

# THEOLOGY M.A.

Department Website: <https://www.vanguard.edu/academics/academic-programs/graduate/theological-studies> (<https://www.vanguard.edu/academics/academic-programs/graduate/theological-studies/>)

## Mission

The Master of Arts in Theology (M.A.T.) enhances a student's understanding of biblically-informed faith by providing a firm foundation in systematic theology, biblical studies, and applied theology. This degree prepares students for ministry in the Church and can serve as a strong academic platform for post-graduate studies.

## Admission Requirements for the M.A.T.

A student seeking admission to the M.A.T. must meet the following requirements:

1. The completion of a Bachelor's degree from a regionally accredited college or university.
  - a. Exceptions:
    - i. Applicants from institutions that are accredited by the Association for Biblical Higher Education (ABHE), or from other institutions not accredited by a regional association, are considered on an individual basis. If accepted, provisional standing is applied. After completion of 12 units earning a grade of "B" or better in each course, the student may request transferring to regular standing.
    - ii. Students in the senior year of their Bachelor's degree can still apply. Such students may be admitted with provisional standing while finishing their Bachelor's degree.
2. A cumulative grade point average of 2.5 or higher (on a four-point scale) in all Bachelor's work.
  - a. Exception: At the discretion of the Admissions Committee, if the GPA is below 2.5, student applications may still be considered. If accepted, students will be admitted provisionally and must complete the first 12 units of graduate level courses with grades of "B" or above before they can be considered for regular standing.
3. Completion of the following prerequisites: Old Testament Survey and New Testament Survey. Students may submit portfolio for faculty approval.

## Transfer Credit

Students in the M.A.T. program may transfer a maximum of twelve (12) units of coursework from an accredited graduate program when the coursework applies directly to their program design. Requests for transfer credit are to be submitted to the Registrar no later than the deadline for advancement to candidacy. Final decisions on matters of transfer credit rest with the Registrar upon receipt of the recommendation of the Director. No course with a grade lower than "B-" (2.67) is considered in transfer toward the M.A.T. degree. No transfer credit can be granted for coursework used for a degree awarded by another institution. A minimum of 36 units at VU is required of all students in the M.A.T. program.

## The Academic Program of the M.A.T.

This degree program requires 12 required courses (36 units), 3 elective courses (9 units) and an Exit Option (3 units). Students choosing the Directed Reading (3 units) or the Master's Thesis (3 units) Exit Option instead of the Integrative Seminar must register for an additional 3 units for the Exit Option Design and Proposal course, which will be applied toward the 9-unit elective requirement. The program will consist of 48 total units.

## Graduation Requirements

To complete a graduate degree program, students will need to successfully complete the specified coursework, choose and complete an exit option, and apply for graduation. Details of these steps are as follows:

### Coursework and Academic Standing

Students must successfully complete the core and elective courses for an approved program. "Successful completion" means achieving a minimum cumulative grade point average of 2.67 for the M.A.T. degree. In addition, no more than two course grades of C or C- can count toward the M.A.T. degree. Lastly, the student must have regular standing (rather than provisional), with all academic deficiencies resolved.

### Choose Exit Option

The final stage of the degree program is the exit option, which allows the candidate to develop specialized expertise in an area of interest related to the academic program.

### M.A.T. students may complete the exit option in one of the following ways:

Option 1: RELG-693 Integrative Seminar (3 units)

Option 2: RELG-790 Exit Option Design and Proposal (3 units) and RELG-795 Directed Reading (3 units)

Option 3: RELG-790 Exit Option Design and Proposal (3 units) and RELG-798 Master's Thesis (3 units)

Students who choose Option 2 or Option 3, must obtain approval from appropriate faculty by no later than the beginning of the semester in which the exit option will be completed.

### GUIDELINES FOR INTEGRATIVE SEMINAR

The Integrative Seminar option is available to students who are enrolled in the M.A.T. programs. The Integrative Seminar is designed to help students reflect theologically on ministry experience by integrating what they have learned in graduate coursework with the practice of ministry.

*To complete this exit option:*

Register in RELG-693 Integrative Seminar (3 units).

### GUIDELINES FOR DIRECTED READING OPTION

In general, the directed reading option is an opportunity to explore a subject of interest. Research should be supported by at least 4,500 pages of scholarly reading, and the results are expressed by written critiques,

oral or written examinations, annotated bibliographies, or other means that the student and faculty mentor have agreed on.

*To complete this exit option:*

1. Students should register for RELG-795 Directed Reading (3 units) after having the RELG-790 Exit Option Design and Proposal course (3 units).
2. Select a topic. The exit option design and proposal professor and/or academic advisor should be consulted as needed.
3. Select Faculty Committee Chair and begin to describe the research topic in prospectus form (as instructed in the exit option design and proposal course).
4. Select one other faculty reader after consulting with the Chair.
5. Complete the Exit Option application and return it to the School of Theology and Ministry Office.
6. Submit a copy of the approved prospectus with the School of Theology and Ministry Office.
7. Submit the final draft of the synthesis paper to the Faculty reader and Chair. Deadlines for submission of the synthesis paper are available from the School of Theology and Ministry Office.
8. Complete the directed reading in consultation with the Chair, and submit a copy of the final synthesis paper to the School of Theology and Ministry Office.

