

## 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](#) ([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 1 of the following areas:*

- Elementary Education
- English Education
- Art or Music Education
- or Childhood Development
- Anthropology or Geography or History
- Physical Science
- Computer Science

*Example courses (courses you have taken or are planning to take may also be approved):*

- LSEE 101 Foundations of Teaching (E-LD)
- ENGL 225 Intro to Language Analysis
- MATH 308 Mathematics for Elementary Education
- SCI 331 Fundamental Concepts in Science Education
- SPAN 315S Teaching Field Experience

*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*
- Completing a related academic internship with community organization approved by Center for Community Based Learning
- Completing a related Service Learning course approved by Center for Community Based Learning

## 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 3 courses from 1 of the following areas:*

- Nursing
- Health Education
- Biology
- Kinesiology
- Pre-Professional Health
- Recreation Management

**Example courses (courses you have taken or are planning to take may also be approved):**

- ZOOL 270 Human Anatomy
- KINS 244 Medical Terminology
- HED 231 Basic Human Nutrition
- HED 392 Community and Population Health

**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
- Completing a related academic internship with community organization approved by Center for Community Based Learning
- Completing a related Service Learning course approved by Center for Community Based Learning

### 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 3 courses from 1 of the following areas:**

- |  |                             |            |
|--|-----------------------------|------------|
| ○ Environmental Science and Management | ○ Geography                 | ○ Forestry |
| ○ Environmental Resource Engineering   | ○ Environmental Studies     | ○ Biology  |
|  | ○ Wildlife Resource Science | ○ Botany   |
|  |                             | ○ Geology  |

**Example courses (courses you have taken or are planning to take may also be approved):**

- ENST 295 Power, Privilege and the Environment
- GEOG 301 International Environmental Issues and Globalization (D-UD)
- PHIL 302 Environmental Ethics (C-UD)
- ESM 355 Principles of Ecological Restoration  
or ESM 425 Environmental Impact Assessment
- WLDF 244 Wildlife Policy and Animal Welfare

**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
- Completing a related academic internship with community organization approved by Center for Community Based Learning
- Completing a related Service Learning course approved by Center for Community Based Learning

## 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 3 courses from 1 of the following areas:*

- |                               |  |                                 |
|-------------------------------|--|---------------------------------|
| <input type="radio"/> Biology | <input type="radio"/> Rangeland Resource Science | <input type="radio"/> Economics |
| <input type="radio"/> Botany  | <input type="radio"/> Wildland Soil Science      | <input type="radio"/> Business  |
| <input type="radio"/> Zoology |  | <input type="radio"/> Biology   |

*Example courses (courses you have taken or are planning to take may also be approved):*

- SOIL 260 Intro to Soil Science
- BOT 310 General Plant Physiology
- BIOL 330 Principles of Ecology

*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
- Completing a related academic internship with community organization approved by Center for Community Based Learning
- Completing a related Service Learning course approved by Center for Community Based Learning

## 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 3 courses from 1 of the following areas:*

- |  |                                      |                                  |
|--|--------------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| <input type="radio"/> Social Work                            | <input type="radio"/> Recreation     | <input type="radio"/> Psychology |
| <input type="radio"/> Child Development and Family Relations | <input type="radio"/> Administration | <input type="radio"/> Sociology  |

**Example courses (courses you have taken or are planning to take may also be approved):**

- CD 209 Middle Childhood Development
- SOC 306 The Changing Family
- PSYC 414 Psychology of Adolescence and Young Adulthood

**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
- Completing a related academic internship with community organization approved by Center for Community Based Learning
- Completing a related service-learning course approved by Center for Community Based Learning

## 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 Development, take 3 courses from 1 of the following areas:**

- Business Administration
- Economics
- Computer Science
- Communication
- Graphic Design (Art Studio)
- Public Relations (Journalism)

**Example courses (courses you have taken or are planning to take may also be approved):**

- Art 108 Graphic Design I (C-LD)
- BA 250 Financial Accounting or BA 252 Management Accounting
- JMC 323 Public Relations
- JMC 354 Media Advertising

**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
- Completing a related academic internship with community organization approved by Center for Community Based Learning
- Completing a related Service Learning course approved by Center for Community Based Learning

**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 at least two courses (attaining at least Level III) 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 at least one course (attaining at least Level II) 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.

