



Holy Apostles *College & Seminary*

Cultivating Catholic Leaders for Evangelization

Requirements of the Pre-Theology Intellectual Formation Program per the Program of Priestly Formation, 6th Ed. (2006)

Student Name: _____

Semester of Entry: _____

For questions, contact the Student Advisor at advising@holypostles.edu.

Philosophy Courses* (follow this sequence below):

Semester Completed

1. PHH 605 Ancient and Medieval Philosophy

2. PHH 620 Modern and Contemporary Philosophy

3. PHE 501 Ethics

4. PHS 551 Philosophical Anthropology

5. PHS 611 Logic and Epistemology

6. PHS 621 Philosophy of Nature & Metaphysics

7. PHH 781 Philosophy of St. Thomas Aquinas

8. PHE 663 Natural Law

9. PHS 541 Natural Theology

10. PHS 641 Reason in the Theology of St. Thomas

Theology Courses

1. DTH 101 Fundamental Theology

2. LLT 300 Liturgy

3. MTH 300 Moral Theology

4. SAS 101 Sacred Scripture

Highly recommended for those who have never formally studied the Catechism on the college level:

1. PAS 161 Catechism Pillars I & II

2. PAS 161 Catechism Pillars III & IV

Language (recommended):

1. LAT 201 Latin I

2. LAT 202 Latin II

* The philosophy courses listed here are all on the graduate level for the purpose of enabling students who desire to receive the MA in Philosophy with a concentration in General Studies to complete that degree by taking ENG 891 and writing a thesis.

Note also Section 162 of the PPF (provided in full below): Those who begin pre-theology without a solid liberal arts education should be provided a curriculum that supplies for lacunae in this area. The Catholic intellectual tradition (e.g., literature and the arts) should be a part of such a curriculum.

Relevant Sections from the Program of Priestly Formation, 6th Ed. (2006)

156. The philosophy program must include the study of logic, epistemology, philosophy of nature, metaphysics, natural theology, anthropology, and ethics:

- The study of logic helps seminarians to develop their critical and analytical abilities and become clearer thinkers who will be better able rationally to present, discuss, and defend the truths of the faith.
- The study of epistemology, the investigation of the nature and properties of knowledge, helps seminarians see “that human knowledge is capable of gathering from contingent reality objective and necessary truths,”⁹⁷ while recognizing also the limits of human knowledge. Moreover, it reinforces their understanding of the relationship between reason and revelation. They come to appreciate the power of reason to know the truth, and yet, as they confront the limits of the powers of human reason, they are opened to look to revelation for a fuller knowledge of those truths that exceed the power of human reason.
- The study of the philosophy of nature, which treats fundamental principles like substance, form, matter, causality, motion, and the soul, provides seminarians a foundation for the study of metaphysics, natural theology, anthropology, and ethics.
- The study of metaphysics helps seminarians explore fundamental issues concerning the nature of reality and see that reality and truth transcend the empirical. “A philosophy which shuns metaphysics would be radically unsuited to the task of mediation in the understanding of revelation.”⁹⁸ As the seminarian confronts the questions about the nature of being, he gains a deeper understanding and appreciation of God as the source of all being and gains some sense of how profound is this truth. A strong background in metaphysics also gives him the structure and ability to discuss certain theological concepts that depend on metaphysics for their articulation and explanation.
- The study of natural theology, which treats the existence of God and the attributes of God by means of the natural light of reason, provides a foundation for the seminarian’s study of theology and the knowledge of God by means of revelation.
- The study of philosophical anthropology helps seminarians explore “the authentic spirituality of man, leading to a theocentric ethic, transcending earthly life, and at the same time open to the social dimension of man.”⁹⁹ The philosophical study of “the human person, his fulfillment in intersubjectivity, his destiny, his inalienable rights, and his ‘nuptial character’ as one of the primary elements which is expressive of human nature and constitutive of society”¹⁰⁰ provides a foundation for the seminarian’s study of theological anthropology.
- The study of ethics, which treats general principles of ethical decision making, provides seminarians with a solid grounding in themes like conscience, freedom, law, responsibility, virtue, and guilt. Ethics also considers the common good and virtue of solidarity as central to Christian social political philosophy. It provides a foundation for the seminarian’s study of moral theology.

