

Five Essential Elements of Successful Programs

A summative report completed in 2018 identified five essential elements of successful accelerated pastoral degree programs (APDP).

1. Passionate **Program Director** devoted to the APDP at least half-time.

Devoted, gifted, fully engaged directors with institutional accountability and support are perhaps the single biggest factor in program success.

2. Broad **Institutional Ownership** by faculty and administration reflected in seamless **Academic Coordination**.

Faculty and administrative buy-in is a sliding scale, but the best programs move the needle on this crucial measure. With buy-in comes effective coordination, another hallmark of successful programs.

3. Cohesive **Cohort Experiences** for formation and camaraderie.

Today's students value social development and community, and the learning benefits of cohorts are well known.

4. **Spiritual and Pastoral Formation** through mentoring and seminary-church partnerships.

Spiritual and character strength, emotional intelligence, and leadership skills cannot develop exclusively within the classroom; individual mentoring and church-based experiences are key factors in how successful programs form pastoral leaders.

5. **Marketing/Recruitment/Creating Awareness** within and beyond the institution.

Program leaders work continually with stakeholders to imagine changes that could increase student participation in the APDP while strengthening formation. Stakeholders include admissions and marketing, partnering institutions (undergraduate and graduate), senior leadership, department chairs, and partnering churches.