

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](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:

- Elementary, Secondary or Special Education
- Curriculum and Instruction
- English or Linguistics
- Computer Science
- Any Physical or Biological Science

Recommended courses -

Courses in Curriculum and Instruction (CI)

CI 3300 – Middle School Curriculum and Instruction

CI 3325 – Adolescents and Society

CI 3332 – Foundations of Bilingual and ESL Education

CI 4350 – Teaching Mathematic to Diverse Children in 3rd-6th Grade Classrooms

CI 4355 – Science in Elementary Education

CI 4360 – Methods and Materials for Teaching ESL in the Content Areas

Courses in Bilingual Education

BILG 3332 – Foundations of Bilingual Education

BILG 4365 – Biliteracy for Bilingual Learners

Courses in Early Childhood Education (ECE)

ECE 4300 – The Languages of Children: Acquisition and Use

ECE 4310 – Seminar for Teachers of Young Children

ECE 4380 – Independent Study in Early Childhood

Courses in Reading (RDG)

RDG 3312 – Reading and Writing Instruction for Children with Special Needs

RDG 3320 – Integrating Reading and Writing

RDG 4320 – Language and Literacy in Diverse Communities

Courses in Special Education (SPED)

SPED 2360 – Survey Exceptionalities

SPED 3338 – Education Students with Emotional/Behavioral Disorders

SPED 3390 – Assessing Students with Disabilities

SPED 4381 – Educating Students with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities

Courses in English (ENG)

ENG 3311 – Practices in Writing and Rhetoric

ENG 3319 – The Development of English

Courses in Computer Science (CS)

CS 1308 – Computer Literacy and the Internet

Physical or Biological Science Courses

BIO 1320 – Modern Biology I, Molecules, Cells, and Physiology

PHYS 1310 – Elementary Physics

PHYS 1315 – General Physics I

CHEM 1310 – Introductory Chemistry for Non-Science Majors

CHEM 1341 – General Chemistry I

ANTH 2301 & ANTH 2101 – Biological Anthropology

GEO 2410 – Physical Geography

Students will also be required to complete 50 hours of related field experience through activities 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, or a STEM subject.
- Students may secure teaching/observation hours through SMCISD, HAYS CISD, New Braunfels ISD or surround school district, pending participation approval by district and Texas State University.
- Relevant teaching experience/service learning through a faculty led or affiliated study abroad program.

#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:

- | | | |
|--|---------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| <input type="radio"/> Nutrition | <input type="radio"/> Biology | <input type="radio"/> Psychology |
| <input type="radio"/> Health Education | <input type="radio"/> Sociology | <input type="radio"/> Geography |

Recommended courses:

Courses in Nutrition and Foods (NUTR)

NUTR 1362 – Food Science

NUTR 2360 – Nutrition Science

NUTR 3362 – Nutrition and Health

Courses in Geography (GEO)

GEO 3351 – Health Geography

Courses in Public Health (PH)

PH 1310 – Foundations of Personal Health

PH 1320 – Introduction to Public Health

PH 2340 – Community Health

PH 3301 – Environmental Health

PH 3348 – Prevention of Disease

PH 3350 – Consumer Health

Courses in Psychology (PSY)

PSY 2311 – Psychology of Human Sexuality

PSY 3331 – Social Psychology

PSY 3361 – Health Psychology

Courses in Sociology (SOCl)

SOCl 3363 – Medical Sociology: The Sociology of Health and Illness Behavior

SOCl 3383 – Aging and Society

SOCl 3395 – Sociology of Sexuality

Courses in Biology (BIO)

BIO 1320 – Modern Biology I, Molecules, Cells, and Physiology

BIO 1321 – Ecology, Evolution, and Society

Students will also be required to complete 50 hours of related field experience through activities 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

#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:

- Geography
- Natural Resources Management
- Biology
- Geology
- Sociology

Recommended courses:

Courses in Biology (BIO)

BIO 1320 – Modern Biology I, Molecules, Cells, and Physiology

BIO 1321 – Ecology, Evolution, and Society

BIO 1330 – Functional Biology

BIO 1331 – Organismal Biology

BIO 3308 – Global Ecology

Courses in Geology (GEOL)

