

Summer Reading for Masters-level Students Entering VTS August 2024

The following pages contain information about summer reading to help you prepare for your transition to seminary life. Please read carefully; the list is sorted by class. Some readings are required, some are recommended, so read carefully. Required readings have specific due dates for completion, again, so read carefully.

Section I contains readings required and recommended to be completed prior to August term courses: PRXT 500, WRRE 505, and CHWT 675. Please note which of these courses is required for the specific program in which you are enrolled.

Section II contains readings to be completed prior to the Living and Learning at VTS sessions (August 8th) and Intercultural Competency orientation sessions (August 29th).

Section III contains an additional recommended reading, as well as texts that are recommended to purchase before you arrive on campus.

SECTION I: August Term Course Readings

PRXT 500: Foundations for Ministry (required for M.Div., Pathway to Ministry, and MA in Christian Formation students; recommended for students in other MA tracks)

Using the theme of “disruption,” students will pay close attention to their own experience of disruption, dislocation, and disorientation. Together we will examine ways in which VTS is disrupted and disruptive, and patterns of disruption across the North American church and global landscape. How does Holy Scripture and our Christian heritage speak to experiences of disruption and call leaders to be both pastoral and disruptive? Where do we sense God’s call to us in these times of disruption and change?

Using practical theological methods (descriptive/empirical, interpretive, normative, and pragmatic) students will examine their assumptions about mission, ministry, and leadership as they enter into a new cultural context and begin to build community.

The course will stretch students’ understanding of the theology and practice of ministry, prepare them for healthy participation in the common life of VTS, and equip them for CPE (Clinical Pastoral Education), Contextual Ministry, internships and further study in the field of Practical Theology.

Note that August term courses are unique in our curriculum. Students take only one course, and PRXT 500 is designed to be pedagogically immersive. Students should expect to need additional hours in the day, beyond the classroom, to complete the work.

Required Texts:

Susan Beaumont, *How to Lead When You Don’t Know Where You Are Going: Leading in a Liminal Season*. Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2019. ISBN: 9781538127681

Verna J. Dozier, *The Dream of God: A Call to Return*. Cambridge, MA: Cowley, 1991/2006. ISBN: 1561010464

Howard Thurman, *Jesus and the Disinherited*. Boston, MA: Beacon Press, 1949/1996. ISBN: 9780807010297

Reading Reflection Forms for PRXT 500:

Please complete [a Reading Form](#) by 5pm Friday, August 2nd

Be reassured that the Reading Form will be "graded" with completion points. We want a sense of your comprehension of the material and your honest opinions, and we look forward to getting to know more about you through them.

No expertise is assumed.

Pre-class Reflection Form - 20 (completion) points

- 20 points - submission by deadline, reflections demonstrate effort to read and engage texts
- 10 points - submission late but thoughtfully completed, or submissions by deadline and reflections do not substantially engage texts
- 5 points – late and shallow work
- 0 points - no submission

If you have questions or concerns about this assignment, please contact Dr. Lisa Kimball, lkimball@vts.edu or Dr. Elizabeth DeGaynor, edegaynor@vts.edu

CHWT 675: Mapping Anglican Studies (required for Anglican Studies students)

Required Texts:

Mark Chapman, *Anglicanism: A Very Short Introduction* (Oxford, 2006).

Robert S. Heaney & William L. Sachs, *The Promise of Anglicanism* (SCM Press, 2019)

Recommended Text:

Carla Roland Guzman, *Unmasking Latinx Ministry for Episcopalians* (CPI, 2020)

WRRE 505: Foundations for Theological Writing (recommended for international students and students whose primary daily language is not English).

The following readings are recommended before the beginning of August term, but not required. Sections will be posted to Brightspace, so check out the course page as soon as you have access. We will work with these books in our class time together.

If you want to do some reading to get ready for the class, and the year ahead, we recommend that you start with:

Robert W. Pazmiño, *Doing Theological Research: An Introductory Guide for Survival in Theological Education* (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2009).

This is a very short book, but the text provides an excellent overview of the philosophy and challenges of writing in the North American seminary environment. It is worth it to read the entire book, but if you just want a taste of the text, focus on Chapter 2 and Chapter 5.

If you are coming to VTS from an active teaching or ministry position, we recommend that you read this book to help ease the transition from the front of the classroom/pulpit back to the student chair:

Brandon J. O'Brien, *Writing for Life & Ministry: A Practical Guide to the Writing Process for Teachers and Preachers* (Chicago: Moody Publishers, 2020).

This is also a very short book but written from a non-academic perspective. We will use some of the chapters from this book in class, but to begin, we recommend that you read Chapters 2, 4,5, and 6 to get started.

SECTION II: Orientation Sessions

Learning and Living at VTS

Required for ALL entering students.

Barreto, E. D. (Ed.). (2015), Introduction, "Thinking Spiritually," in *Thinking Theologically* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2015), 1-5, 119-134.

Reflection Questions: In his introduction (pp. 1-5), Barreto makes three assertions as to what theological thinking is, employing terms that are often used in opposition to each other. Please reflect on a moment or a project in which your thinking was both embodied and cerebral, emotional and intellectual, and/or relational and individualistic. That is, can you describe a time when you were thinking theologically? Use the essay by Carvalhaes to spur your reflection on embodied spirituality as an element in this thinking.

The Book of Jonah:

Reflection Questions: What are the key moments of Jonah's call? What does he learn? What do you as the reader learn about Jonah, his faith, and his community?

Paul's First Letter to the Church at Corinth

Reflection Questions: What are the challenges in community that Paul is confronting? How does he translate the Gospel into norms for healthy community? What aspects of a communal Rule of Life emerge from this letter?

From the *Book of Common Prayer*, pp. 299-308.

Reflection Questions: What do the promises of the Baptismal Covenant suggest might be core elements of our rule of life as individuals? As a gathered community? What are the implications for Christian witness in the world?

SECTION III: Recommended additional reading for all students

Pazmiño, Robert W. *Doing Theological Research: An Introductory Guide for Survival in Theological Education*. Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock, 2009.

Recommended books for the library of all students

We recommend that you purchase at least one study Bible, such as the following:

- *The New Oxford Annotated Bible: New Revised Standard Version with the Apocrypha*, Fourth Edition; edited by Michael D. Coogan (New York: Oxford University Press, 2010). 2480 pp. Hardcover: ISBN 9780195289558. Softbound college edition: ISBN 9780195289602.
- *The HarperCollins Study Bible: New Revised Standard Version including Apocryphal Deuterocanonical Books*, Fully Revised and Updated; edited by Harold W. Attridge (San Francisco: HarperOne, 2006). 2203 pp. Hardcover: ISBN 9780060786854. Softbound: 9780061228407.
- *The SBL Study Bible: The New Revised Standard Version Updated Edition with the Apocrypha*, Fully Revised and Updated by the Society of Biblical Literature (San Francisco: HarperOne, 2023). 2240 pp. ISBN: 9780062969422.

In addition, we recommend that M.Div. students have:

- *The Book of Common Prayer*. New York, NY: Church Publishing, 1979.
- *The Hymnal 1982*. New York: Church Hymnal Corp, 1985.