

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 & 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. Information provided in this guide serve as suggestions. In addition to identifying opportunities themselves, students are also encouraged to meet with the UNCP Career Center, Office of International Programs, and Community and Civic Engagement offices to assist them in identifying internship and volunteer opportunities to fulfill the required 50 hours.

Note: Actual Peace Corps assignments are based on their needs, and thus may or may not align seamlessly with your qualifications. Flexibility is central to the Peace Corps experience!

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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 or Special Education
- English or Linguistics
- Computer Science
- ESL
- Math
- Physical/Biological Science

Recommended courses:

- ELE 2010. Child Development and Cultural Dynamics
- ELE 4030. Living in a Global Society
- ENG 4830 Second Language Acquisition
- ENG 4850 Cultural Issues of English as a Second Language
- MAT 2500. Introduction to Teaching Mathematics in Middle Grades and Secondary Schools
- MAT 3500. Teaching Mathematics with Technology
- MAT 4000. Methods of Teaching Mathematics in Middle Grades and Secondary Schools (EDN 4000)
- SCE 3000. Early Experiences for Prospective Science Teachers
- SCE 3010. Early Laboratory Experiences for Prospective Science Teachers
- SCE 3500. The Teaching of Science in the Middle Grades (6-9)
- SCE 4000. Teaching Science in the Secondary School

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
- Additional opportunities for students to gain necessary experience include:
 - **Elementary Education (ED) and Special Education (SPED) majors** will fulfill the 50 hour requirement through required field/student teaching experiences.
 - Other **ED majors** can fulfill the 50-hour service requirement by taking advantage of the identified campus opportunities:
 - Participation in UNCP Center for Student Success programs
 - Tutoring & HAWK (Honing Academics With Knowledge) Program
 - Volunteering at the UNCP Writing Center
 - Serving as Academic Resource Mentors (ARMs)
 - Serving as a Community & Civic Engagement Volunteer Reading Tutor
 - Research opportunities through the UNCP RISE Program
 - Volunteer opportunities through the Red Springs Middle School Reading Partnership, Math Literacy Tutoring at Oxendine Elementary School, and After

School Mentoring, Empowerment & Tutoring at the Pembroke Middle CIS After School Program

- UNCP study abroad programs in education through the Office of International Programs

#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
- Pre-physical occupational therapy
- or
- Biology

Recommended courses:

- NUR 2010. Medical Terminology for Professional Nursing
- NUR 3010. Introduction to Professional Nursing
- NUR 3100. Transcultural Nursing
- NUR 4120. Leadership in Nursing
- NUR 4350. Community Health Nursing
- BIO 2110. Human Anatomy and Physiology
- BIO 2120. Human Anatomy and Physiology
- BIO 3025. Natural History of Costa Rica
- BIO 3040. Principles of Ecology
- BIO 3150. Microbiology
- BIO 3180. Principles of Genetics
- PED 4110 Biomechanics
- PED 4120 Exercise Physiology

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
- The following opportunities also exist for students to gain additional experience:
 - UNCP Health Careers Access Program (HCAP)
 - UNCP Health Careers Club
 - Clinical Health Summer Program (CHSP) for internship opportunities
 - UNC Pembroke's Health Careers Center for activities and services for minority students enrolled in pre-profession health programs

- Volunteer at local hospitals, rehabilitation centers, and clinics in Robeson, Scotland, and Cumberland counties, to include:
 - Memorial Hospital, Cape Fear Valley Medical Center, Scotland Urgent Care Center, Southeastern Regional Medical Center, Dr. Arthur J. Robinson Medical Clinic, Pembroke Outpatient Center for Rehabilitation, Southeastern Lifestyle Center for Rehabilitation, & Robeson County Mental Health
- UNCP study abroad programs in health/health services through the Office of International Programs

#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
- Geology
- Biology, Botany, or Ecology

Recommended courses:

- BIO 3040. Principles of Ecology
- BIO 3180. Principles of Genetics
- BIO 3420. Pollution Ecology
- ENV 2300. Field Zoology
- ENV 2400. Field Microbiology
- ENV 3100. Freshwater Ecosystems and Watershed Management
- ENV 3200. Soils and Hydrology
- ENV 4100. Environmental Laws and Regulations
- GLY 2460. Weather and Climate
- GLY 2620. Environmental Geology

*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 at the Biotechnology Research and Training Center (BRTC)
- Participating in the Farm Bureau BioAg Symposium
- Participating in faculty-directed, student undergraduate research opportunities offered by the UNCP Departments of Biology and Chemistry & Physics

- Participating in the UNCP RISE program
- Membership in the UNCP COMPASS Scholarship Program
- Volunteering with the on-campus horticulturist under the UNCP Campus Tree Care Program
- UNCP study abroad programs in the area of the environment through the Office of International Programs

#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:

- Business or economics
- Biology
- Botany

Recommended courses:

- BIO 2200. Field Botany
- BIO 2310. Morphology of the Non-Vascular Plants
- BIO 2320. Morphology of the Vascular Plants
- BIO 3400. Plant Systematics
- BIO 3540. Plant Physiology
- ECN 4400 International Economics
- ENV 2450. Principles of Sustainable Agriculture
- ENV 3250. Plant Cropping and Weed Management
- ENV 4200. Pest Management
- FIN 4210 International Finance
- MGT 3150 International Management

*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 through the Hawkeye Indian Cultural Center to serve as a Hawkeye Farms Tour Guide
- Volunteering through the Hawkeye Indian Cultural Center's Harvesting at Hawkeye Farms program to learn about organic farming, how to harvest fresh produce, and how farms can benefit the community
- Participating in the UNCP School of Business Internship and Passport to Professional Success Programs

- UNCP study abroad programs in the area of the agriculture through the Office of International Programs. Opportunities to study abroad for business students are also available through the Magellan Exchange Program.

