

**PROMPTS FOR
ADVISING SESSIONS**

MTS DEGREE PROGRAM

MTS Orientation (for entering students)

- ❖ What motivates your decision to pursue theological education?
- ❖ What issues in the world and/or religion are most capturing your imagination ?
- ❖ Do you know your career/vocational goals? How do you plan explore these possibilities while completing your degree program?
- ❖ How do you see your courses and community involvements feeding your interests?

- Are you planning to choose MTS General Study or Concentration Plan?
- Have you signed up for Hebrew Bible? Or have you filed your petition for a waiver for a higher level course in HB?
- If you are Concentration Plan: what concentration(s) are you planning on pursuing and why?

MTS Fall I (or after 12 hours of enrollment)

- ❖ As you reflect on your work at VDS so far, what have you found most compelling and animating? What academic experiences stand out to you? What community experiences, including programming, stand out to you?
- ❖ What career/vocational possibilities are you considering for yourself? Why? What have you ruled out? Why?
- ❖ In what ways do you anticipate your classes and community participation next semester feed your intellectual interests and vocational possibilities?

- Have you signed up for Foundations and New Testament? Or have you filed your petition for a waiver for a higher level course in NT?
- What concentrations are you still considering and how are they related to your vocational goals?
- In what other required Common Courses (General Plan of Study) and Concentration Courses are you enrolling? Have you looked at the 2 year course projections to see what might be offered later in these concentrations?
- Have you scheduled an initial conversation with the Director of Student Life and Spiritual Formation?

MTS Spring I (or after 24 hours of enrollment)

- ❖ As you reflect on your work at VDS so far, what have you found most compelling and animating? What academic experiences stand out to you? What community experiences, including programming, stand out to you?
 - ❖ What gifts, strengths, capacities have you discovered or re-confirmed in yourself?
 - ❖ What truths, beliefs, and value statements about work and/or vocation are most important to your identity?
 - ❖ What kinds of networks are you establishing with people in careers you admire?
 - ❖ Have you had a conversation with the Director of Stewardship and Vocational Planning about your plans for the summer and for beginning for next steps related to career in your second year?
- Concentration Plan:
 - What concentration are you declaring during registration?
 - Have you fulfilled a praxis course for your concentration? How many of the four concentration courses do you have remaining, are there any specifically required concentration courses you need to fulfill (esp. SSA, PCS, RAC)?
 - Have you looked at updated course projections to make sure you can complete your requirements?
 - General Plan:
 - How many remaining Common Classes do you have? Have you looked at updated course projections to make sure you can complete your requirements?
 - Are you collecting your papers for your portfolio? Or are you planning on doing a thesis/project?
 - Are you considering enrolling in a Field Education course? If so, have you scheduled a meeting with Field Education faculty?

MTS Fall II (or after 36 hours of enrollment)

- ❖ What realizations did you have after completing the Project 360 essay?
 - ❖ If you had to describe your growth since you've been in this program, what would you say you've learned, particularly about yourself in community?
 - ❖ What gifts, skills, and passions do you think you possess that the world needs?
 - ❖ Have you experienced moments of *via negativa*, that is, pathways that have closed, ways your mind and heart have changed, or possibilities that are narrowing?
 - ❖ How do you imagine embodying theologically-educated leadership in your chosen vocational field?
 - ❖ What are your plans for your MTS Thesis? Have you secured the first reader for the MTS thesis/project? Are you signing up for the MTS Thesis Writing Course (non-credit/tuition bearing)?
- General Plan:
 - What final requirements must you satisfy?
 - Concentration Plan:
 - Have you completed your praxis requirement and all four of your concentration requirements?
 - Have you met with the Director of Student Life and Spiritual Formation to put together a plan for researching careers, setting up job interviews, and updating your resume and/or CV and other application materials?

MDIV PROGRAM

MDIV Orientation (for entering students)

- ❖ What motivates your decision to pursue theological education?
- ❖ What issues and/or courses are you most passionate about?
- ❖ How do you plan to explore your career/vocational ideas while completing your degree program?
- ❖ What have you learned about yourself in community, and how might that knowledge translate into this community?
- ❖ How do you plan to attend to growing your spirituality here (if that is a priority for you)?
- Have you signed up for Hebrew Bible, and History of Global Christianities I? Or have you filed your petition for a waiver for a higher level course in HB or HGC I?
- What concentration(s) are you planning on pursuing and why?

MDIV Fall I (or after 12 hours of enrollment)

- ❖ What courses, or parts of courses, are currently most interesting and generative for you?
- ❖ How is your co-curricular and/or community participation feeding your academic, vocational, and theological development?
- ❖ In what ways will your classes next semester feed your vocational ideals and build related necessary skills?
- Have you signed up for Foundations, New Testament and History of Global Christianities II? Or have you filed your petition for a waiver for a higher level course in NT or HGC II?
- What concentrations are you considering and how are they related to your vocational goals?
- Have you scheduled an initial meeting with Field Education faculty regarding your learning context [placement site] for fall/spring next year?

