



Peace Corps

PREP

# 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](http://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](http://www.peacecorps.gov/volunteer/what-volunteers-do/) (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:**

- English
- Math
- Computer Science
- Any Physical or Biological Science
- English
- History
- Interpretive Training

**Recommended courses:**

- EDU 2200 Introduction to International Education
- ASL 1141 American Sign Language I
- EDU 3310 Introduction to Education
- Any World Literature
- ENG 3301 Women's Literature
- Various History Class (special approval)

**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.
- IDS Classes are service learning based so many opportunities to serve in an education environment will be afforded in the classroom.
- Conversation Partners: on campus organization where native English speakers are paired with non-native speakers and meet on a regular basis to practice speaking English.
- English Literature Study Abroad in London: Students may join Troy's Study Abroad Office for a two week trip to London to earn credit for ENG 2245 along with volunteer hours.
- Study Abroad in China: Students may join Troy's Study Abroad Office for a two week trip to China to study Chinese culture and earn volunteer hours. General Studies Credit Available.
- Study Abroad in India: Students may join Troy's Study Abroad Office for a two week trip to India to study Indian culture and earn volunteer hours. General Studies Credit Available.
- Multiple semester long Study Abroad options are available

## #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:*

- Nutrition
- Health Education
- Biomedical Sciences
- Biology
- Environmental Science

*Recommended courses:*

- BIO 1100 Principles of Biology
- KHP 3350 Psychology of Wellness and Performance
- BIO 2229 General Ecology
- KHP 2211 Human Nutrition
- KHP 2240 Personal and Community Health

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

- Nutrition Education for underserved populations through local non-profits
- Wellness and Healthy Decision Making for young adults
- 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
  - Ex: and a partnership with a local clinic through which student volunteers/interns help outreach to low-income families would be perfect for the Health section.
- Nursing in Costa Rica: Students may join Troy's Study Abroad Office for a 2 week trip to Costa Rica to earn credit toward your nursing degree along with volunteer hours.
- Study Abroad in Spain/Portugal: Students may join Troy's Study Abroad Office for a two week trip to Spain and Portugal to earn credit for BIO 4476 along with volunteer hours.
- Health Care and Nursing Study Abroad in London: Students may join Troy's Study Abroad Office for a 2 weeks trip to Costa Rica to earn credit toward your nursing degree along with volunteer hours.
- Students may join Troy's Study Abroad Office for a 2 week trip to Ukraine to earn credit toward your nursing degree along with volunteer hours.

## #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 Science or related field
- Hospitality, Sport & Tourism Management
- Geology
- Natural Resources Conservation
- Wildlife Biology
- Biology

*Recommended courses:*

- ECO 4452 Environmental Economics
- GEO 3301 Principles of Cultural Geography
- HTSM 2255 Introduction to Hospitality, Sport and Tourism Management
- BIO 3328 Environmental Pollution and Control

*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, vegetable production
- Providing technical assistance and training in natural resource management
- Food waste recovery through the Campus Kitchens Program
- Tree Campus designation activities

## #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
- Developmental Psychology
- Family Studies
- Counseling
- Human Studies
- Rehabilitation
- Criminal Justice

*Recommended courses:*

- HS 2230 Survey of Human Services
- HS 3375 Diversity
- PSY 2200 General Psychology
- PSY 3325 Adolescent Psychology
- CJ 3325 Juvenile Justice
- SWK 3301 Children and Family Services

- SWK 3390 Social Work with Individuals and Families

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, the environment, and/or business primarily in the non-profit sector.
- Reading to Headstart Children
- Activity planning and interaction with children at Boys and Girls Club
- Wellness Education at local center for underserved children

## #6 COMMUNITY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT



**Harness 21<sup>st</sup>-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:

- |                                  |  |                          |
|----------------------------------|--|--------------------------|
| ○ Business                       | ○ Computer Science and Information Systems | ○ Graphic Design         |
| ○ Nonprofit Management           | ○ International Business                   | ○ Mass Communications    |
| ○ Accounting, Banking or Finance | ○ Political Science                        | ○ International Business |
|                                  |  | ○ Journalism             |

Recommended courses:

- BUS 3310 Innovative Practices and Thoughts
- ACT 2291 Principles of Accounting I
- BUS 4474 Business and Society
- CS 3310 Foundations of Computer Science
- ECO 4452 International Trade & Finance
- ECO 4455 Comparative Economic Systems
- IS 3310 Introduction to Information Systems & Data Analytics
- JRN 3380 Global Journalism & International Media Systems
- POL 2260 World Politics

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
- Students may join Troy's Study Abroad Office for a 2 week trip to study Political Science in Ukraine to earn credit along with volunteer hours.
- Students may join Troy's Study Abroad Office for a 2 week trip to Ireland to earn credit toward your journalism degree along with volunteer hours.

- Volunteer hours with the Chamber of Commerce in any of the following sectors: downtown development, education, agriculture, economic development, leadership

***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**

**Requirements vary by language**

Working across cultures often entails verbal and nonverbal languages distinct from your own. Building foreign language skills is thus a second key component of the PC Prep curriculum.

*Where would you like to serve?* PC Prep minimum course requirements align with those needed by applicants to the Peace Corps itself, which vary by linguistic region.