157. “Philosophical instruction must be grounded in the perennially valid philosophical heritage and also take into account philosophical investigation over the course of time. It is to be taught in such a way that it perfects the human development of students, sharpens their minds, and makes them better able to pursue theological studies.” The philosophy of St. Thomas Aquinas should be given the recognition that the Church accords it. Especially in the courses on the history of philosophy, there should be a significant treatment of St. Thomas’s thought, along with its ancient sources and its later development. The fruitful relationship between philosophy and theology in the Christian tradition should be explored through studies in Thomistic thought as well as that of other great Christian theologians who were also great philosophers. These include certain Fathers of the Church, medieval doctors, and recent Christian thinkers in the Western and Eastern traditions.

158. College-level seminarians should also begin the study of theology, with undergraduate courses that focus on the fundamental beliefs and practices of the Catholic faith. In particular, they should concentrate on those elements of the faith that may have been overlooked or neglected in the students’ earlier religious education and that stand as a presupposition for all forms of graduate theological study. College-level theology courses should study the themes contained in the Catechism of the Catholic Church, including courses on Catholic doctrine, liturgy and sacraments, Catholic morality, Christian prayer, and

Sacred Scripture. All seminarians should be thoroughly acquainted with the Catechism of the Catholic Church and its contents as a source for “a full, complete exposition of Catholic doctrine” and for “the requirements of contemporary catechetical instruction.”

In addition, the PPF directly addresses pre-theologians as follows:

161. Pre-theology programs, often organized in conjunction with a theologate or college seminary, prepare seminarians who have completed college but lack the philosophical and theological background and other areas necessary to pursue graduate-level theology. The study of philosophy is central to the academic formation of all pre-theology programs. The philosophical and theological preparation of pre-theology seminarians ought to match the requirements, as described above, for seminarians in a college seminary program, in particular, the 30 credit hours of philosophy. The temptation to abbreviate or circumvent requirements for pre-theology seminarians ought to be strenuously avoided.

162. Besides philosophical and theological studies, the pre-theology program should strive to provide seminarians with an understanding of the historical and cultural context of their faith. Those who begin pre-theology without a solid liberal arts education should be provided a curriculum that supplies for lacunae in this area. The Catholic intellectual tradition (e.g., literature and the arts) should be a part of such a curriculum. Education in rhetoric and communications as well as language study is appropriate for a pre-theology course of studies. Latin and Greek are especially important. The study of Spanish or other languages used where one will serve in pastoral ministry should be included in the course of studies throughout the period of priestly formation, including pre-theology.

185. Because two full years should be dedicated to the philosophical disciplines, pre-theology programs should extend for at least two calendar years in length.

186. Sound philosophical formation requires a biennium of study, which is understood in the United States to be at least 30 semester credit hours together with the out-of-classroom work associated with each credit hour traditionally expected in American higher education. The philosophical curriculum must include the study of the history of philosophy (ancient, medieval, modern, and contemporary), logic, epistemology, metaphysics, philosophy of nature, natural theology, anthropology, and ethics. Seminaries should ensure that the philosophy is appropriate for studying Catholic theology and explore creative curricular strategies so that students can grasp the linkage between philosophical insights and theological frameworks.

187. A minimum of 12 semester credit hours is required in appropriate courses of undergraduate theology, which provide a solid foundation in Catholic doctrine through a thorough study of the Catechism of the Catholic Church. These courses should study the themes of the Catechism (doctrine, liturgy and sacraments, morality, prayer) as well as Sacred Scripture.

188. Programs that utilize colleges and universities for philosophy and theological studies should carefully and consistently monitor the content and quality of their students' courses. It is essential that philosophical instruction be grounded in the perennially valid philosophical heritage, as well as taking into account philosophical investigations over the course of time.

189. A knowledge of Latin and the biblical languages is foundational and should be given the emphasis that church teaching accords it. Particular attention must be given to ensure that before entering the theologate all seminarians can demonstrate that they have acquired that “knowledge of Latin which will enable them to understand and make use of the sources of so many sciences and the documents of the Church,” according to the insistence of the Fathers of the Second Vatican Council. The study of Spanish should also be encouraged. Facility with other liturgical and spoken languages may be necessary for those of the Eastern Churches.