GEOL 1410 – Physical Geology

GEOL 1420 – Historical Geology

Courses in Geography (GEO)

GEO 1310 – World Geography

GEO 2310 – Environmental Geography

GEO 2410 – Introduction to Physical Geography

GEO 3313 – Natural Resource Use and Management

GEO 3320 – Community and Regional Planning

GEO 3321 – Energy Resource Management

GEO 3349 – World Population

GEO 3351 – Health Geography

GEO 3434 – Water Resources

GEO 4313 – Environmental Management

Courses in Health Education (H_ED)

PH 2340 – Community Health

PH 3301 – Environmental Health

Courses in Sociology (SOCl)
SOCl 3320 – Population Dynamics
SOCl 3330 – Globalization and Development
SOCl 3365 – Society and Environment

Students will also be required to complete 50 hours of related field experience through activities such as:

- Educating the public on environmental or conservation issues, or working on environmental campaign.
- 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

#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:

- Horticulture
- Agricultural Science
- Agribusiness
- Agricultural Economics
- Business or economics
- Biology

Recommended courses:

Courses in Agriculture (AG)
AG 1445 – Basic Animal Science
AG 2379 – General Horticulture
AG 2383 – Introduction to Agricultural Economics
AG 3308 – Organic Gardening
AG 3351 – Agricultural Marketing and Sales
AG 4300 – Greenhouse and Nursey Management

Courses in Biology (BIO)
BIO 1320 – Modern Biology I, Molecules, Cells, and Physiology
BIO 1321 – Ecology, Evolution, and Society
BIO 1330 – Functional Biology
BIO 1331 – Organismal Biology
BIO 3308 – Global Ecology

Courses in Economics (ECO)
ECO 2301 – Principles of Economics
ECO 2314 – Principles of Microeconomics

ECO 2315 – Principles of Macroeconomics

Students will also be required to complete 50 hours of related field experience through activities such as:

- Working with a large-scale or family-run business involving vegetable gardening, farming, nursey work, tree planting or care, urban forestry, landscaping, or livestock care and management
- Teaching or tutoring in the public in environmental or agricultural issues/activities
- Working on the business management or marketing side of a commercial farm

#5 YOUTH IN DEVELOPMENT



Empower the next generation of change makers. 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:

- | | | |
|---|-------------------------------------|---|
| <input type="radio"/> Social Work | <input type="radio"/> Developmental | <input type="radio"/> Human Development |
| <input type="radio"/> Community Development | <input type="radio"/> Psychology | <input type="radio"/> Family Studies |

Recommended courses:

Courses in Diversity Studies (DVST)

DVST 3301 – Introduction to Diversity Studies

Courses in Social Work (SOWK)

SOWK 1350 – Introduction to Social Work

SOWK 2375 – Social Services in the Community

SOWK 4315 – Child Welfare

SOWK 4318 – Social Work and Health Care

Courses in Psychology (PSY)

PSY 1300 – Introduction to Psychology

PSY 3300 – Lifespan Development

PSY 3316 – Personality Psychology

PSY 3331 – Social Psychology

PSY 3323 – Evolution and Behavior

PSY 3334 – Psychology of Human Diversity

Courses in Human Development and Family Sciences (HDFS)

HDFS 1351 – Lifespan Development

HDFS 2351 – Child Development

HDFS 2353 – Principles of Guidance

HDFS 4352 – Administration of Programs for Young Children

HDFS 3394 – Adolescent Development

Courses in Public Health (PH)
PH 1310 – Foundations of Personal Health
PH 1320 – Introduction to Health and Wellness
PH 2340 – Community Health

Students will also be required to complete 50 hours of related field experience through activities 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

#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:

- Business or Public Administration
- Accounting, Banking, Economics, or Finance
- Computer Science
- Mass Communications
- International Business

Recommended courses:

Courses in Accounting (ACC)

ACC 2301 – Accounting in Organizations and Society

ACC 2361 – Introduction to Financial Accounting

ACC 2362 – Introduction to Managerial Accounting

Courses in Computer Science

CS 1308 – Computer Literacy and the Internet

Courses in Economics (ECO)

ECO 2301 – Principles of Economics

ECO 2314 – Principles of Microeconomics

ECO 2315 – Principles of Macroeconomics

ECO 3317 – International Economics

Courses in Marketing (MKT)

