

229. The program should introduce students to devotion to the Virgin Mary and the saints. It should also acquaint them with Catholic devotional practices:

230. In the course of the pre-theology program, there should be opportunities for days of recollection and a retreat of approximately one week.

231. The program should include conferences and workshops on the spiritual and practical aspects of formation for celibacy.

232. Seminarians in need of long-term therapy should avail themselves of such assistance before entering a pre-theology program.

233. Pre-theology candidates should be well integrated into the life of the sponsoring institution.

B. INTELLECTUAL FORMATION

234. Central to the academic formation of all pre-theology programs is the study of philosophy.¹²⁷ A philosophy program should be balanced, comprehensive, integrated, and coherent. It should include studies in metaphysics, anthropology, natural theology, epistemology, ethics, and logic. It should also include studies in the history of philosophy treating ancient, medieval, modern, and contemporary philosophy. Some treatment of American philosophy or social thought is also helpful for seminarians in understanding the underlying dynamics of contemporary society in the United States. The perennial philosophy of St. Thomas should be given the recognition which Church teaching accords it.¹²⁸

235. The study of undergraduate theology is essential for those who lack adequate catechesis in the faith and whose understanding of Catholic doctrine, customs, and culture is not as comprehensive as it ought to be. The courses offered in the basic teachings of the Church should ensure a knowledge of biblical revelation; the history and the doctrine of the Church; spirituality; Christian ethics; Catholic social teaching; liturgy; and the literature, art, and music of Catholic piety and culture. Candidates should also study the Church's teaching on ecumenism and interfaith relations. Undergraduate theology courses are intended as a preparation for studies in the theologate, not as a replacement for them.

236. Education in the liberal arts, especially foundational language skills, may be an important part of the program. Study of the biblical languages and Latin should be given the emphasis that church teaching accords it.¹²⁹

In some cases, English as a Second Language (ESL), Spanish, communications skills, and studies in literature may form an essential part of the program.

NORMS

237. Candidates for pre-theology should follow a careful and thorough admissions process equivalent to the entrance procedure for the theologate. This process should include specific recommendations concerning the candidates' program, its length and content.

238. A pre-theology program that does not offer courses in philosophy and/or undergraduate theology should be linked to a Catholic college or university with a complete curriculum of philosophical and undergraduate theology courses.

239. Sound philosophical formation requires 24 semester credit hours.¹³⁰ A minimum of 12 semester credit hours are required in appropriate courses of undergraduate theology.

240. Programs that utilize colleges and universities for philosophy and theological studies should carefully and consistently monitor the content and quality of their students' courses.

241. The study of Latin and the biblical languages is foundational and should be given the emphasis that church teaching accords it.¹³¹ The study of Spanish will also be important for many U.S. dioceses.

C. PASTORAL FORMATION

242. Pastoral formation introduces students to the practical, pastoral life of the Church. The degree and kind of pastoral involvement should be based on the candidates' previous pastoral experience or lack thereof. If at all possible, apostolic activity should be closely matched to the students' individual situation, supplementing their knowledge and experience of the Church's life and mission.

243. The program of apostolic formation should be directed to the formation of future priests. Its focus is pastoral service in light of priestly ministry. It is different from formation at the theologate level, which presupposes a knowledge of theology for purposes of theological reflection. It should include planned programs and well-chosen experiences under qualified supervision.