: (at least 3 credits at VST)**
- 3 credits in Indigenous and Inter-religious Studies
- 3 credits in Christian Spirituality

**Admissions Procedures:**

Students should initially make application to Huron University College for the M.Div program, concurrently making contact with the United Church Director of Denominational Formation at VST. After admission has been granted to Huron University College, applicants to VST @ Huron should arrange for the following documents to be sent to the Admissions office at VST (admissions@vst.edu):
- Copies of the student’s transcripts that accompanied their Huron application
- Copy of the student's Autobiographical-Religious statement that was part of their Huron application
- Copy of the letter of admission from Huron University College

In addition to these documents from their Huron admissions file, applicants must:
- Complete special application form for VST @ Huron applicants
- Send copy of student’s letter confirming their candidacy to VST’s United Church Director of Denominational Formation
- Pay the $75 application fee to Vancouver School of Theology

**For more information, contact:**

Prof. Janet Gear, Assistant Professor of Public and Pastoral Leadership, United Church Director of Denominational Formation
Vancouver School of Theology
Phone: 604-822-9802; Email: janetg@vst.edu

Bradley Morrison, D.Min., R.P. (CRPO)
Assistant Professor, Pastoral Theology
Faculty of Theology, Huron College
bmorri49@uwo.ca
Course Descriptions

The following list of course descriptions is a comprehensive list—all courses are not offered every year. The VST website provides information on available courses and electives for the current year as well as timetables for the year. www.vst.edu

Some courses have prerequisites as indicated. For further information, contact the Registrar’s Office at 604-822-9563 or email registrar@vst.edu.

Courses are normally 3.0 credit hours, unless otherwise noted.

Cancellation
The School reserves the right to cancel or reschedule courses as circumstances demand. Courses will be cancelled if there are fewer than five students registered.

Biblical Languages
VST offers a 3-credit course (BIBL500) which gives an overview of both biblical Hebrew and biblical Greek. Courses in Hebrew and Greek languages are offered at both the elementary and intermediate level by the University of British Columbia and Regent College. Statements on the study of biblical languages appear in the requirements for each degree program.

DENOMINATIONAL STUDIES

DS500—Anglican Polity (1.0 credits)
Bursting wine skins yet keeping them, too. How Anglican polity attempts the impossible by embedding the Spirit and prophetic ministry within the governance structures of church organization. In addition to learning the theory behind Anglican polity, there will be ample opportunity to learn the "nuts and bolts" of how the Anglican church operates in parishes, dioceses, national and international expressions.

DS501—Anglican Liturgy (1.0 credits)
Liturgy is central to the faith and life of the Anglican Church. This intensive course will serve to make participants aware of the purpose and nature of worship and liturgy, and the specific history and development of liturgy in the Anglican tradition. Participants will acquire familiarity with our authorized prayer books, and better ability to understand how the Anglican liturgy is applied creatively in specific contemporary contexts.

DS 601—Anglican Mission and Ministry (2.0 credits)
There is a contradiction lurking at the centre of congregational life: neglect ministry to members, and clergy are written off as uncaring, neglect mission to the world, and churches are written off as irrelevant. Responding to the demands of ministry and the call to mission is an ongoing tension for clergy and congregations. Keeping those tensions strong is the key to keeping congregations healthy, keeping clergy leadership lively, and resolving the contradiction. We’ll identify these dynamics in congregations, and envision how the tensions can become life-giving for the leader and the congregation as they proclaim and enact God’s imminent kingdom.
Pre-requisites: PT500 or PT551

LS/SP501—Anglican Retreats (5 credits total):
All Anglican M.Div. students preparing for Ordination are required to take six teaching retreats for degree credit (0.5 or 1.0 credits each) in their program. These retreats cover a variety of topics in liturgy, spirituality and sacramental ministry: Vocation; Baptism; Eucharist; Marriage; End of Life issues and Funerals; and Ordination. With the exception of Vocation and Ordination, they are typically conducted at a retreat centre on a live-in basis. As well as the teaching aspect on the various themes, these retreats are intended to encourage and
cultivate students’ capacities for introspection, self-discipline, and contemplative spiritual practice. The retreats also create an opportunity to build a community of support among the Anglican students and staff at VST which can positively impact the process of formation toward Anglican ministry.

Other Anglican Denominational Studies: please see HIS6/750: Anglican History, Theology and Spirituality.

SAH-DS510—Presbyterian Heritage, Polity & Practice

The goal of this course is to prepare students for a learned and able leadership in The Presbyterian Church in Canada. We consider the difference between merely maintaining an institution verses being part of an authentic movement of God’s Spirit. We will explore the development of Presbyterian witnessed to the gospel from the 18th Century, the establishment of The Presbyterian Church in Canada in 1875, the Church Union debate and the continuing Presbyterian community following 1925. We will familiarize ourselves with the “Book of Forms” and its historical antecedents. We will also consider some of the church’s other, more recent policy statements concerning sexual abuse and harassment, ‘leading with care,’ and racism and inclusion. The class will seek to apply the gathered wisdom of these documents to a variety of ‘real life’ case studies in congregational (Session), regional (presbytery) and national (General Assembly) settings. We will explore what missional leadership looks like in a “formerly Mainline Denomination” seeking to glorify and serve the Triune God in post-Christendom Canada today.

SAH-DS515—Confessing the Faith: Worship, Creeds and Subordinate Standards (PCC)

This course explores the unique aspects of Reformed Worship and the variety of ways in which Teaching Elders lead congregations within the Presbyterian Church in Canada today. This course will also examine the three subordinate standards of The Presbyterian Church in Canada: “The Westminster Confession of Faith” (1645, adopted in 1875 and 1889), “The Declaration of Faith Concerning Church and Nation” (1954), and “Living Faith” (1988, adopted in 1998) to discover the development of a Reformed theology which is responsive to changing times and contexts. Connections and disconnections will be observed with present statements of faith and confession, as well as the current practice of Presbyterian worship, care and justice in a very different, more socially aware, inter-religious world that seeks to offer a passionate witness to the gospel with gentleness and respect.

SAH-DS580—Presbyterian Church in Canada History

The purpose of this course is to introduce students to the history of the Presbyterian Church in Canada from its roots in 16th century Europe to its present life and times. Seminal events, persons and movements understood in their context (theological, historical, and cultural) will provide focus for the discussion and a resource for understanding and responding to contemporary challenges for the PCC.

