PEACE CORPS PREP STUDENT GUIDE

The Peace Corps Prep program will prepare you for international development fieldwork and potential Peace Corps service. To accomplish this, you'll build four core competencies through interrelated coursework, hands-on experience, and professional development support. These four competencies are the following:

1. Training and experience in a work sector
2. Foreign language skills
3. Intercultural competence
4. Professional and leadership development

This document explains each of these requirements in detail. ***Use this guide to map out your Peace Corps Prep course of study.*** In particular, refer to this when completing your PC Prep application, where you'll need to document how you plan to fulfill each requirement. **This guide aligns point-by-point with each section of the application!**

1. Training *and* experience in a specific work sector

3 courses + 50 hours related experience

Leveraging concrete knowledge and skills is central to on-the-ground international development work. Through this PC Prep program, you will begin to build a professional specialty, which should serve your career well whether or not you become a Peace Corps Volunteer.

For PC Prep, you need to complete at least **3 courses** that align with a specific work sector (they can but do not need to come from your academic major or minor). You also must accumulate **a minimum of 50 hours of volunteer or work experience in that *same* sector**, preferably in a teaching or outreach capacity.

Peace Corps Tip!	*If you intend to apply to the Peace Corps, the best way to assure that you will be a strong candidate is to explore Peace Corps' openings and identify the* type of assignments *in which you'd like to serve (www.peacecorps.gov/volunteer/volunteer-openings), then review the positions' required and desired qualifications and build them up accordingly. In the process, you should fulfill these PC Prep experiential requirements!*

There are six sectors (www.peacecorps.gov/volunteer/what-volunteers-do/) in which Peace Corps Volunteers serve—detailed below. **Choose one sector to focus on** then complete at least 3 courses + 50 hours of related experience in that sector.

Note: Actual Peace Corps assignments are based on local needs, and thus may or may not align seamlessly with your qualifications. Flexibility is central to the Peace Corps experience!

1. EDUCATION

Teach lessons that last a lifetime. Education is the Peace Corp's largest program area. Volunteers play an important role in creating links among schools, parents, and communities by working in elementary, secondary, and postsecondary schools as math, science, conversational English, and resource teachers or as early grade reading and literacy teacher trainers. Volunteers also develop libraries and technology resource centers.

If you choose Education, take 3 courses from one of the following areas:

- o Elementary, Middle, Secondary or Special Education
- o English, Spanish, or Linguistics
- o TEFL/TESL
- o Math
- o Computer Science
- o History
- o Any Physical or Biological Science
- o Health Exercise

Recommended courses:

- o ENSL U355: Service Learning through ESOL
- o EDCI U300: Resources and Technology in Teaching
- o BIOL U397: Laboratory Teaching

*And build 50 hours of **related** field experience through an activity such as:*

- Teaching in one of these or a similar form: in a classroom, with a community outreach organization, or in a formal tutoring capacity.
  - o The subject of the teaching may be English as a Foreign/Second Language, special education, drama, or a STEM subject.
- o Educational experience (observation and/or teaching) in an international school(s) during a study abroad experience through SEHPH.

2. HEALTH

Serve on the front lines of global health. Health Volunteers work within their communities to promote important topics such as nutrition, maternal and child health, basic hygiene, and water sanitation. Volunteers also work in HIV/AIDS education and prevention programs to train youth as peer educators, develop appropriate education strategies, provide support to children orphaned by the pandemic, and create programs that provide emotional and financial support to families and communities affected by the disease.

