

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:

- Elementary, Secondary or Special Education
- English or Linguistics
- ESOL
- Math
- Computer Science
- Engineering
- Biology
- Physics
- Chemistry

Recommended courses:

- EDG4930: Global Studies for Educators
- DEP3053: Developmental Psychology
- IDS2935: Microbes without Borders

*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
- Study abroad & teach abroad (Options including: UF in Dominican Republic International Service Learning or UF in Paris Teach the World)
- Volunteer with the Alachua County School Board to teach ESOL classes
- Tutor/teach with the UF English Language Institute
- Participate in Florida Alternative Breaks: International Education 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:

- Nursing
- Nutritional Sciences
- Dietetics
- Health Education
- Pre-med
- Biology
- Environmental or Sanitary Engineering

Recommended courses:

- PHC344: Global Public Health
- NUR2650: Transcultural Communication in Health Care Today

- HUM2592: Introduction to Arts in Medicine in a Global Context

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
- Participate in Florida Alternative Breaks: Homelessness and Nutrition or Child Nutrition programs
- Get involved & volunteer in a student organization on campus: Gator Savers, Community Health Service Corps, International Medical Outreach, or School Health Interdisciplinary Program (SHIP).

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:

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| ○ Environmental Science | ○ Natural Resource | ○ Geology |
| ○ Environmental Management in Agriculture and Natural Resources | ○ Conservation | ○ Marine Sciences |
| ○ Sustainability Studies | ○ Wildlife Ecology and Conservation | ○ Environmental Engineering |
| ○ Sustainability and the Built Environment | ○ Forest Resources and Conservation | |
| | ○ Biology, Botany, or Ecology | |

Recommended courses:

- BOT4935/ZOO4926: Global Diversity and Culture: Integrating Conservation and Human Well-Being
- DCP322: Social + Cultural Aspects of Sustainability and the Built Environment
- ENY1001: Bugs & People

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
- Study Abroad (Options include: UF in Belize Sustainable systems, UF in Costa Rica EARTH, UF in Florence Global Water Resource Management, UF in Fiji Sustaining Humans and their Environments)
- Participate in Florida Alternative Breaks: Environmental Preservation or Marine Life Conservation programs
- Volunteer with Florida Project Learning Tree, an environmental education program
- Volunteer with the UF / US Forest Service's More Kids in the Woods program.

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:

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|---|---|--|
| <input type="radio"/> Soil and Water Science | <input type="radio"/> Agronomy | <input type="radio"/> Food and Resource Economics |
| <input type="radio"/> Horticulture Science | <input type="radio"/> Agricultural and Biological Engineering | <input type="radio"/> Organic Crop Production |
| <input type="radio"/> Botany | <input type="radio"/> Fisheries and Aquatic Science | <input type="radio"/> Agricultural Operations Management |
| <input type="radio"/> Entomology and Nematology | <input type="radio"/> Business or Economics | <input type="radio"/> Biology |
| <input type="radio"/> Food Science | | |
| <input type="radio"/> Plant Science | | |

Recommended courses:

- ENY2980: Insect Research & Scientific Engagement
- PLS2003C: Plants that Feed the World
- GEB3373: International Business

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
- Get involved in UF's Organic Gardening Cooperative
- Join a student organization like the Organic & Sustainable Agriculture Club, The Honey Bee Club, or the Campus Engineers without Borders club.
- Visit wwroofusa.org to find a local farm in Gainesville where you can work and learn.
- 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 (options include UF in China Horticulture)
- Participate in Florida Alternative Breaks: Sustainable Agriculture, Food Security and Agro-ecology programs.

- Start a garden at the Downtown Farmers Garden or Porters Community Farm in Gainesville.
- Participate in the Florida Cooperative Extension Service and Graham Center for Public Service Internship Program

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:

- Family, Youth and Community Services
- Psychology
- Sociology
- Counseling

Recommended courses:

- FYC3112: Contemporary Family Problems and Interventions
- DEP3053: Developmental Psychology
- WST3930: Violence Against Women

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
- Get involved with a student organization like Gator Pals, After School Gators, and Children Beyond our Borders.
- Volunteer with Gator Teens Mentors, a UF program that pairs UF students with high school students in the community.

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 Administration
- Management
- Accounting or Finance
- Computer and Information Science
- Marketing
- Journalism and Communications
- Economics
- Information Systems

Recommended courses:

- GEB3373: International Business
- SPC4710: Patterns of Intercultural Communication
- WST3371: Women Leadership and Diversity in the Global Environment

*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 (Options include: UF in Nicaragua Transnational Community Development, UF in South Africa Entrepreneurship and Empowerment)
- Get involved in a student organization at UF like Nourish International to learn about community assessment, microfinance, and small business mentorship.
- Participate in Florida Alternative Breaks: Financial Literacy program and teach students from the Jr. Achievement Curriculum.

**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 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

4 approved courses

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:

- ISP International Course

And choose 3 additional electives from the above list or these below:

- International Gen Ed (N)
- A course with an international or intercultural focus

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 Career Connections Center or the UF Peace Corps recruiter.
2. Attend a workshop or class on **interview skills** at the Career Connections Center or the UF Peace Corps recruiter.
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.