DS521—United Church of Canada Education, culture, Identity, and Ministry in the Postcolonial World (1.0 credits)

This course equips students to be educated leaders in the United Church of Canada and the other Christian communities in Canada. It invites students to map out Christianity and ethnicity in Canada, explore biblical stories taken from postcolonial approaches and articulate the issues that are central and critical to faith formation in intercultural congregational ministries.

DS522—United Church of Canada Worship and Music (1.0 credits)

This course provides an overview of the history and current practices of worship within the United Church, including sacramental ministry and hymnody. The course requirements include worship leadership in the school context.

DS523—“Landmarks and Legacies” —History and Ethos of the United Church of Canada (1.0 credit)

The story of the United Church of Canada is told in many different voices over many decades prior to and after union. By attending to a variety of testimonies to our history and formation, we will trace the threads of our founding traditions to their earlier roots and read our current context for the legacies of historic events, struggles and aspirations.

DS525—“Practicing the Faith”: Polity and Governance in the United Church of Canada (1.0 credit)

This course will provide opportunity to study the polity and practices of church governance and current changes to church policies and procedures. We will review The Manual and other UCC policy documents. Within the context of external and internal challenges to the church, this course will orient students to the policies governing leadership in the United Church of Canada.

DS624—“Thinking the Faith”—Theology and Doctrine in the United Church of Canada (2.0 credit)

Within the context of external and internal challenges to the church, this class will provide an arena both to acquire and practice the ability to reflect theologically on the church’s statements of faith (the Doctrine section of the “Basis of Union,” “A Statement of Faith,” a “New Creed,” and “A Song of Faith”) and other doctrinally-based statements and reports. It will provide the forum for articulation of a collective understanding of the purpose of the church and the practice of its ministries. Prerequisite: DS523 and one course in theology.

*DS680-689—Directed Studies

Students may elect to do Directed Studies in selected topics and readings with individual instructors, to a maximum of 6-credit hours per degree for the M.Div. and M.A. degrees.

*Denominational Studies for other denominations will be arranged as required.

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

ED500—Catechesis and Community in Post-Christendom

Catechesis is the process of transmitting the Gospel in a variety of intercultural contexts, as the Christian community has received it, understands it, celebrates it, and communicates it in many ways. Catechesis, within the Christian community, educates and equips people for missionary discipleship and evangelical witness by building up the Body of Christ in the world. Catechesis, translated from the Greek “to echo the teaching,” is an interactive process in which the Word of God speaks to and through the proclaimer, the one receiving the message, and the Holy Spirit. Catechesis is a life-long process of initial call and conversion, formation, and on-going conversion. Through Word, worship, service and community, Catechesis seeks to lead all God’s people missionally to an ever-deepening relationship with God the Father revealed in Jesus Christ through the power of the Holy Spirit. Catechesis takes many forms and includes the initiation of adults, youth and children as well as the intentional and systematic effort to enable all to grow in faith and discipleship through sanctification. This course will explore models of catechesis and community in post-Christendom Canada for leaders exercising a teaching ministry.

ED580-589—Directed Studies

Students may elect to do Directed Studies in selected topics and readings with individual instructors, to a maximum of 6-credit hours per degree for the M.Div. and M.A. degrees.
ETHICS

ETH500—Christian Ethics
This course will introduce participants to spiritual, cultural, social and religious origins of human value systems, paying particular attention to Biblical, Aboriginal and Western origins. We will use stories and readings to consider the foundations of ethical thought and behavior. Our goal is to reach greater understanding of how to deal with moral dilemmas and help others do the same. We will stress the importance of well informed ways in which Christian thought and action can serve the wider community.

ETH630—Professional Ethics for Spiritual Care
The course will provide the student with an opportunity to explore the essentials of professional ethics and further develop and integrate their own values into a broadening understanding of ethics. Students will explore a variety of professional Codes of Ethics as well as precedent setting case examples. The student will be encouraged to reflect on their own professional and personal experience and draw upon the emerging and growing literature in the field. Issues of poor differential and dual roles are central issues in the course as such tensions generate ethical dilemmas in professional practice. Prerequisite: at least one CPE unit.

ETH680-689—Directed Studies
Students may elect to do Directed Studies in selected topics and readings with individual instructors, to a maximum of 6 credit hours per degree for the M.Div. and M.A. degrees.

HEBREW BIBLE

HB500—Introduction to the Hebrew Bible I
To encourage an informed and faithful engagement with the Hebrew Bible, this course emphasizes the study of ancient Israel in its ancient Near East context, skills in the critical methods used to study the Hebrew Bible, understanding of the theologies of the Hebrew Bible, and reflection on the interpretation of the Hebrew Bible in the church and world. The fall semester covers the Biblical books of Genesis through 1 Kings—beginnings to the United Kingdom. No prerequisites.

HB600—Introduction to the Hebrew Bible II
A continuation of HB500, this semester will enhance methodological skills and cover 1 Kings through Malachi—Divided Kingdom to early Judaism. Prerequisite: HB500

BIBL500—Biblical Language Tools for Exegesis
A basic introduction to Biblical Hebrew and Koiné Greek (NT) for students who have no background in biblical languages and who will need language tools to accomplish exegesis in upper level biblical courses. It will enable students to understand and analyze basic elements of syntax and sentence construction in Hebrew and Greek and develop competence in using exegetical resources and tools (theological dictionaries, interlinear Bibles, lexicons, Bible software, etc.) in the translation and interpretation of biblical texts.

HB6/710—Timeless Inquiries: Biblical Wisdom Literature and Contemporary Values
Biblical wisdom literature engages with a surprisingly modern set of concerns, including creation, ecology, feminine faces of God, sexuality, money, and responsibility. Using a variety of text–centered and reader–centered interpretive techniques, we will explore the lessons and questions of Job, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Song of Songs, and Ben Sirach. Prerequisites: HB500

HB6/711—Prophecy In Ancient Israel
A chronological survey of the Hebrew Bible prophets, this course will emphasize the interplay between the prophets’ contexts and their message and theology. How Biblical texts can be appropriately related to contemporary contexts and issues will also be discussed. A variety of pedagogical methods will be used in class to provide students an opportunity to experience and reflect on models for the interpretation and teaching of the Bible in church-related contemporary contexts. Prerequisites: HB500 and HB600

HB6/740—Social Justice: Prophet and Reformer
What is the Biblical and prophetic basis for the church’s involvement in social justice in local communities and the world community? This course will engage both the theology and practice of social justice. An analysis of the types and uses of power in societal relationships will help understand both the biblical call for justice and contemporary social justice issues. A current social justice issue of the student’s choosing, or from a student’s social ministry site, will provide the source for theory and praxis. (This course may be taken to fulfill a Pastoral Theology Field Education requirement.) Prerequisites: HB500