If you choose Health, take three courses from one of the following areas:

- o Nursing
- o Health Information Management
- o Exercise Science
- o Pre-med
- o Biology
- o Community Health

Recommended courses:

- o EDCF U449: Mental Health and Play Therapy in Young Children
- o CHME U320: Principles of Health Education
- o EDHL U221: Lifelong Health and Wellness

*And build 50 hours of **related** field experience through an activity such as:*

- Volunteer or work experience in such areas as HIV/AIDS outreach, hospice, family planning counseling, emergency medical technician (EMT) or CPR teaching/certification, maternal health, and hands-on caregiving in a hospital, clinic, or lab technician setting.
- Counseling or teaching in health subjects.
- Working as a resident advisor in a dormitory, as a peer nutritionist, or as a sexually transmitted infections counselor.
- Significant experience in mechanical repairs, construction, carpentry, masonry, plumbing, hydrology, or set design.
- A study abroad experience involving community health in an international setting through the MBSN or SEHPH.

3. ENVIRONMENT

Help forge a global movement to protect our planet. Volunteers lead grassroots efforts in their communities to protect the environment and strengthen understanding of environmental issues. They teach environmental awareness in elementary and secondary schools and to youth groups and community organizations, empowering communities to make their own decisions about how to protect and conserve the local environment. Volunteers also address environmental degradation by promoting sustainable use of natural resources.

If you choose Environment, take three courses from one of the following areas:

- Chemistry
- Biology

Recommended courses:

- BIOL U395: Internship in Biological Science
- CHEM U395: Internship in Chemistry
- BIOL U525: Plant Taxonomy

*And build 50 hours of **related** field experience through an activity such as:*

- Educating the public on environmental or conservation issues, or working on environmental campaigns.
- Conducting biological surveys of plants or animals.
- Gardening, farming, nursery management, organic or low-input vegetable production, or landscaping.
- Providing technical assistance and training in natural resource management.
- A study abroad experience in any of the above-mentioned academic fields.

4. AGRICULTURE

Lead grassroots efforts to fight hunger in a changing world. Agricultural Volunteers work with small-scale farmers and families to increase food security and production and adapt to climate change while promoting environmental conservation practices. They introduce farmers to techniques that prevent soil erosion, reduce the use of harmful pesticides, and replenish the soil. They work alongside farmers on integrated projects that often combine vegetable gardening, livestock management, agroforestry, and nutrition education.

If you choose Agriculture, take three courses from one of the following areas:

- Business Administration
- Biology
- Entrepreneurship and Innovation
- Economic

Recommended courses:
- o ECON U303: International Economics
- o ENTR U393: Innovation, Creativity, and Change
- o BIOL U525: Plant Taxonomy

*And build 50 hours of **related** field experience through an activity such as:*
- Working with a large-scale or family-run business involving vegetable gardening, farming, nursery work, tree planting or care, urban forestry, landscaping, livestock care and management, or fish cultivation and production.
- Teaching or tutoring the public in environmental or agricultural issues/activities.
- Working on the business management or marketing side of a commercial farm.
- Study abroad experience in one of the above-mentioned academic fields.

5. YOUTH IN DEVELOPMENT

Empower the next generation of changemakers. Volunteers work with youth in communities on projects that promote engagement and active citizenship, including gender awareness, employability, health and HIV/AIDS education, environmental awareness, sporting programs, and info technology.

If you choose Youth in Development, take three courses from one of the following areas:
- o Sociology
- o Psychology
- o Child Advocacy Studies
- o Early Childhood Education

Recommended courses:
- o CAST U499: Child Advocacy Internship
- o EDCF U350: Development of the Young Child I
- o PSYC U307: Social Psychology

*And build 50 hours of **related** field experience through an activity such as:*
- Teaching or counseling in at-risk youth programs.
- Activities that involve planning, organizing, assessing community needs, counseling, and leadership, in areas such as education, youth development, health and HIV/AIDS, the environment, and/or business
- Study abroad experience in any of the above-mentioned academic fields.

6. COMMUNITY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Harness 21st-century tools to help communities lift themselves. Volunteers work with development banks, nongovernmental organizations, and municipalities to strengthen infrastructure and encourage economic opportunities in communities. They frequently teach in classroom settings and work with entrepreneurs and business owners to develop and market their products. Some Volunteers also teach basic computer skills and help communities take advantage of technologies such as e-commerce, distance learning, and more.

