

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

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.

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:

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|-------------|--------------------|--------------------------|
| ○ Education | ○ Computer Science | ○ Physical or Biological |
| ○ English | ○ Engineering | Science: Biology, |
| | ○ Math | Chemistry, Physics, |
| | | Biochemistry |

Recommended courses:

- EDUC 2201: Explorations in Education: Teaching, Learning and Schooling - Community Engaged Learning (CEL)
- EDUC 3241: Educational Psychology
- EDUC 2329: Philosophy of Education
- ENGL 1720: Literacy and Language (CEL)
- ENGL 2220: Teaching and Writing

- ENGL 1410 Imagining Shakespeare (CEL version) or ENGL 2013 Shakespeare I (CEL version) or ENGL 2014 Shakespeare II (CEL version)
- ENGL 2230 Teaching and Learning Grammar
- Students planning to teach in a STEM field may count any course in Biology, Chemistry, Biochemistry, Computer Science, Engineering, Math or Physics

*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. The subject of the teaching may be English as a Foreign/Second Language, special education, drama, or a STEM subject
- Tutoring opportunities are available through the Center for Social Impact, Campus Ministry, the International Studies Program, as well as through many academic programs including the Educational Studies Minor in the Graduate School of Human Development
- Community Engaged Learning courses (CEL) in various departments and schools, as long as they incorporate practical education methods.
- Humanitarian Action Internship (HA 298) and International Studies Program internships (IL 298) including Global Scholars Program summer internships in the Global South which include practical education methods
- Campus Ministry service immersion programs/alternative breaks which include practical education methods.
- Students can work with the career counselor in their school or college to assist them with finding internship, volunteer, research or experiential learning opportunities to support their sector of choice.

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:

- Nursing
- Health Studies
- Public Health
- Pre-med
- Biology / Biomedical Engineering
- Social Work

Recommended courses:

- ANTH 1210 Biomedical Anthropology
- ANTH 3600: Anthropological Research Methods
- NUTR 7020: Community Nutrition
- BIEG 3301: Biomedical Instrumentation
- COMM 3248: Health Communication
- ENGR 1031: Fundamentals of Engineering
- ENGR 4961, 4962: Senior Design
- HLST 1101: Intro to Health Studies
- NURS 1112: Health Care Delivery
- NURS 3301: Health and Wellness
- NURS 4330 Public Health
- PUBH 2240: Introduction to Global Public Health and Social Justice
- PUBH 2201: Public Health, Disease, and Injury
- PUBH 2205: Fundamentals of Nutrition
- PUBH 2216: Introductory Principles of Epidemiology
- PUBH 2217: Biostats for Health Research
- PUBH 4310/SWRK 3311: Leadership for Interdisciplinary Health Professionals
- PSYC 2370: Community Mental Health

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

- Related Service Learning Courses (hours of field experience for service learning courses are to be determined or confirmed in writing by the faculty member teaching the course), for example:
 - NURS 1112: Healthcare Delivery Systems (Prof. Planas' section) - Students work with local elementary schools, hospitals, or the Hope Dispensary low-cost pharmacy to create and implement health education initiatives
- 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
 - i.e. local hospitals, Yale Oncology Fellowship, Lourdes Pilgrimage
 - Clinical hours for nursing students
 - Counseling or teaching in health subjects

- Students can work with the career counselor in their school or college to assist them with finding internship, volunteer, research or experiential learning opportunities to support their sector of choice.

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:

- Environmental Studies
- Biology

Recommended courses:

- AETH 2283: Environmental Justice
- AETH 2284: Environmental Ethics
- ANTH 3600: Anthropological Research Methods
- BIOL 1074: Biology of Food
- BIOL 3319: Latin American Ecosystems
- BIOL 3319: Zoology Field Experience
- BUSN 3220: Environmental Law and Policy
- CHEM 1085: Chemistry, Energy & Environment
- ENGR 1031: Fundamentals of Engineering
- ENGR 4961,4962: Senior Design
- EVST 2004 Causes and Solutions of Environmental Problems
- ENVT 3980: Environment Internship*
- ENVST 2005 Campus Sustainability
- POLI 2112: US Environmental Politics and Policy
- POLI 2474: International Environmental Policy
- POLI 2475: Climate Change: International Politics and Policy
- PHYS 1093: Energy and the Environment

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

- Educating the public on environmental or conservation issues, i.e. LEAF student club (Leadership for Environmental Action at Fairfield), Campus Sustainability Committee
- Working on environmental campaigns (i.e. the federal government through a semester-long program of study, i.e. Washington Internship Institute)
- Conducting biological surveys of plants or animals as faculty-led research project
- Gardening, farming, nursery management, organic or low-input vegetable production, or landscaping on campus garden, ie., Sporthill Farm etc.
- Providing technical assistance and training in natural resource management to local NGOs, community groups, or school children
- Enrolling in a service learning or practicum course like:
 - ENVR 3980: Environment Internship*
 - BIOL 3319: Zoology Field Experience

*Choose an internship from a variety of organizations involved in environmental science, environmental policy, environmental economics, and environmental law. Please see [website](#) for a list of past Environmental Studies internships.