HB6/712—Deuteronomistic History
The Deuteronomistic History, the books of Joshua through 2 Kings, tells a history of Israel emphasizing God’s covenantal relationship with the people that required fidelity and offered blessing. Using interpretive tools such as literary, rhetorical, historical-critical, archeological and sociological approaches, as well as insights from Third World, native and feminist perspectives, this course will seek to understand how the Deuteronomistic History shapes the story of Israel’s past to portray theological truth. Prerequisites: HB500 and HB600

HB6/714—Social World of Ancient Israel
This seminar will be grounded in a sociological study of ancient Israel as a basis for critical applications/appropriation of social world topics in contemporary contexts. The course will cover methods and topics in the sociology of ancient Israel, and reading in the literature of social scientific criticism in the last three decades in Hebrew Bible studies. Students will study the impact of social scientific methods on Biblical research and interpretation, including perspectives that emerged in biblical studies across disciplines with literary, feminist, ideological, liberation theology, and global approaches. Pre-requisite: HB500 and HB600

HB6/715—Lamentations
This seminar style course will engage in a close reading of the text of Lamentations, as well as consider traditional and recent interpretive approaches for the book. These approaches include traditional historical critical methods as well as feminist interpretation and recent interpretive perspectives engaging topics around trauma. Reading in the Hebrew text of Lamentations will occur every week, as well as presentations of resources on the interpretive approaches included. Students with limited Hebrew (BibL500) are welcome and Hebrew reading assignments will be adjusted to match their abilities. Access to Bible Works or Logos online Bible software will be important (Bible Works is available at the VST Library). Pre-requisites: HB500, HB600 and BIBL500 or equivalent

HB680-689—Directed Studies
Students may elect to do Directed Studies in selected topics and readings with individual instructors, to a maximum of 6 credit hours per degree for the M.Div. and M.A. degrees.

HB698—Major Exegetical Paper
Master of Divinity and M.A.T.S. students with a concentration in Biblical Studies are required to complete a major exegetical paper as a part of their program. See page 31 for details.
HIS500—Christianity and Judaism in Late Antiquity
An introduction to the central figures, theological and historical developments, controversies, and culture of Christianity and Judaism in the first 5 centuries CE. Topics include but are not confined to, early Christian unity and diversity, creeds, councils, and theological controversies, monastic movements, women in the early church, the relation of Jews and Christians, the Talmuds and rabbinic interpretation, liturgical theology. In addition, an introduction to various forms of historiography and their application.

HIS600—North American Church History
This seminar provides students with an opportunity to encounter key historical dimensions of the Christian experience in Canada. Where appropriate the broader North American context is considered. Use of both primary and secondary sources facilitates the development of skill in textual analysis and critical reading of both texts and contexts, and their application to the milieu of the contemporary Church. Themes such as: church state relations as a context for religious definition; the place of gender and race in the unfolding of the Canadian Christian story; denominationalism and the drama of rise and decline in mainline Christianity, will be explored. Pre-requisite: HIS500

HIS/TH6/715—Theology and Biblical Interpretation
The last generation or two in theology has seen an explosion of proposals to return to ancient Christian ways of interpreting. This course will examine what I call the “back to allegory” movement. What are these interpreters reclaiming that they imagine had been lost or neglected in the church’s practices of interpreting? How might our ministries look different if we reappropriate those forgotten treasures? How can it be done responsibly without losing the gifts of modern interpretation? This course will address such questions with help from ancient interpreters like Origen and Augustine, with contemporary reappropriators such as Karlfried Froehlich, Peter Leithart and Sarah Coakley. Our hope is to produce our own theology of scripture by which Christ interprets his bible for the sake of his church. Pre-requisite: TH500

SAH-HIS/6740—The History of the Reformation
This course will familiarize students with the work of major personalities and movements of the Protestant Reformation as these arise and flourish in the social and historical context of Sixteenth and Seventeenth Century Europe. While students will be exposed to the family resemblance between the various Protestant Reformation trajectories, an appreciation of the range of reforms and reformers and their continuing influence on Protestant and Anglican confession, worship and church polity will be explored. Pre-requisite: HIS500

HIS6/750—Anglican History, Theology & Spirituality
This course is designed to explore Anglican identity through an inter-disciplinary conversation across the worlds of history, theology and spirituality. Beginning with the English Reformation, the course will track key themes in the Anglican story related to critical timeframes in the unfolding narrative. Key moments in the development of Anglican ethos and identity, as well as key thinkers, church leaders, and movements will be considered. A heavy emphasis is placed on reading primary source documents, so that class participants are able to practice the skills of historical interpretation and critical analysis from the location of themselves as: Anglican; historian; theologian; spiritual practitioner. Prerequisite: HIS500 or the permission of the instructor.

HIS6/741—Advanced Seminar in Reformation Studies
Selected topics in the story of the Continental Reformation including the thought of key figures and key dimensions of broadly based movements and their inter-relationships will be explored. Pre-requisite: HIS500.

SAH-HIS/TH6/760—Christianity and Culture: Barth & the Rise of National Socialism
This course examines the responses of the churches in Germany to the rise of National Socialism, particularly in the early 1930s. We will investigate the history and principal features of the so-called German Christians as they assimilate to Nazi ideology in a people’s church (Volkskirche) based not on baptism but an association of ‘blood’ and ‘race’. We will again explore the origins and development of the confessing church, with special attention to the writings of Karl Barth and the Barmen Declaration.
Finally, we turn to the reception of the event and literature of the German ‘Church struggle’ (Kirchenkampf) in Canadian churches with a view to its relevance to the question of Christ and culture for our time. Pre-requisites: TH500 & HIS500.

HIS680-689—Directed Studies
Students may elect to do Directed Studies in selected topics and readings with individual instructors, to a maximum of 6-credit hours per degree for M.Div and M.A. degrees.

HIS699—Thesis: History
Guidelines for the M.A.T.S. thesis are delineated in the Supplementary Calendar/Student Handbook.
HOM699—Thesis: Homiletics
Guidelines for the M.A.T.S. thesis are delineated in the Supplementary Calendar/Student Handbook.

INTEGRATIVE SEMINARS

IPI/INTS/700—Research Methods
The purpose of this course is to prepare students to write a thesis, project or paper of substance and quality in an area of theological, biblical, historical, pastoral, inter-religious or indigenous studies. Students will be made aware of critical religious terms, hermeneutic practices, and theological methodologies in use today. Student will learn how to construct a thesis statement and an argument and then to correlate these with a methodological approach suited to their research topic. The course will focus on methods, processes, procedures, styles and formats that are necessary to do credible research, to create and present publishable work.