#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:

- Social Work
- Developmental Psychology
- Counseling

Recommended courses:

- PSY 2160. Social Psychology
- PSY 2250. Health Psychology: Wellness and Health
- PSY 3040. History and Systems of Psychology
- PSY 4010. Physiological Psychology
- PSY 4170. Clinical and Counseling Psychology
- SWK 2000: Introduction to Social Work
- SWK 2450: Human Diversity & Population-at-Risk
- SWK 3450: Human Behavior in the Social Environment (HBSE) I
- SWK 4450: Human Behavior in the Social Environment (HBSE) II

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
- The following opportunities exist for students to gain the required experience:
 - **Social Work** students will fulfill the 50 hour work requirement through the social work internship.
 - **Non-Social Work** majors may:
 - Participate in faculty-directed, student undergraduate research opportunities offered by the UNCP Department of Psychology
 - Participate in volunteer opportunities through the UNCP Community & Civic Engagement Office. Some opportunities include serving in the CARE Resource Center, Lumber River Area Agency on Aging, Liberty Homecare & Hospice Services, Angelo's Care Home, Inc., Guardian Ad Litem Program of Cumberland County, & Robeson County Innovative Health Approaches.

#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
- Computer Science and related majors
- Accounting, Banking or Finance
- Mass Communications

Recommended courses:

- ACC 2270. Financial Accounting
- ACC 2280. Managerial Accounting
- ACC 3210. Intermediate Accounting I
- ACC 3220. Intermediate Accounting II
- ECN 4400. International Economics
- FIN 4210. International Finance
- MGT 3150. International Management
- MKT. 3130 International Marketing
- PLS 2510. Introduction to World Politics
- PAD 3190. Public Policy and Analysis
- CSC 2050. Introduction to Programming—C/C++
- CSC 2250. Fundamentals of Computer Systems
- CSC 2260. Operating Systems and Networking
- CSC 3750. Programming Languages

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
- Participating in the UNCP Mathematics Contest
- Participate in faculty-directed, student undergraduate research opportunities offered by the UNCP Department of Mathematics and Computer Science
- UNCP study abroad programs in the area of the computer science through the Office of International Programs.

**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.

UNCP offers instruction in the following languages: German, Italian, Spanish, and French.

In addition, the Office of International Programs offers several study abroad programs where students can pursue language study currently used in Peace Corps countries. Programs are currently being offered in the following locations (languages in parenthesis):

- United Kingdom, at Bangor University and the Canterbury Christ Church University (English)
- Germany, at the University of Mannheim, School of Humanities, and the University of Ludwigsburg (German)
- Sweden, at Umea University and Linnaeus University (Swedish)
- South Korea, at the University of Seoul (Korean)

Through the UNCP Office of International Programs, students also have the opportunity to study abroad with a consortium. Two current consortiums, International Student Exchange Programs (ISEP) and the Magellan Exchange Program, grant students access to over 300 institutions and 42 countries for summer, semesters, or full year programs abroad.

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.

You'll take at least 1 of these core courses:

- ENG 3250. Language in Society
- ENG 3900. Study Abroad
- ENG 4850. Cultural Issues of English as a Second Language
- GGY 2000. Cultural Geography
- SWK 2450. Human Diversity and Populations at Risk

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

- ECN 1000. Economics of Social Issues
- ECN 2060. Economic Geography
- ENG 2180. Asian American Literature
- ENG 2190. Latino Literature
- GGY 3290. Society and the Environment
- GGY 3700. Geography of Africa
- GGY 3770. Geography of American Indians
- GGY 3780. Geography of Latin America
- HST 3800. Women and the Development of U.S. Society
- REL 1430. Society and Religion
- REL 2160. Asian Religions
- REL 3029. Cultural and Religious History of Korea and Japan (HST 3029)
- REL 3030. Islam
- REL 3430. Buddhist Traditions
- SOC 1050. Introduction to Cultural Anthropology
- SOC 3140. Collective Behavior and Social Movements
- SOC 3160. Development and Globalization
- SOC 3210. Social Inequalities
- SPN 3610. Civilization and Culture of Spanish America

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 the UNCP Career Center.
2. Attend a workshop or class on **interview skills** at the UNCP Career Center.
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. You may do so by joining the UNCP Lead Fellows Program, housed under the Office of Diversity and Inclusion or by participating in the Leadership Living Learning Community (LLC) here on campus.