- Students can work with the career counselor in their school or college to assist them with finding internship, volunteer, research or experiential learning opportunities to support their sector of choice.
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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 the one of the following areas:

- Business Economics
- Economics
- Biology

Recommended courses:

- AETH 2283: Environmental Justice
- AETH 2284: Environmental Ethics
- ANTH 3600: Anthropological Research Methods
- BIOL 1074: Biology of Food
- BIOL 3319: Zoology Field Experience
- ECON 2112: Economic Aspects of Current Social Problems
- ECON 2120: Environmental Economics
- ECON 2185: Regional Economic Development
- ECON 3230: Comparative Economic Systems
- ECON 3231: International Trade
- ECON 3233: International Economic Policy and Finance
- ECON 3235: Economic Development
- ENGR 1031: Fundamentals of Engineering
- POLI 2474: International Environmental Policy

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

- Working or interning 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
- Working with the Green Village Initiative, a community partner
- Food Security research opportunities in the Center for Social Impact
- Interning with African Sky – ie., Women's Onion Collective
- Teaching or tutoring the public in environmental or agricultural issues/activities
- Working on the business management or marketing side of a commercial farm
- Join the Engineers Without Borders Club and Participate in its community projects
- Enrolling in a service learning or practicum course like:
 - ENVT 3980: Environment Internship*
 - BIOL 3319: Zoology Field Experience

- Students can work with the career counselor in their school or college to assist them with finding internship, volunteer, research or experiential learning opportunities to support their sector of choice.

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:

- Social Work
- Psychology

Recommended courses:

- ANTH 3600: Anthropological Research Methods
- COMM 2242: Alcohol, Addiction and Culture (CEL)
- COMM 2246: Family Communication
- EDUC 3241: Educational Psychology
- PSYC 1110: Developmental Psychology (nurses only)
- PSYC 1310: Psychopathology & Clinical Science (non-majors)
- PSYC 1610: Behavioral Neuroscience
- PSYC 2150: Developmental Psychology* (lab or non-lab section) - lab section (CEL)
- PSYC 2210: Social psychology
- PSYC 2220: Stereotyping prejudice and discrimination
- PSYC 2310: Psychopathology & Clinical Science for Majors
- PSYC 2330 Gender & Mental Health
- PSYC 2370 Community & Mental Health

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

- Students can work with the career counselor in their school or college to assist them with finding internship, volunteer, research or experiential learning opportunities to support their sector of choice.
- Psychology majors can participate in an internship for one or two semesters of credit in Applied Psychology*. The wide range of opportunities includes:
 - Work with children with Autism
 - Assisting probation officers and guidance counselors
 - Work in advertising and human resources
 - Assisting in psychiatric facilities

*Students choose between an Internship in Applied Psychology (1) or a Teaching Psychology Internship (2). All internships allow students to spend ten hours a week using knowledge acquired in their classes.

*Psychology majors also have the opportunity to work in a faculty member's lab during the supervised research course. Advanced majors can also take an independent research course, during which students design their own independent project under the mentorship of a psychology department faculty member. Psychology majors also have the opportunity to engage in summer research opportunities at other institutions, as well as at Fairfield University.

(1) Internship in Applied Psychology: Integrating both cognitive and experiential learning, the Psychology Department offers its senior psychology majors the opportunity to work as interns in varied settings. Student interns are offered a wide selection of placements from which to choose, including working with autistic children, assisting probation officers, working with guidance counselors, learning about advertising or human resources, working in psychiatric facilities, etc. Each student spends at least ten hours per week on-site under qualified supervision enabling her or him to use the skills and knowledge acquired as students of psychology.

(2) Internship in Teaching Psychology: This practicum experience, open to advanced psychology majors, affords the student an opportunity to explore the profession of the teaching of psychology. Under the direct supervision of the professional staff of the Department, students are introduced to the issues of curriculum development, methods of classroom instruction, selection and use of media resources, test construction, and strategies for the academic and practical motivation of students. Interns have the opportunity to observe participating faculty engaged in the profession of teaching, to share in some of the instructional activities, and to meet with other interns in a seminar format to process the learning experiences.

(3) Supervised Research: This course is the mechanism through which many of the professors in the department engage students in their research programs for course credit during the academic year. Students work in the laboratory of a faculty member, learning hands on what psychological research entails, and are expected to do substantial reading and critiques of peer-reviewed journal articles, to analyze data collected during the semester with the guidance of the professor.