INTS50—Global Cross-Cultural Experience
Students will be provided with opportunities to immerse themselves in a global cross-cultural experience that is in dramatic contrast to the North American experience. These immersion experiences will require significant preparation preceding and critical reflection after the experience. In years when VST does not provide this immersion education option, similar opportunities through other accredited institutions may be recognized for transfer credit.

INTS51—Theological Learning through International Exposure
This course will introduce students to the societal, theological and ecclesiastical realities of a host country in Latin America. The emergence of the “global village”, the increasing multi-cultural makeup of both urban and rural communities in Canada, the shift of Christianity’s centre of gravity from the north to the south, and the life-changing effect of international exposure opportunities are all part of the rationale behind this course.

INTS50 or 610—Inter-Disciplinary Seminars
These seminars are offered on an occasional basis and provide an opportunity for students to explore issues and themes of critical contemporary relevance from an inter-disciplinary perspective.

INDIGENOUS AND INTER-RELIGIOUS STUDIES

IPS/SPS500—Spiritual Formation in Communities
This course explores spiritual formation in three religious traditions. Normally taught over three weekends, each of which will be dedicated to one of the traditions, the course will focus on the specific form of spirituality brought by the instructor. Study of approaches to spirituality and specific spiritual practices will develop the student’s skills in understanding spirituality in general and the particular forms and ways of spirituality for each tradition. Students will read a resource bibliography, cultivate experiential learning by interaction with contemporary practitioners, and document their learning in modalities not restricted to academic-paper formats.

THS/714—Indigenous Theologies and Epistemologies
This course is an exploration of Indigenous ways of knowing and being. The course foci include Indigenous identity, Indigenous ways of teaching, ceremony and their implication for the practice of theological reflection. The course focuses primarily upon North American Indigenous groups through dialogue, media, assigned reading and an extended retreat. This course will assist students with inquiring into the Indigenous mind as a way of thinking and being rather than a concept of identity and separation. Throughout discussions and writings, all are supported to explore personal and collective experiences past and present. Throughout all exploration, the emphasis will be on foundational spiritual teachings from Indigenous thought and protocol and the teachings of Christ.

IPS/SPS513—Indigenous Spirituality and Christian Faith
Indigenous people take seriously their Indigenous and Christian heritage but room has not always been made for the former by the latter. This course will investigate the historical relationship between the two with the goal of offering possible models for telling the two stories “side by side, until they can be told together.” In an effort to do this we will use the language of theology and work toward creating space where we can see examples of Indigenous Christian Faith.

IPS/SPS510—Liturgy, Ritual and the Sacred
An introduction to the theory and practice of ritual, focused on elements shared by multiple traditions. Humans use ceremony to approach the divine, build community, mark important life events, and more. Together, we will explore theological, psychological, sociological, anthropological, and philosophical theories of ceremonial activity. We will apply those theories as we study effective ritual facilitation to increase our own skills. The course is an MDiv/PPL spirituality elective and MAIS requirement.

IPS150—Encountering the Other
This course encourages students to identify issues in multi-cultural communication, become aware of personal barriers, and develop skills for working with them. Students will be introduced to (1) critical concepts about the politics of identity and cultural complexes; (2) philosophical discussion of inner stances towards welcoming the other; and (3) practical techniques for listening and shared change. Discussions will emphasize Canadian cultural milieus, and faith-based contexts.

IPTS/712—Sacred Texts and Oral Traditions in a Multi-Religious Society
This course will provide an introduction to some critical issues in the interpretation of sacred oral and written traditions in multi-religious societies past and present, with particular attention to Judaism, Christianity, Islam, and First Nations cultures. We will consider the phenomenon of text-based or text-centered religion in societies with overlapping sacred textual traditions, from various perspectives, including historical, political, aesthetic, ethical, legal, literary, linguistic, mystical, spiritual, social, and experiential, to provide a framework and resources for present day reflection on the place of sacred texts and textual interpretation in contemporary concerns. Students will gain ideas and practical experience to respectfully collaborate and address issues and challenges with peers across and among wisdom traditions.

IPS/SPS500—Spiritual Formation in Communities
This course explores spiritual formation in three religious traditions. Normally taught over three weekends, each of which will be dedicated to one of the traditions, the course will focus on the specific form of spirituality brought by the instructor. Study of approaches to spirituality and specific spiritual practices will develop the student’s skills in understanding spirituality in general and the particular forms and ways of spirituality for each tradition. Students will read a resource bibliography, cultivate experiential learning by interaction with contemporary practitioners, and document their learning in modalities not restricted to academic-paper formats.

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religious cultures.

IPTS/720—Jews and Christians: A Theological Journey

Jews and Christians have often done theology as rivals. In this course, we will explore a different approach: talking about God as curious friends with a common goal of being a blessing to the world. We will study both traditions’ core Biblical narratives of faith (Exodus and Resurrection), examine prominent modern declarations of common ground, read inter-faith writings from contemporary theologians, and discuss multiple approaches to interfaith engagement.

LITURGICAL STUDIES

LS500—An Introduction to Christian Worship

The purpose of this course is to introduce students to the historical, theological and pastoral dimensions of Christian worship. By participating in and completing the class, students will achieve familiarity with the language and content of liturgical theology and will have developed a working knowledge of how Christian worship has developed and changed over the centuries since the beginning of the church. We will also pay particular attention to the cultural contexts in which Christianity evolved and the cultural influences which shape current practices.

LS/SP501 – 505—Anglican Retreats (5 credits total):

All Anglican M.Div. students preparing for Ordination are required to take six teaching retreats for degree credit (0.5 or 1.0 credits each) in their program. These retreats cover a variety of topics in liturgy, spirituality and sacramental ministry: Vocation; Baptism; Eucharist; Marriage; End of Life issues and Funerals; and Ordination. With the exception of Vocation and Ordination, they are typically conducted at a retreat centre on a live-in basis. As well as the teaching aspect on the various themes, these retreats are intended to encourage and cultivate students’ capacities for introspection, self-discipline, and contemplative spiritual practice. The retreats also create an opportunity to build a community of support among the Anglican students and staff at VST which can positively impact the process of formation toward Anglican ministry.

LS680–689—Directed Studies in Liturgical Studies

Students may elect to do directed studies in selected topics and readings with individual instructors, to a maximum of 6 credit hours in either the M.Div. or M.A. degree.