Example courses (courses you have taken or are planning to take may also be approved):

- CRGS 108 Power/Privilege: Gender and Race, Sex, Class (D-LD)
- COMM 213 Interpersonal Communication or COMM 222 Intercultural Communication
- JMC 305 International Mass Communication (D-UD)
- ANTH 104 Cultural Anthropology
- GEOG 105 Human Geography (D-LD)
- RS 300 Living Myths (C-UD)

*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 Academic Career and Advising Center.
2. Attend a workshop or class on **interview skills** at the Academic Career and Advising Center or a SkillShop at the Library
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.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Student ID: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Expected Graduation (month and year): \_\_\_\_\_ Cumulative GPA: \_\_\_\_\_

## 1. Training and experience in a specific [work sector](#)

**Please check the box of the sector in which you would like to serve:**

- |                                    |                                      |   |
|------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Education | <input type="checkbox"/> Environment | <input type="checkbox"/> Youth in Development           |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Health    | <input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture | <input type="checkbox"/> Community Economic Development |

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

**(1) Coursework. List the number and name of 3 courses in this same sector that you plan to take, and the semester in which you plan to take them** (it is fine if you've already taken them).

*Note: The courses you include on this application may change, but it's good to have a plan.*

1. Course: \_\_\_\_\_ Semester and year: \_\_\_\_\_
2. Course: \_\_\_\_\_ Semester and year: \_\_\_\_\_
3. Course: \_\_\_\_\_ Semester and year: \_\_\_\_\_

**(2) Hands-on experience in that same sector (must total at least 50 hours).**

**Describe what you plan to do:**

## 2. Foreign language skills

**Requirements depend upon desired Peace Corps volunteer placement site.** (1) Latin America/ Spanish-speaking countries → two Spanish courses (at least Level III). (2) West Africa/ French-speaking countries → one French course (at least Level II). (3) *Everywhere else* → no explicit requirements, but language skills are a plus.



If you intend to learn a foreign language, please list which one: \_\_\_\_\_

List the top 2 foreign language courses you plan to take:

Course 1: \_\_\_\_\_ Semester and year: \_\_\_\_\_

Course 2: \_\_\_\_\_ Semester and year: \_\_\_\_\_

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

### 3. Intercultural competence

List the number and name of the three courses you plan to take:

1. Course: \_\_\_\_\_ Semester and year: \_\_\_\_\_

2. Course: \_\_\_\_\_ Semester and year: \_\_\_\_\_

3. Course: \_\_\_\_\_ Semester and year: \_\_\_\_\_

### 4. Professional and leadership development

1. **Professional resume feedback:** When do you plan to meet with Academic Career Advising Center for a one-on-one resume review? Month and year: \_\_\_\_\_

2. **Professional interview prep:** When do you plan to meet with Academic Career Advising Center for an interview workshop? Month and year: \_\_\_\_\_

3. **Describe a leadership experience that you intend to pursue:**

*For example, leading a work or volunteer project, serving on the executive board of a student organization, or organizing a big campus event.*

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

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Peace Corps Prep Coordinator

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date



**Peace  
Corps**

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

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

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

# 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:

- |                                    |                                      |   |
|------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Education | <input type="checkbox"/> Environment | <input type="checkbox"/> Youth in Development           |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Health    | <input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture | <input type="checkbox"/> Community Economic Development |

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

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

(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 Spanish courses (at least Level IV). (2) *French-speaking countries* → a French courses (at least Level II). (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. \_\_\_\_\_ 3. \_\_\_\_\_  
2. \_\_\_\_\_

## 4. Professional and leadership development

- Professional resume feedback:**  Yes  No Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Where: \_\_\_\_\_
- Professional interview prep:**  Yes  No Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Where: \_\_\_\_\_
- 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 Cal Poly Humboldt 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, Cal Poly Humboldt will not release records related to your performance in the PC Prep program, other than those enumerated in this disclosure agreement.

I hereby permit Cal Poly to disclose personally identifiable information to Peace Corps regarding my participation in the PC Prep 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, Cal Poly Humboldt may report post-graduation career information to the extent that Cal Poly Humboldt has that information.

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

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

Date \_\_\_\_\_