### GUIDELINES FOR THESIS

A thesis is an intensive study of a subject relevant to the student's concentration. The project options allow one to study/survey, and contribute to some aspect of ministerial studies. Research for any option will be guided by three professors and formally written and defended. The average size of a thesis is approximately 100 pages.

*To complete this exit option:*

1. Register for RELG-798 Master's Thesis (3 units) after having taken the RELG-790 Exit Option Design and Proposal course (3 units).
2. Select a topic. The research methodology professor and/or academic advisor should be consulted as needed.
3. Select a faculty committee chair and clarify the research topic in prospectus form (as instructed in the Exit Option Design and Proposal course).
4. Select a faculty committee in consultation with the committee chair. The committee must consist of at least three faculty members. In rare instances, students may request that scholars other than VU faculty be allowed to serve as readers on their thesis committee.
5. Complete the Exit Option Application and return it to the School of Theology and Ministry Office.
6. File a copy of the approved prospectus with the School of Theology and Ministry Office.
7. The completed thesis must be submitted at least three months prior to defense date. Deadlines for Defending the Thesis/Project are available from the School of Theology and Ministry Office.
8. Defend the exit option when the committee agrees that it is complete enough to defend.

### Application for Graduation

Students must file an application for graduation on the self-service portal no later than the beginning of the semester in which the degree will be granted, even if the student does not participate in the commencement ceremony. The degree is conferred on the last day of the semester in which the student has completed all degree program requirements as described above, and the student has satisfied the requirements below:

1. filed all the necessary forms in accordance with the timetable provided by the School of Theology and Ministry office;
2. successfully completed all degree requirements within the "maximum time" limits of eight (8) years;
3. if transferring any graduate coursework, submitted official, original transcripts accompanied by proper certification from all transfer institutions; and
4. settled all financial obligations to the university.

### Program Learning Outcomes

1. Students will gain competence in theology by reflecting on its classical topics in light of their historical developments and contextual challenges.
2. Students will develop competence in biblical theology and Scriptural interpretation.
3. Students will develop competence in applied theology through the study of ethics, leadership and ministry in various contexts.

## Requirements

### Core Course Requirements

These core courses embody specific, foundational readings, dialogue and research/writing instruction for each of the three areas of the degree.

Students gain familiarity with the scope of each academic discipline enabling them to proceed with the second level of the program. These courses also introduce the student to the books of the Old Testament and New Testament, to the study of Christian theology and ethics, to the distinctive features of a Pentecostal/Charismatic theology of church leadership and mission, including its biblical foundations and moral responsibilities, and principles of leadership which include sermon preparation, administration, pastoral care and counseling, intercultural and urban ministry, and spirituality.

Code	Title	Units
<b>Core Course Requirements</b>		
THOG-510	Systematic Theology: Christology, Anthropology, Soteriology	3
NTG-508	New Testament Theology & Interpretation	3
OTG-518	Old Testament Theology & Interpretation	3
CLSG-741	Expository Preaching	3
THOG-520	Systematic Theology: Pneumatology, Ecclesiology, and Eschatology	3
THOG-530	Systematic Theology: Theological Method, Revelation, and Theology Proper	3
THOG-536	Contemporary Pentecostal Theology	3
OTG-690	Seminar in Old Testament	3



NTG-690	Seminar:	3
CLSG-715	Church/Contemporary Moral Issues	3
CLSG-720	Theology/Theory of Leadership	3
THOG-645	Theology & Ministry/Postmodern Context	3

<b>Elective Course Requirements</b>		<b>9</b>
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The elective courses provide a broad base of interpretive skills in biblical interpretation, an understanding of Christian theology, and an introduction to the ministry and mission of the Christian church.

The elective courses can be distributed between Biblical Studies, Theology and Leadership, or focused on any one of the three areas.

<b>Biblical Studies</b>		
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Old Testament		
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OTG-503	Beginning Hebrew I	
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OTG-504	Beginning Hebrew II	
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OTG-631	Intermediate Hebrew I	
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OTG-632	Intermediate Hebrew II	
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OTG-670	Special Topic:	
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New Testament		
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NTG-503	Beginning Greek I	
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NTG-504	Beginning Greek II	
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NTG-631	Intermediate Greek I	
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NTG-632	Intermediate Greek II	
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NTG-670	Special Topic:	
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NTG-680	Ind Study:	
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<b>Theology and Ethics</b>		
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THOG-670	Special Topic:	
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THOG-680	Individual Study:	
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<b>Leadership Electives</b>		
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CLSG-601	History of Spirituality	
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CLSG-606	Spiritual Formation	
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CLSG-607	Spiritual Direction	
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CLSG-624	Change and Strategic Planning	
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CLSG-632	Team Development & Conflict Management	
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CLSG-646	Leadership/Character Developmt	
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CLSG-710	Mission/Culture in Theo Persp	
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CLSG-670	Special Topic:	
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CLSG-680	Ind Study: Leadership Studies	
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<b>Exit Option</b>		
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Select one of the following options:		3-6
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RELG-693	Integrative Seminar	
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RELG-791 & RELG-795	Exit Option Design/Proposal:leadership and Directed Reading	
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RELG-791 & RELG-798	Exit Option Design/Proposal:leadership and Master's Thesis	
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<b>Total Units</b>		<b>48-51</b>
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