NEW TESTAMENT

NT500—Synoptics

The purpose of this course is to introduce students to the critical issues entailed in the study of Matthew, Mark and Luke. Through a close reading of the differing literary genres that constitute the synoptic tradition, students reflect on the theologies of the synoptic gospels as well as on the critical issues involved in moving from biblical text to proclamation.

NT501—Paul

This course introduces students to New Testament Pauline literature. Through focusing on the socio-cultural environment that helped to form this literature, students will encounter the central critical issues in the interpretation of such topics as Jews and Gentiles in Pauline theologies, the role of women in Pauline communities, the relationship of the early church to the world and early Christian Christology.

BIBL500—Biblical Language Tools for Exegesis

A basic introduction to Biblical Hebrew and Koine Greek (NT) for students who have no background in biblical languages and who will need language tools to accomplish exegesis in upper level biblical courses. It will enable students to understand and analyze basic elements of syntax and sentence construction in Hebrew and Greek and develop competence in using exegetical resources and tools (theological dictionaries, interlinear Bibles, lexicons, Bible software, etc.) in the translation and interpretation of biblical texts.

NT6/740—John

This course introduces students to the gospel of John as a literary and historical document and as a resource for contemporary theology. By focusing on the socio-cultural environment in which this writing was formed, students will encounter the central critical issues in the interpretation of the relationship of the early church to the world, early Christian Christology and the place of wisdom theology in its formation. Students who elect Greek as their required biblical language will write a major exegetical paper in this course. Prerequisites: NT500 and NT1501

NT6/711—De/Colonizing Jesus: New Testament Christologies Against the Backdrop of the Roman Empire

This course investigates New Testament representations of Jesus and their function in creating social identity and witness in the context of Roman imperial society. Using the lenses of post-colonial studies, it takes up ways in which early Christians borrowed from the colonizing forces of imperial culture, especially the cult of the emperor, to build a counter-cultural identity. The course unfolds with a view to contemporary forms of Christian identity, rooted in spirited witness to the Reign of God in our midst. Prerequisites: NT500 and NT501

NT6/713—Creating Jesus: The Historical Jesus in Scholarship, Film & Fiction

This course will take up the figure of Jesus from three different angles: historical scholarship, film, and fiction. In each case we will consider the role of culture and context in accounts of the historical Jesus. The interest is as much in the historians, directors, and authors of Jesus as it is in the historical person, Jesus of Nazareth. Pre-requisite: NT500

NT6/741—Revelation

This course leads students through a close reading of the Book of Revelation to uncover its meaning in its socio-historical context and to explore its various interpretations both in critical scholarship and in popular culture. It introduces students to Revelation as an example of an ancient genre of literature and considers its enduring relevance to contemporary culture and Christian identity in a secular world. Prerequisites: NT500 and NT501

NT680 - 689—Directed Studies

Students may elect to do Directed Studies in selected topics and readings with individual instructors, to a maximum of 6-credit hours per degree for the M.Div. and M.A. degrees.

NT698—Major Exegetical Paper

Master of Divinity and M.A.T.S. students with a concentration in Biblical Studies are required to complete a major exegetical paper as a part of their program. The purpose of the major exegetical paper is for students, reflecting on their own social location as readers and interpreters of the Bible, to demonstrate exegetical ability by considering a selected passage with particular attention to its social and historical background, its literary structure and narrative context, its textual and grammatical properties, its history of interpretation, its theology and ideology and its meaning in our contemporary context. Full details of the paper requirement will be given in class.

Guidelines for the M.A.T.S. thesis are delineated in the **Supplementary Calendar/Student Handbook**.

**PASTORAL AND PUBLIC LEADERSHIP AND THEOLOGICAL FIELD EDUCATION**

**Integrative Theological Field Education**

Integrative ministry and leadership practice is an essential piece of the both the M.Div and MAPPL degrees. Students will have the opportunity to apprentice in best practice ministry and leadership field sites. At foundational and advanced levels, students prepare for field-based learning through course content and supervised field work in their area of concentration (ministry and/or public leadership). Field education is integrated into PTS01, PTS02, PTS51, and PT651/652. M.Div students are required to complete an additional stand alone Ministry Practicum in consultation with both VST and their denominational judicators.

**CPE Basic and Advanced - Clinical Pastoral Education**

CPE is an experiential action/reflection model of education. It is in many respects a hybrid blend of the pastoral/spiritual-tradition and modern sociological and psychological approaches to care. As a member of an inter-professional team, each student’s educational experience involves providing pastoral care to patients, families and staff. Learning occurs through direct experience, use of reflective tools, didactic sessions, dialogue around cases in an interfaith peer group, as well as individual supervision.

CPE is offered through participating hospitals, and application for a Unit must be made directly to the appropriate hospital Spiritual Care Supervisor before registration can take place at VST. Successful completion of a unit of CPE qualifies for one three-hour course credit and exemption from one term of the Ministry Practicum required of M.Div. students. In order to receive this credit and exemption, students must submit their final evaluations to the Director of Field Education for approval.

**PTS00—Theological and Spiritual Foundations in Public and Pastoral Leadership**

_The time_ is one of “emergence;” a “threshold time” characterized by a recognized shift in inherited patterns of thinking and acting. _The place_ is right here where your feet are planted and your relationship to those around you matters deeply. _The task_ is preparation for contributing to the collective spiritual work of embracing the intersection of suffering and wonder where questions of meaning and purpose arise. The goal of this course is to deepen our understanding of the teaching and practices of contemplation and action integral to the Christian life as a foundation for public and pastoral leadership in the 21st century.

**PTS01—Personal Foundations for Public and Pastoral Leadership: Leadership and Awareness of Self and Others (1.5)**

Awareness of oneself and others is a foundational requirement for public and pastoral leaders. When we know ourselves—our personality tendencies, our emotions, our identity in relation to God, and how our personal history and faith shapes our perceptions and behaviours, we can see more clearly how we impact others and how others may perceive and affect us. When we have skills to listen well and communicate appropriately, we can serve as a positive influence in the life of a community or organization. This course is an introduction to this crucial aspect of effective leadership—an inflection point in the lifelong journey towards gaining wisdom.

**PTS02—Practical Foundations of PPL: Leadership in Context (1.5)**

Building on the skills and understanding of Leadership Foundations: Self As Leader, Leading In Context will provide method and opportunity to explore potential studio practicum sites that combine leadership challenges, ministry opportunities and demonstrate best practices in pastoral and public ministry. To be effective in ministry practice and leadership in the public sphere it is critical to understand the field and its demands, expectations and possibilities. Preparation for practice of ministry is not introduced simply as skill development but rather as the formation of leaders who will understand and respond to the continually changing landscape of contemporary ministry and navigate communities in the art of resourced and adaptive change.