(4) Independent Research: This course entails the design and implementation of an independent research project, and is taken by a subset of psychology majors, usually during senior year. It is also the mechanism through which psychology majors in the university honors program complete their senior theses. Independent research students, under the guidance of the faculty advisor, develop their own projects, with the outcome measure being an empirical paper in APA format with novel data collected during the project

Internship sites (a sampling):

- *YWCA (domestic violence unit)*
- *Superior Court (adult probation, family court, juvenile center)*
- *Legal Services of Connecticut*
- *Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center (children's unit)*
- *Family and Children's Agency, Norwalk*
- *New England Center for Children*
- *Giant Steps*
- *National Center for Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder*
- *Fairfield Preparatory School (counseling)*
- *The United Way (organizational)*

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:

- International Business ○ Finance ○ Economics- Business
- Accounting ○ Business Analytics

- ACCT 3344: Individual Taxation: Socioeconomic Applications
- ACCT 3380 *Not-for-Profit Accounting*
- ANTH 2051: *Refugees and Culture in the Modern World*
- ANTH 3600: *Anthropological Research Methods*
- ECON 2120: *Environmental Economics*
- ECON 3237: *Fair Trade and Microfinance*
- FNCE 3200: *Global Capital Markets*
- MGMT 3240: *Managing Human Resources*
- MGMT 3240: *Leading and Managing people*
- MGMT 4320: *Diversity in the Workplace*
- MGMT 4336: *Social Entrepreneurship*
- MGMT 4338: *Managing a family business*
- MGMT 4370: *Managing non-profit organizations*
- MGMT 4380: *Performance, compensation, and reward*
- MGMT 4385: *Managing people for global business*
- MGMT 4390: *Cross-cultural management*

*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 (i.e. working at ITS)
- Website design or online marketing (i.e. intern with a non-profit)
- Founding or leading a community- or school-based organization
- Participating in the Annual Fairfield StartUp Showcase where student teams make a business pitch and compete for seed funding.
- Take a relevant Community Engaged Learning Course such as ACCT 3344: Individual Taxation: Socioeconomic Applications (students prepare income tax returns for taxpayers eligible for free tax return preparation service through the Volunteer Income Tax Assistance Program of the IRS)
- Students can work with the career counselor in their school or college to assist them with finding internship, volunteer, research or experiential learning opportunities to support their sector of choice.

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

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 1100: Intro Four-Field Anthropology
- ANTH 1110: Cultural Anthropology
- ANTH 1115 Cultures of Africa
- ANTH 1120 Islamic Societies and Cultures
- ANTH 3600 Anthropological Research Methods
- ENGL 1010- Intro Lit & Cultural Studies
- ENGL 1020 - Intro to Cont World Lit
- ENGL 3052: Cultural Studies Theory
- HIST 2242: Immigration, Race, Ethnicity
- INST 1050: People, Places & Global Issues
- LCST 3301: Justice and the Dev World
- POLI102 - Intro to Comparative Politics
- RLST 2335: Liberation Theology
- SOCI 1135: Race, Gender & Ethnic Relations
- MGMT 4320: Diversity in the Workplace
- PHIL 3360: Critical Race Theory
- POLI 2236: Politics, Race, Class, and Gender

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

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| 1. AETH 2276 - <i>Ethical Dimension / Global Bus Practices</i> | 10. HIST 2289 - <i>Modern Latin America 1800 - Pres</i> |
| 2. AETH 2262 - <i>Ethics and the Community</i> | 11. MG0385 - <i>Managing People for Global Business</i> |
| 3. AETH 2265 - <i>Ethics in Education</i> | 12. MKTG 3312 - <i>Global Marketing</i> |
| 4. ANTH 1125: <i>Sex, Gender and Sexual Orientation</i> | 13. NS0330 - <i>Community, Public, and Global Health Nursing</i> |
| 5. ANTH 2015: <i>Refugees and Culture in the Modern World</i> | 14. PHIL 2240 - <i>Intro to Asian Philosophies</i> |
| 6. ECON 2120 <i>Introduction to Environmental Economics</i> | 15. POLI 2251: <i>Islam and Muslim Politics</i> |
| 7. EDUC0200 - <i>Explorations in Education</i> | 16. POLI 2252: <i>African Politics</i> |
| 8. HIST 2270 - <i>Hist / Global Humanitarian Action</i> | 17. PSYC 1110 - <i>Dev Psychology for Non-Majors</i> |
| 9. HIST 0280 - <i>The West and the Middle East</i> | 18. SOCI 1125 - <i>Sociology of Religion</i> |
| | 19. SPAN 3271 - <i>Hispanic Film</i> |
| | 20. SPAN 4359 - <i>Cult, Civ, Lit / Spanish-American Caribbean Region</i> |

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). If you would like to substitute a studying/volunteering abroad experience for one of the electives above, please discuss it with the PC Prep Coordinator. Examples may include: The Humanitarian Spring Break Trip to Abilene, TX to work with newly resettled refugees; an inter-session experience in Ecuador through Campus Ministry, etc.

4. Professional and leadership development

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 career center in your school or college (College of Arts & Sciences, School of Engineering, Dolan School of Business, Marion Peckham Egan School of Nursing, or the School of Education and Human Development).
2. Attend a workshop or class on **interview skills** in the career center in your school or college.
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.