MKT 3343 – Principles of Marketing

MKT 4310 – International Marketing

Courses in Management (MGT)
MGT 3303 – Management of Organizations
MGT 3375 – International Business

Courses in Mass Communication (MC)
MC 1301 – Introduction to Mass Communication
MC 3355 – Mass Media and Society
MC 4303 – International Advertising

Course in Political Science (PS)
PS 3351 – Introduction to International Studies
PS 4342 – Economic Development in Latin America
PS 4354 – Politics of International Economic Relations

Course in Public Administration (PA)
PA 3300 – Introduction to Public Administration

Students will also be required to complete 50 hours of related field experience through activities 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

***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 2000-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 2000-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!

The Department of Modern Languages at Texas State University offers courses in Arabic, Chinese, French, German, Italian, Japanese, Russian, and Spanish.

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. Courses can also be substituted through the completion of an intercultural experience. 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:

Courses in Anthropology (ANTH)
ANTH 1312 – Cultural Anthropology

Courses in Diversity Studies (DVST)

DVST 3301 – Introduction to Diversity Studies

Courses in Political Science (PS)

PS 3351 – Introduction to International Studies

Courses in Sociology (SOCl)

SOCl 3327 – Multicultural Relations

SOCl 3330 - Globalization

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

Courses in Anthropology (ANTH)

ANTH 3311 – Disease and Society

ANTH 3314 – Latin American Cultures

ANTH 3322 – Peoples and Cultures of Africa

Courses in Communication Studies

COMM 2315 – Interpersonal Communication

COMM 3329 – Intercultural Communication

COMM 3336 – Diversity and Communication

COMM 4341 – Intercultural Communication in the Americas

Courses in English (ENG)

ENG 3341 – Studies in World Literature

Courses in Geography (GEO)

GEO 1309 – Introduction to Cultural Geography

GEO 3307 – Geography of Europe

GEO 3308 – Geography of Latin America

GEO 3309 – Geography of the United States and Canada

GEO 3328 – Geography of North Africa and the Middle East

GEO 3332 – Geography of South and Southeast Asia

GEO 3333 – Geography of China and Japan

Courses in History (HIST)

HIST 2310 – Western Civilization to 1715

HIST 2311 – History of World Civilization to the 17th Century

HIST 2312 – History of World Civilization from the 17th Century
HIST 2320 – Western Civilization, 1715 to Date
HIST 3320 – History of Mexico
HIST 4318S – Britain and the World
HIST 4328 – History of India
HIST 4343 – Modern China
HIST 4344 – Modern Japan
HIST 4346 – Modern Korea
HIST 4350R – Workers and Work in the Arab World
HIST 3357 – History of U.S. Foreign Relations
HIST 3368F – History of U.S. Foreign Policy-Making in the Muslim World
HIST 3368O – U.S. Foreign Relations from Revolution to Reconstruction

Courses in Political Science (PS)

PS 3352 – Theories of International Politics
PS 3353 – Issues in World Politics
PS 3354 – United States-Latin American Relations
PS 4351 – International Conflict and Security
PS 4352 – International Law
PS 4353 – International Organization
PS 4354 – Politics of International Economic Relations

Courses in Women's Studies (WS)

WS 3376 – Images of Women
WS 3377 – Realities of Women

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

You may also choose to satisfy electives through the completion of an intercultural experience. **ALL INTERCULTURAL EXPERIENCES MUST BE APPROVED BY THE PC PREP COORDINATOR.** In order to do this, students must do one of the following:

- **Study or Volunteer Abroad** - Student must choose a country that has at some point hosted Peace Corps Volunteers (see list of current and past countries at www.peacecorps.gov/countries). Studying/volunteering abroad in these countries from 1 week to a summer may substitute for one course.

- **Other Intercultural Experience** – Student can complete an intercultural experience such as helping new immigrants/refugee acculturate to the U.S. or volunteering in diverse schools, may also count. Each distinct intercultural experience lasting at least forty hours may substitute for one elective.

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 Career Services at Texas State. They can be reached at 512-245-2645
2. Attend a workshop or class on **interview skills** at Career Services.
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.