**PTS51—Pastoral/Spiritual Care and Practice**

To be a caregiver of another psyche or soul in times of everyday discernment, life transitions, trauma or crisis is a sacred and privileged call. As human beings our first instinct is to “fix” what is wrong and restore the comfort of the other and of ourselves. To be present with another's suffering without imposing our own opinions, prejudices or agenda is a critical skill. The goal of this course is to facilitate a level of self awareness conducive to caring without harm to the other; to develop skills in the practice of pastoral/spiritual care; to clarify the similarities and the differences in pastoral care, pastoral counselling and spiritual direction; and to learn the importance of a personal spiritual practice as self care.

**HIS/PTS/714—Leadership in the Ancient and Contemporary Church**

“Leadership” is a topic much in discussion in today’s church. This course aims to explore this topic theologically, with vantages from the ancient and contemporary churches as well as secular sources. The goal is to draw on the deep memory of the church’s wisdom on leadership with special concentration on the scriptures, on St. Augustine, and on John Wesley.

**SAH-L500—Practicing Evangelism in a Post-Christendom World**

On the surface many kind-hearted Christians in Canada today would agree that the “E word” has become an embarrassing practice within the broader Christian movement. While reading Scripture on Sunday mornings in church is fine, speaking to others about their deep faith in Jesus where they live, work or play the rest of the week seems daunting to some and unseemly to others. While sanctuaries encourage people to flex their doxological muscles, the wider world can be a place where many Christians experience regular “liturgical laryngitis.” And yet, the Triune God calls us to witness in the world. Like women running from the empty tomb to proclaim the resurrection to others locked away in fear, we are sent Sunday by Sunday into the world with good news to share. How we best practice that sharing of good news in the world that feels authentic and sensitive in a post-Christendom, pluralistic, multi-faith world is the heart of this course. Together, we will explore how to reclaim a “playful urgency” in sharing the gospel in partnership with the on going reconciliation and redemption of the Holy Spirit in the world.

**SAH-PTS/720—The World Wide Christian Movement Today**

Just over a century ago, the unquestioned center of world Christianity was the North Atlantic nations of Europe and North America. By the end of the century, however, the Church had significantly declined in the North Atlantic, and historic Christendom was all but gone. At the same time, surprisingly and in sharp contrast, the Christian movement had grown dramatically in the global South, most notably in the former ‘mission fields’ of Africa, Asia, and Latin America. This course presents an alternative to traditional Euro-centric histories of the Church by surveying the historic dynamics of the Christian movement, the burgeoning growth of the past century, and issues that impinge on the post-Christendom Western churches in light of recognizing the Christian movement as a highly diverse, multi-cultural, worldwide phenomenon.

**PT610—M.Div Integration Seminar: Practical Theology & Practice of Ministry (1.5)**

To lead from the heart of a community’s lived faith requires a capacity to read and interpret the theologies operative within a given context. The purpose of this senior seminar is to allow us to practice our skills as practical theologians – as interpreters of the implicit and explicit theologies shaping and expressing the belief and unbelief about God/world/church of those with whom we live, work, and serve. Building on the work begun in previous Pastoral and Public Leadership courses, PT610 will pay continued attention to three core issues affecting the practice of ministry: identity, theology, and context. Students will use methodologies of
The Integrative Paper on Public and Pastoral Ministry is an integrative paper of 3,500-5,000 words, normally required eight hours of practicum for third year M.Div. students. If students do not need the credit-hours, they may opt to take a Leave of Absence rather than pay the credit-fee for their Internship. Prerequisites: PT651/652 or equivalent.

PT651—Pastoral and Public Leadership Studio
Theologically trained professionals serving congregational or social ministries, agencies, organizations, and other institutions are continually presented with a changing context and the need for their organizations to respond. One of the critical leadership challenges is to identify opportunities which are truly strategic and then to assist the organization to embrace the occasion. This complex skill set requires an ability to read, interpret and move in the direction of the missio Dei in very concrete ways in widely diverse settings. This course provides an opportunity for those preparing for pastoral and public leadership to combine instruction in leadership theory and theology with on-the-ground experience of discerning and developing leadership challenges and ministry opportunities. Students also enroll in TFE Unit 2 during this course. Prerequisites: PT500; PT501 and PT502.

PT652—Pastoral and Public Leadership Studio
Continuation of PT651.

PT653—Advanced Leadership Seminar: Leadership Here and Now (1.5)
You are equipping yourself in faith for vocations in and beyond congregations - vocations of love, service, sacrament, reconciliation and compassion. The effective leader has advanced skills in understanding, navigating and working within complex communities. Building on and advancing the skills acquired in the Leadership Studio (PT651/652), this course aims to advanced students’ leadership capacity through the practice of self-reflection and group process.

PT680 - 689—Directed Studies
Students may elect to do Directied Studies in selected topics and readings with individual instructors, to a maximum of 6-credit hours per degree for the M.Div. and M.A. degrees.

PT698—Integrative Paper on Public and Pastoral Ministry
The Integrative Paper on Public and Pastoral Ministry is an integrative paper of 3,500-5,000 words, normally completed in the first term of the M.Div student’s final year. The purpose of the Integrative Paper on Public and Pastoral Ministry is to assist VST in assessing the ability of Master of Divinity students to integrate their academic and experiential learning and to demonstrate competency in the disciplines underlying a vocation in ministry. The paper might also be used by some denominational bodies in their assessment of candidates for ordered ministry. The paper should reflect the learning outcomes and competencies articulated by the school for the M.Div. degree.

PPL698—Capstone Project
The Capstone Project is an opportunity for students to complete their MA-PPL degree by addressing a practical, real world leadership challenge or opportunity using the skills and knowledge they have gained throughout their program of study. It provides opportunity for students to synthesise and apply their knowledge and experiences from their whole program, as well as helps them to negotiate successfully the transition to the next stage of their career, whether to the workplace or further study. The Capstone Project includes a 10-15 page paper and a presentation, normally completed in the final term of the student’s final year.

PPL699 - Thesis—Public and Pastoral Leadership
Guidelines for the M.A.T.S. thesis are delineated in the Supplementary Calendar.

CHRISTIAN SPIRITUALITY

IPS/SP500—Spiritual Formation in Communities
This course explores spiritual formation in three religious traditions. Normally taught over three weekends, each of which will be dedicated to one of the traditions, the course will focus on the specific form of spirituality brought by the instructor. Study of approaches to spirituality and specific spiritual practices will develop the student’s skills in understanding spirituality in general and the particular forms and ways of spirituality for each tradition. Students will read a resource bibliography, cultivate experiential learning by interaction with contemporary practitioners, and document their learning in modalities not restricted to academic-paper formats.