If you choose Community Economic Dev., take three courses from one of the following areas:

- o Business Administration
- o Nonprofit Management
- o Accounting or Finance
- o Computer Science and related majors
- o Graphic Design
- o Marketing
- o Communications
- o International Business
- o Economics

Recommended courses:

- o ARTS U399: Directed Projects in Graphic Design
- o FINA U353: Business Finance
- o MKTG U351: Consumer Behavior

*And build 50 hours of **related** field experience through an activity such as:*

- Working with businesses, organizations, or cooperatives in accounting, finance, microfinance, management, project management, budgeting, or marketing.
- Starting and running your own business or other entrepreneurial activity.
- Training others in computer literacy, maintenance, and repair.
- Website design or online marketing.
- Founding or leading a community- or school-based organization.
- Study abroad experience in any of the above-mentioned academic fields.
- International virtual internship opportunity.

Peace Corps Tip!	*Nearly two-thirds of Peace Corps Volunteers serve in Education or Health. Coursework and meaningful experience in one of these areas—especially teaching English as a second/foreign language—produce some of the strongest candidates.*

2. Foreign language skills

Most students must hone their capacity to interact professionally using a non-English language. Minimum course requirements vary by desired placement region.

❑ *Latin America*: Students indicating an intention to serve in Spanish-speaking countries must build strong intermediate proficiency, having completed two 200-level courses or learned Spanish through another medium.

❑ *West Africa*: Students indicating an intention to serve in French-speaking African countries must build proficiency in French or another Romance language, having completed one 200-level course or learned the language through another medium.

❑ *Everywhere else*: Students indicating an intention to serve anywhere else do not have explicit language requirements to complete the Program, but they should still be encouraged to study a foreign language.

Note: If you are a strong native speaker and hope to serve in a country that speaks your same language, you can skip this requirement!

3. Intercultural competence

3 approved courses *or* 1-2 courses + substantive intercultural experience

Engaging thoughtfully and fluidly across cultures begins with one's own self-awareness. With this learning objective, you will deepen your cultural agility through **a mix of three introspective courses** in which you learn about others while reflecting upon your own self in relation to others. The goal is for you to build your capacity to shift perspective and behavior around relevant cultural differences. Some example courses:

You'll take at least 1 of these core courses:

- ANTH U102: Understanding Other Cultures
- SPCH U380: Intercultural Communication
- GLST U301: Global Cultures and Identities
- SOCY U337: Gender and Society

And choose 2 additional electives from the above list or these below:

- WGST U398: Topics in Women's and Gender Studies
- SPCH U350: Communication and Gender
- POLI U420: Women and Politics: A Global Perspective
- ENGL U387: Topics in Literature, Culture, and Difference

Is there another course in the catalog that you feel meets this requirement? Please discuss it with your PC Prep Coordinator.

Optional: Intercultural experience in place of elective(s).
- Study/internship/service learning/experience abroad program approved by the Center for International Studies. This program should have a specific academic content or purpose and should be supported with relevant coursework.
- 50 hours of relevant volunteer work with a) new immigrants to the US; b) international students during their first semester on campus; c) volunteering in a Title I (K-12) setting where you work with ethnically diverse groups.

4. Professional and leadership development

Resume and interview support + leadership experience

Peace Corps service and similar international development work opportunities are highly professional and selective. PC Prep requires **three specific activities** that will strengthen your candidacy for the Peace Corps (or any other professional endeavor):
1. Have your **resume** critiqued by someone in the Office of Career Management.
2. Attend a workshop or class on **interview skills** with the Office of Career Management.
3. Develop at least one significant **leadership experience** and be prepared to discuss it thoughtfully. For example, organizing a campus event, leading a work or volunteer project, or serving on the executive board of a student organization.