

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 the following areas:

- Education
- Multidisciplinary Science
- Family and Consumer Sciences Education
- Early Childhood Education
- English
- Agricultural Education
- Any Physical or Biological Science
- Area selected in consultation with PCP advisor

Recommended courses:

- EDBL 3135 Teaching Linguistically and Culturally Diverse Students
- EDLL 3352 Language Literacy Acquisition
- HDFS 2311 Introduction to Early Childhood
- SOC 3336 Sociology of Education
- Many other courses offered at TTU will fulfill this requirement. Those shown above suggest kinds of classes that fit with the area. Consult with the PCP advisor to design your course curriculum for the Education work sector.

*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
- In Lubbock, students can volunteer, work, or intern in such areas and organizations as
 - Student teaching
 - English as a Second Language partnering with international students
 - Literacy Lubbock – Help a Lubbock neighbor pass the GED
 - After School Tutor
 - Other educational field experience with approval from PCP advisor

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 the following areas:

- Nursing
- Nutrition or Dietetics
- Health Education
- Pre-med
- Biology
- Technical Education
- Environmental or Sanitary Engineering

- Area selected in consultation with PCP advisor

Recommended courses:

- COMS 3365 Communication in Healthcare
- BSN 3604 Core Concepts of Nursing Care
- HPHM 4313 Community Health Issues
- HPSH Language Disorders
- Many other courses offered at TTU will fulfill this requirement. Those shown above suggest kinds of classes that fit with the area. Consult with the PCP advisor to design your course curriculum for the Health work sector.

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
- Face Masks for Lubbock
- Beyond Faith Hospice – Virtual Volunteer
- Alzheimer’s Association
- Rape Crisis Center

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 the following areas:

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| ○ Environmental Science or related field | ○ Natural Resources or Wildlife Management | ○ Area selected in consultation with the PCP advisor |
| ○ Natural Resources Conservation | ○ Forestry | |
| ○ Park Administration | ○ Biology, Botany, or Ecology | |
| ○ Wildlife Biology | ○ Geology | |

Recommended courses:

- GEOG 3310 Environmental Change
- NRM 2302 The Ecology and Conservation of Natural Resources
- SOC 4312 Population and Environment

- Many other courses offered at TTU will fulfill this requirement. Those shown above suggest kinds of classes that fit with the area. Consult with the PCP advisor to design your course curriculum for the Environment work sector.

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
- In Lubbock, students can volunteer, intern or work in such areas and organizations as:
 - Community garden providing fresh produce to the South Plains Food Bank
 - Audubon Society – education on the protection of local and migrating bird populations
 - Heart of Lubbock Neighborhood Cleanup

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 the following areas:

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| ○ Agronomy | ○ Agricultural Science | ○ Biology |
| ○ Horticulture | ○ Agribusiness | ○ Area selected in |
| ○ Botany | ○ Agricultural Economics | consultation with PCP |
| ○ Entomology | ○ Business or economics | advisor |

Recommended courses:

- ACOM 3300 Communicating Agriculture to the Public
- AGED 2304 Agriculture and Society
- AGLS 3315 Team Leadership Development in Agriculture and Natural Resources
- Many other courses offered at TTU will fulfill this requirement. Those shown above suggest kinds of classes that fit with the area. Consult with the PCP advisor to design your course curriculum for the Agriculture work sector.

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
- Volunteer to help organize the university's Arbor Day celebration
- Internships with local farms

- Work with local wildlife rescue programs
- Volunteer with the South Plains Food Bank

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 the following areas:

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| ○ Social Work | ○ Human Development | ○ Family Studies |
| ○ Counseling | ○ Area selected in | |
| ○ Community Development | consultation with PCP | |
| ○ Developmental Psychology] | advisor | |

Recommended courses:

- HDFS 2303 Life Span Human Development
- HLTH 3314 Health for Adolescents
- PSYC 2307 Adolescent Psychology
- Many other courses offered at TTU will fulfill this requirement. Those shown above suggest kinds of classes that fit with the area. Consult with the PCP advisor to design your course curriculum for the Youth in Development work sector.

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
- In Lubbock, students can volunteer, intern, or work at such organizations as:
 - TTU child development center
 - Boys and Girls Club of Lubbock
 - Childcare center at the YWCA
 - Promise Neighborhood
 - Big Brother or Big Sister
 - Ronald McDonald House

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 Development, take three courses from the following areas:

- Business or Public Administration
- Nonprofit Management
- Accounting, Banking or Finance
- Computer Science and related majors
- Graphic Design
- Mass Communications
- International Business
- Area selected in consultation with the PCP advisor

Recommended courses:

- AGRI 3301 Agribusiness Marketing
- BECO 4366 Global Business Economics and Policy
- MGT 4374 International Entrepreneurship
- MKT 4358 International Marketing
- Many other courses offered at TTU will fulfill this requirement. Those shown above suggest kinds of classes that fit with the area. Consult with the PCP advisor to design your course curriculum for the Community Economic Development work sector.

*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
- In Lubbock, students can volunteer, intern, or work in such areas and organizations as:
 - Founding or leading a community- or school-based organization
 - Roots Historical Council
 - Open Door
 - Texas Tech Museum and Ranching Heritage Center

**Peace
Corps
Tip!**

Nearly two-thirds of Peace Corps Volunteers serve in Education or Health. Coursework and meaningful experiences 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.

Texas Tech students are required to take at least one course designated multicultural. Any class on the list of approved multicultural courses will fulfill the PCP criterion. Students may choose three courses from that list to meet the PCP requirement. In addition, Global Studies has compiled a list of prescribed electives, many of which are multicultural in nature. Students may select courses from the Global Studies list, with approval of the PCP advisor. Global Studies students are required to take GEOG 2351, which fulfills the Texas Tech multicultural requirement and counts toward the PCP requirement.

Some example courses:

- ANTH 2302 Introduction to World Cultures and Ethnology
- COMS 3332 Intercultural Communication
- SOC 3323 Race and Ethnicity
- WGS 2305 Intersectionalities: Race, Class, and Gender in a Global World

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.

Texas Tech's Study Abroad program offers students opportunities to further their education in all parts of the world. For information, go to TTU Study Abroad www.depts.ttu.edu/international/studyabroad.

In addition, students can serve in internships in other countries and receive scholarship support for international study. TTU Scholarships can be accessed at www.depts.ttu.edu/scholarships/howToApply.php.

Many organizations provide assistance to students seeking internships: www.international-internships.com, www.goabroad.com, www.ciee.org, and others. In addition, the State Department and other government agencies offer internship opportunities, both in Washington DC and abroad www.careers.state.gov. The Texas Tech University Career assists students seeking internships www.careercenter.ttu.edu, and they can access the UCC's Internship Search Toolkit at <http://www.depts.ttu.edu/careercenter/documents/career-development-guides/internship-toolkit.pdf>.

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 Texas Tech University Career Center, Wiggins Complex.
2. Attend a webinar or class on **interview skills** at the Texas Tech University Career Center, Wiggins Complex.
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.