IPS/SP510—Liturgy, Ritual and the Sacred
An introduction to the theory and practice of ritual, focused on elements shared by multiple traditions. Humans use ceremony to approach the divine, build community, mark important life events, and more. Together, we will explore theological, psychological, sociological, anthropological, and philosophical theories of ceremonial activity. We will apply those theories as we study effective ritual facilitation to increase our own skills. The course is an MDiv/PPL spirituality elective and MAIS requirement.

IPS/SP513—Indigenous Spirituality and Christian Faith
Indigenous people take seriously their Indigenous and Christian heritage but room has not always been made for the former by the latter. This course will investigate the historical relationship between the two with the goal of offering possible models for telling the two stories “side by side, until they can be told together.” In an effort to do this we will use the language of theology and work toward creating space where we can see examples of Indigenous Christian Faith.

SP/THS/712—Theology and Practice of the Lord’s Prayer
This course will introduce students to historic and contemporary expositions of the Lord’s Prayer in their liturgical, homiletic, catechetical, devotional, musical, artistic and historical settings. The course is an exercise in the “communion of the saints” as students learn (critically) to pray from and with the saints to God following the model of prayer taught to disciples of Jesus Christ. Particular attention will be paid to how the Lord’s Prayer is
both interpreted in light of a context and is light by which a context is interpreted.

**SPS22—Women Mystics and the Christian Tradition**
This course will explore the lives, art and writing of several women mystics in different historical contexts and from a variety of traditions, bold voices to guide and inspire us in the 21st century. With language and images from domestic chores and administration, child-bearing and mothering, but also erotic desire and friendship, nature and community life, these women give expression to their experience of God. Although full of deep theological insight, many were dismissed by the institutional church. We will encounter, amongst others, some of Macrina, Hildegard of Bingen, Mechtild of Madgeburg, the Beguines, Julian of Norwich, Catherine of Sienna, Hadewijch, Teresa of Avila, Queen Marguerite of Navarre (patron of Jean Calvin), Margaret Fell, Anne Bathurst, Evelyn Underhill, and Mary Oliver. In addition to figures from the western tradition, we will engage lesser-known but important voices from non-western and indigenous cultures.

**SPSXX—Thomas Merton and Spirituality**
Through VST’s collaborative relationship with the Thomas Merton Society of Canada, a 1.5 credit hour course is offered every summer during Summer School on aspects of Thomas Merton’s life, work and thought. Information about this annual course in Spirituality can be found each spring on the VST website.

**SP/HB6/715—The Book of Genesis as Spiritual Text**
In the Book of Genesis, complex narratives invite the reader to reflect on issues of deep spiritual, existential, and philosophical importance. Issues include divine nature, human nature, dreams and visions, reconciliation, and family relationships. Guided by close reading of selected narratives, and employing interpretive techniques from the Jewish midrashic, kabbalistic, and Hasidic traditions, along with ecumenical depth psychological traditions, we will explore the issues from scholarly and personal perspectives. Pre-requisite: HB500

**SP680 - 689—Directed Studies**
Students may elect to do Directed Studies in selected topics and readings with individual instructors, to a maximum of six-credit hours per degree for the M.Div. and M.A. degrees.

**THEOLOGY**

**TH500—Christian Theology I**
This course will further critical understanding and appropriation of major Christian doctrines in the context of the contemporary church and in loving engagement with the world. It treats principally central Christian themes of doctrinal reflection (revelation, scripture, Trinity, creation, sin, Christ, reconciliation, Holy Spirit, church and hope) as well as contemporary critiques and reformation in the light of the ordered and sanctified components of Christian theological reflection (scripture, tradition, reason and experience).

**TH/SPS/712—Theology and Practice of the Lord’s Prayer**
This course will introduce students to historic and contemporary expositions of the Lord’s Prayer in their liturgical, homiletic, catechetical, devotional, musical, artistic and historical settings. The course is an exercise in the “communion of the saints” as students learn (critically) to pray from and with the saints to God following the model of prayer taught to disciples of Jesus Christ. Particular attention will be paid to how the Lord’s Prayer is both interpreted in light of a context and is light by which a context is interpreted.

**TH5/714—Indigenous Theologies and Epistemologies**
This course is an exploration of Indigenous ways of knowing and being. The course foci include Indigenous identity, Indigenous ways of teaching, ceremony and their implication for the practice of theological reflection.

The course focuses primarily upon North American Indigenous groups through dialogue, media, assigned reading and an extended retreat. This course will assist students with inquiring into the Indigenous mind as a way of thinking and being rather than a concept of identity and separation. Throughout discussions and writings, all are supported to explore personal and collective experiences past and present. Throughout all exploration, the emphasis will be on foundational spiritual teachings from Indigenous thought and protocol and the teachings of Christ.

**TH6/700—Christology**
The centre of Christian theology is Jesus Christ. Therefore, this course will focus on thinking through the scriptural and ecclesiastical traditions concerning the person and work of Christ. This will provide the basis for a discussion about the implication of Christology for the present and future Church. Thus, the course will seek to engage the ideas represented by the councils, creeds of past theologians, and then move to examine the theological praxis that resulted in a colonial and post-colonial context. Indigenous thought will be a key component in the teaching. All this in hopes of the learner developing a shared praxis based upon a renewed Christology. Pre-requisite: TH500

**SAH-TH6/722—Missional Theology in a Post-Christendom World**
This course introduces the historical-cultural context and key voices that shaped a missional theology movement in the late-twentieth century, and the implications of this distinctive perspective for contemporary church leadership in North America. Pre-requisite: TH500

**HIS/TH6/715—Theology and Biblical Interpretation**
The last generation or two in theology has seen an explosion of proposals to return to ancient Christian ways of interpreting. This course will examine what I call the “back to allegory” movement. What are these interpreters declaring that they had lost or neglected in the church’s practices of interpreting? How might our ministries look different if we reappropriated those forgotten treasures? How can it be done responsibly without losing the gifts of modern interpretation? This course will address such questions with help from ancient interpreters like Origen and Augustine, with contemporary reappropriators such as Karlfried Froehlich, Peter Leithart and Sarah Coakley. Our hope is to produce our own theology of scripture by which Christ interprets his bible for the sake of his church. Pre-requisite: TH500