- Latin America: Individuals wanting to serve in Spanish-speaking countries must apply with strong intermediate proficiency. This typically means completing **two 200-level courses**.
- West Africa: Individuals wanting to serve in *French-speaking* African countries should be proficient in French (or, in some cases, any Romance Language), usually through **one 200-level course**.
- Everywhere else: The Peace Corps has **no explicit language requirements** for individuals applying to serve in most other countries. However, you will still likely learn and utilize another language during service, so it is only helpful to have taken at least one foreign language class.

*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:

- **Optional: Intercultural experience in place of elective(s)**. If you would like the option of substituting intercultural experiences for one or both electives, here are the guidelines:
  - **Studying or volunteering abroad** may count *if* the student is in a country that has at some point hosted Peace Corps Volunteers (see the list of current and past countries [here](http://www.peacecorps.gov/countries) [www.peacecorps.gov/countries]).

- Studying/volunteering abroad in these countries from one week to a summer may substitute for one course.
- Experiences that last a full semester may substitute for both electives.

**You'll take these 2 core courses:**

- [IDS 1101 Citizenship to Address Global Challenges]
- [IDS 2201 Applications in Civic Engagement]

**And choose 1 additional electives from the list below:**

- [COM 2231 Interpersonal Communication]
- [COM 3324 Gender Communication]
- [PSY 3315 Cultural & Diversity Psychology]
- [HIS 4420 History of American Minorities]
- [HIS 4421 African-American History]
- [HIS 4422 History of American Women]
- [COM 3328 International/Intercultural Communication]
- [HIS 4410 Women, Health & History]

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

***Peace Corps Tip!*** *Prolonged intercultural experiences—such as studying or volunteering abroad, supporting new immigrants or refugees acculturate to the United States, or volunteering in diverse schools—would also strengthen your Peace Corps candidacy significantly.*

## **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 Services.
2. Attend a workshop or class on **interview skills** at your Career Services office. Details will follow.
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.

\*Note: The required leadership project in Applications for Civic Engagement will fulfill this requirement

\*Please note: Troy University does not have an Agricultural Program therefore we will focus on the 5 remaining sectors.



PREP

Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_

University: \_\_\_\_\_

PC Prep Coordinator: \_\_\_\_\_

# EXIT CHECKLIST

Appendix D: Exit Checklist

Below are the Peace Corps Prep certification requirements. If you apply to Peace Corps, please scan and attach this signed form to your application with the name "PC Prep Checklist." If you apply to Peace Corps before completing a requirement below, write: "[Activity]: planned [month/year]."

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

Please check the box of the sector in which you have prepared yourself to serve:

- Education
- Environment
- Youth in Development
- Health
- Community Economic Development

(1) Coursework. List the 3 highest approved sector-aligned course #s and titles you took:

- 1. \_\_\_\_\_
- 2. \_\_\_\_\_
- 3. \_\_\_\_\_

(2) Hands-on experience in that same sector. Total Hours (must be at least 50): \_\_\_\_\_

Description of experience:

## 2. Foreign language skills

Requirements depend upon desired Peace Corps volunteer placement site. (1) Spanish-speaking countries → two 200-level courses. (2) French-speaking countries → one 200-level courses in any Romance Language. (3) Everywhere else → no explicit requirements, but language skills are a plus.

Language: \_\_\_\_\_ List your 2 highest level course #s and titles:

- 1. \_\_\_\_\_
- 2. \_\_\_\_\_

Or describe your alternative learning process (e.g., native speaker):

## 3. Intercultural competence

List your 3 approved courses/experiences that bolstered your intercultural competence:

- 1. \_\_\_\_\_
- 2. \_\_\_\_\_
- 3. \_\_\_\_\_

## 4. Professional and leadership development

- 1. Professional resume feedback:  Yes  No Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Where: \_\_\_\_\_
- 2. Professional interview prep:  Yes  No Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Where: \_\_\_\_\_
- 3. Demonstrated leadership experiences (i.e., student orgs, work, volunteer, etc.) Describe: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Student

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of PC Prep Coordinator

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date



## RELEASE OF INFORMATION FORM

With your approval, the Troy University Peace Corps Preparatory (PC Prep) program will release information on a regular basis to the Peace Corps, including details about the participants in this program and other relevant data that help the Peace Corps evaluate the effectiveness of PC Prep. These educational records are subject to the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), a Federal law designed to protect the privacy of a student's educational records. This Act prohibits college officials from disclosing any records, including grade reports, academic standings, transcripts of records, or any other records, which contain information directly related to the student and from which the student can be individually identified without the student's consent. Consistent with FERPA guidelines, Troy University will not release records related to your performance in the PC Prep program, other than those enumerated in this disclosure agreement.

I hereby permit Troy University to disclose personally identifiable information to Peace Corps regarding my participation in the Peace Corps Preparatory program for the purposes of evaluating PC Prep. This information will be limited to my name, date of admission to PC Prep, the coursework and other activities I pursued to satisfy PC Prep requirements, date of graduation, and whether I successfully completed the PC Prep upon graduation. If I do not ultimately enter the Peace Corps, Troy University may report post-graduation career information to the extent that Troy University has that information.

Student Name (printed) \_\_\_\_\_

Student Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_