MDIV Spring I (or after 24 hours of enrollment)

- ❖ What parts of your coursework, co-curricular, and community involvements seem to bring you most alive?
- ❖ Where do your vocational interests currently lay?
- ❖ What kinds of networks are you establishing with people in careers you admire?
- ❖ How might you utilize field education to discern your vocational gifts?
- Have you signed up for Intro to Christian Theology (or submitted a waiver) and 7900 Supervised Ministry and Seminar?
- Have you met with Field Education faculty regarding your placement [learning context] for 7900 Supervised Ministry and Seminar?
- What concentration do you think you will choose and how might your Field Education placement fulfill its praxis-requirement?
- Have you looked at the 2 year course projections to see what might be offered later in these concentrations and how you might fulfill your remaining Common Course requirements?

MDIV Fall II (or after 36 hours of enrollment)

- ❖ In what ways are your coursework, especially field education, and co-curricular involvements helping you discern your post-graduation plans?
 - ❖ Describe your growth since you have been here. What have you learned about yourself in community? About growing your spirituality (if that is a priority for you)?
 - ❖ In what ways are you connected to a community of faith or practice that can assist you in professional ministerial formation? Are you connected with your ecclesial body if you are exploring ordination?
 - ❖ Describe some of the professional connections you would like to continue to cultivate in the next year?
 - ❖ What truths, beliefs, and value statements about work and/or vocation are most important to your identity?
- Are you signed up for 7900 Supervised Ministry and Seminar? What other Common Course requirements remain for you?
 - What Concentration will you be declaring during registration? Why?
 - How are you fulfilling your Concentration praxis requirement and any other required courses within the Concentration (esp. PPCL, Chap, SSA, PCS, RAC)?
 - Have you looked at the updated 2 year course projections to see what might be offered later in these concentrations and how you might fulfill your remaining Common Course requirements?
 - Do you have any ordination requirements you need to fulfill (esp. UMC, PCUSA, Episcopalian)? Are you aware of partner offerings at Sewanee School of Theology?
 - Have you had a conversation with the Director of Student Life and Spiritual Formation about your experience in field education and how this is informing next steps related to career?

MDIV Spring II (or after 48 hours of enrollment)

- ❖ What are you learning through your coursework—particularly field education--and co-curricular involvement about what you may want to do after graduation?
 - ❖ What have you learned about cultivating self-awareness and professional practice?
 - ❖ What gifts, skills, and passions do you think you possess that the world needs?
 - ❖ How do you understand “ministry” and in what ways will you be using your summer to further your professional ministerial formation?
 - ❖ What do you think the focus of your Sr. Seminar Project will be and why?
- Are you signed up for MDiv Senior Seminar and Project?
 - What Common Courses and Concentration courses remain for you? Have you fulfilled your Concentration praxis requirement and any other required Concentration courses?
 - Have you looked at the updated 2 year course projections to see what might be offered later in these concentrations and how you might fulfill your remaining Common Course requirements?

MDIV Fall III (or after 60 hours of enrollment)

- ❖ What realizations did you have after completing the Project 360 essay?
 - ❖ Describe the kinds of work you have done previously and how it has impacted your sense of vocational identity.
 - ❖ How do you imagine embodying theologically-educated leadership in your chosen vocational field?
- What Common Courses and Concentration courses remain for you? Have you fulfilled your Concentration praxis requirement and any other required Concentration courses?
 - Have you put together a plan for researching careers, setting up job interviews, and updating your resume and/or CV and other application materials?

THM PROGRAM

Entering ThM students

- ❖ What motivates your decision to pursue this degree?
 - ❖ What issues and area(s) of study are you most passionate about?
 - ❖ Are you planning to do the accelerated program (12-15 hours/semester [+summer, if needed] for one year) or the paced program (6-9 hours/semester [+ summer, if needed] for two years)?
- Register for the selected courses accordingly

ThM students progressing through the program

- ❖ Are your original motivations for pursuing this degree still the same or have they changed?
 - ❖ What issues and area(s) of study are you most passionate about? What have you learned, so far, about them in your time at VDS?
 - ❖ What are your plans for the future, vocationally?
 - ❖ How well have you progressed through the program -- accelerated (12-15 hours/semester [+summer, if needed] for one year) or the paced program (6-9 hours/semester [+ summer, if needed] for two years) – you signed up for ?
- Register for the selected courses accordingly
- Complete Declaration of Area of Study