**TH6/715—Kierkegaard**
Provocative, prophetic, relentless, playful: many of the most influential philosophical and theological movements of the last 100 years have claimed Søren Kierkegaard as one of their own. But Kierkegaard is notoriously difficult to school. The purpose of this class is a detailed introduction to the thought of Kierkegaard through a close reading of some of his most influential writings. Top of the agenda will be to get a feeling for his unceasingly dialectical way of thinking. We will encounter his use of pseudonyms, and consider his technique of “indirect” (as opposed to “direct”) communication. We will pay close attention to his concept of selfhood, including the so-called “stages of existence”; but concentrating especially on his notions of paradox, striving, inward deepening, faith and offense, and the God-relation. In preparation for this course, it is highly recommended students read Plato’s dialogue, “Meno”. Pre-requisite: TH500

**TH6/750—Reformed Theology in the 19th and 20th Centuries**
This course is designed to acquaint students with the evolving theological expression of the Reformed tradition in its 19th and 20th century embodiments as it responds and interacts with modernity and post-modernity in an increasingly non-western context. This will involve examination of Reformed doctrine as it finds expression in major figures, schools and movements throughout the world. Ad hoc attention will be given to the authority of Scripture, the nature of critical biblical interpretation, the role of experience in theological reflection, the
relationship between faith and culture and faith and science, Christianity among the religions, social justice and care for creation. Prerequisite: TH500

TH653—Interpretation and Imagination in ‘Post-liberal’ Theology
Post-liberal theology features imagination in both critical and constructive theological endeavour. In this course we will examine the work of a range of post-liberal theologians, philosophers, pastoral theologians and biblical scholars on the role and limitation of imagination across the theological curriculum. Particular attention is paid to the intellectual conditions that have lead to the importance of imagination in theology, to the role of revelation and scripture in forming and funding imagination and to the prophetic function of ‘faithful’ imagination in preaching, pastoral practice, biblical interpretation, ethics and social action. Prerequisite: TH500

HIS/TH6760—Christianity and Culture: Barth & the Rise of National Socialism
This course examines the responses of the churches in Germany to the rise of National Socialism, particularly in the early 1930s. We will investigate the history and principal features of the so-called German Christians as they assimilate to Nazi ideology in a ‘people’s church’ (Volkskirche) based not on baptism but an association of ‘blood’ and ‘race’. We also explore the origins and development of the confessing church, with special attention to the writings of Karl Barth and the Barmen Declaration. Finally, we turn to the reception of the event and literature of the German ‘Church struggle’ (Kirchenkampf) in Canadian churches with a view to its relevance to the question of the German ‘Church struggle’ (Kirchenkampf) in Canadian churches with a view to its relevance to the question of the German ‘Church struggle’ (Kirchenkampf). Pre-requisites: TH500 & HIS500

TH6/780—Contemporary Trinitarian Thought
This course explores the ‘rediscovery’ of the doctrine of the Trinity in twentieth-century theology. Current projects in Trinitarian theology are examined for their appropriation of scripture and tradition and for their fruitfulness in funding ecclesiology, liturgy, missiology and ethics. Special attention will be paid to the influence of Orthodox (Cappadocian) Trinitarian thought in recent Trinitarian formulations. Among the writers considered are Barth, Moltmann, Gunton, Jüngel, Zizioulas, Placher, LaCugna and Tanner. Pre-requisite: TH500

TH680—Directed Studies
Students may elect to do Directed Studies in selected topics and readings with individual instructors, to a maximum of 6-credit hours per degree.

TH699—Thesis: Theology
Guidelines for the M.A.T.S. thesis are delineated in the Supplementary Calendar/Student Handbook.

MASTER OF THEOLOGY

In addition to the courses listed below, all courses cross-listed with a 700 number in the course listings can be taken at the Advanced Degree level.

H8800—Social World of Ancient Israel: Critical Contexts
This advanced seminar will be grounded in a sociological study of ancient Israel as a basis for critical applications/appropriation of social world topics in contemporary contexts. The course will cover methods and topics in the sociology of ancient Israel, and reading in the literature of social scientific criticism in the last three decades in Hebrew Bible studies. Students will study the impact of social scientific methods on Biblical research and interpretation, including perspectives that emerged in biblical studies across disciplines with literary, feminist, ideological, liberation theology, and global approaches. Pre-requisite: ThM student or permission from the instructor

HIS800—Graduate Seminar in Ancient Christianity (Second - Sixth Century)
This course is designed for ThM Students doing advanced degree work in history. Topics will include Second Century Christianity; Gender and Social Identity in the Early Church; topics relating to central figures in early Christianity (Augustine; Origen; etc.); Art, Empire, and Theology in Early Christianity; Politics and Church in Late Antiquity. Pre-requisite: Th.M student or permission from the instructor

HIS805—Graduate Seminar in Historical Studies
Each year or as needed, VST offers an historical topics seminar at the Th.M level in selected areas. Pre-requisite: Th.M student or permission from the instructor

NT800—Graduate New Testament Seminar
This course is designed for ThM students doing advanced degree work in biblical studies. Topics will include: Postmodern Biblical exegesis; Mark in Literary and Post-Structuralist Perspective; Social Scientific Study of the New Testament; Luke-Aックス; Art, Empire, and the New Testament; Colossians and Philemon in the History of Interpretation. Pre-requisite: Th.M student or permission from the instructor

TH800—Graduate Seminar in Theology
Each year or as needed, VST offers a seminar in topics related to theology at the Th.M level in selected areas. Recent examples include, “A Secular Age”; “Re-Imagining God and the World; “Readings in Post-Liberal Theology”. Pre-requisite: Th.M student or permission from the instructor

TH810—A Secular Age
This seminar takes the form of reading and discussing Charles Taylor’s Templeton Prize Winning book, A Secular Age, as well as significant reviews and review essays of it. The book chronicles the rise of Western secularity, signal features of which are the marginalization of religious institutions and their influence in public life. The central feature that Taylor identifies, however, is that belief in God has become a matter of choice, one human possibility among others. Taylor chronicles how it got this way in the West and draws attention to what it might possibly mean for the world, as people struggle to make sense of their lives and give shape to their spiritual aspirations. Pre-requisite: Th.M student or permission from the instructor

Th.M—Directed Studies
Th.M. students may elect to pursue Directed Studies in selected topics and readings with individual instructors, subject to the availability of the instructor’s time.

THM898—Th.M Project
Guidelines for the Th.M. project are delineated in the Supplementary Calendar/Student Handbook.

THM899—Th.M Thesis
Guidelines for the Th.M. thesis are delineated in the Supplementary Calendar/Student Handbook.