



# 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  
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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/](http://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
- Math
- Any Physical or Biological Science
- English or Linguistics
- Computer Science
- Engineering

*Recommended courses (substitutes will be considered):*

- EDCI: 2030, 2400, 2500, 2700
- ENGL/LING: 4710, 4713, 4714, 4716
- BASC: 2010, 2011 (teaching courses for STEM majors)
- BIOL: 1201, 1202, 2051
- MATH: 1021, 1550, 1552

*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. Some examples:
- Project 225: English Language Learning with local students
- Tutoring with the Gardere Initiative
- Educating others on urban farming with the Urban Arts Farm
- Give a Presentation with Humanities Amped
- Volunteer as a Center for Academic Success Supplemental Instruction (SI) Tutor or Leader
- Volunteering with EverybodyReads or EveryoneCounts programs with Volunteers in Public Schools (VIPS) East Baton Rouge Parish School District

## 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:*

- [Pre-Nursing](#)
- [Nutrition, health, and Society](#)
- [Environmental Engineering](#)
- [Nutrition and Food Sciences](#)
- [Health Education](#)
- [Environmental Sciences](#)
- Biology

*Recommended courses (substitutes will be considered):*

- NFS: 1014, 1110, 2112, 2000, 2110, 3000, 3110, 3114, 3116
- BIOL: 1201, 1202, 2051, 2153, 3040, 4385, 4015, 4155, 4105, 4106
- EVEG: 1050, 2000, 3400, 3145, 3110, 4150
- ENVS: 1126, 4035, 4101, 4600, 4261, 4262, 4264

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

- Working or volunteering 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
- Volunteering at Life Source Hospice, Baton Rouge General Medical Center, Women's Hospital
- Volunteering with LSU Global Brigades

## 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 Sciences/Environmental Engineering
- Wildlife Conservation and Management
- Forest Resources Management
- Geology
- Biology

Recommended courses (substitutes will be considered):

- BIOL: 1201, 1202, 2051, 2153, 3040, 4385, 4015, 4155, 4105, 4106
- EVEG: 1050, 2000, 3400, 3145, 3110, 4150
- ENVS: 1126, 4035, 4101, 4600, 4261, 4262, 4264
- RNR: 1010, 2039, 2101, 2102, 3004, 3103, 3105, 4015, 4101, 4107, 4078, 4150
- GEOL: 1201, 1202, 2081, 3032, 3041, 3071, 4084

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
- Volunteering with Baton Rouge Green or Louisiana Conservation Corps

## 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:

- Agriculture
- Horticulture
- Economics
- Agricultural Business
- Agricultural Business
- Biology
- General Business
- Finance

Recommended courses (substitutes will be considered):

- AGECE: 2003, 3503, 4613, 4403, 4603, 4273, 4433
- AGRI: 1001, 1005, 1011, 2001
- AGRO: 1001, 2051, 3040, 4052, 4055, 4056, 4058, 4071, 4078,
- AEEE: 1001, 2001, 2002, 2011, 3010, 3301, 4010, 4011,
- HORT: 2050, 2070, 3503, 4010, 4040
- ANSC: 1011, 1048, 1049, 2049, 2133, 4009, 4018, 4050
- BIOL: 1201, 1202, 2051, 2153, 3040, 4385, 4015, 4155, 4105, 4106

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
- Volunteering with 4H, Future Farmers of America, AgAmbassadors, or related clubs

## 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
- Human resources
- Education
- Educational Leadership
- Anthropology
- Child and Family Studies

Recommended courses (**substitutes will be considered**):

- SW: 2000, 3002, 3003, 3007, 3007, 3011, 4500
- PSYC: 2002, 3083, 4070, 4072, 4176, 4030
- HRE: 2723, 3071, 3723, 4025, 4723
- ELRC: 4360, 4361, 4365, 4370, 4600, 4602
- ANTH: 1001, 1003, 2051, 3060, 4040
- CFS: 2050, 2065, 3067, 3090, 3065, 4052, 4064, 4065

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

- Teaching or counseling in at-risk youth programs
- Planning, organizing, assessing community needs, counseling, and leadership in areas such as education, youth development, health and HIV/AIDS, the environment, and/or business
- Volunteering with the Big Buddy program, CASA, or similar counseling, after school, or mentoring programs in Baton Rouge.

## 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:

- Entrepreneurship
- Accounting
- General Business
- Finance
- Mass Communication
- Economics

Recommended courses (substitutes will be considered):

- ECON: 2000, 2010, 2030, 2035
- ACCT: 2001, 2101, 3101, 3121, 3122
- ENTR: 2000, 3111, 3012, 4040
- FIN: 3716, 3826, 3717, 4850
- MC: 2000, 2010, 2015, 2035, 3001, 3010, 3333, 3020, 4005

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
- Volunteering with community organizations in Baton Rouge such as the Gardere Initiative or Front Yard Bikes

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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 region of interest

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 1003
- ANTH 2051
- INTL 3001
- SOCL 3401
- SOCL 4551

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

- AAAS 2000
- ANTH 2050
- HIST 2023
- HIST 4064
- ANTH 3060
- WGS 2500
- WGS 2900

- Completing a longer experience abroad, such as studying or volunteering abroad, could not only fulfill the intercultural competence requirement, but it is also an opportunity to complete one's sector courses if applicable. Students wishing to study abroad should meet with Dr. Schafer to discuss what courses they plan to take, how to add this to their application, and if any additional assignments should be done upon completion of the study abroad experience, specifically for Peace Corps Prep.
  - For a comprehensive list of LSU's study abroad opportunities, please go to <http://lsu.edu/studyabroad> to get to LSU's Academic Programs Abroad page. This site contains a comprehensive list of LSU faculty-led study abroad opportunities, the national and international institutions students can exchange to, the subjects supported at these institutions, and the financial aid available to students.
  - The Academic Programs Abroad office is housed in 103 Hatcher Hall, and it is directed by Dr. Harald Leder, who is always hoping to get more students studying abroad.

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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 Olinde Career Center in the LSU Student Union.
2. Attend a workshop or class on **interview skills** at the Olinde Career Center in the LSU Student Union.
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.



4. Complete the LSU's Leadership Development minor or complete the initial 4-course sequence of the Leadership development minor.
  - a. The 4-course sequence consists of HRE 2723, 3723, 4723, and 4808. The minor includes an additional 6 credit hours of electives.

*The courses and extracurricular programs listed above are recommended and are not the comprehensive list of courses identified for each sector. If a course you are interested in is not listed above, please refer to LSU's Peace Corps Preparatory website for a comprehensive list of courses. If the course is still not listed but you believe it would be beneficial to your Peace Corps Preparatory experience, please contact Dr. Schafer and he will verify the course and its association with your chosen sector. Additionally, if you are seeking related field experience with a program not listed above, please let the Peace Corps Prep Director know so the program can be verified and the program can be added to your application.*