



UNIVERSITY *of* WEST FLORIDA

Peace Corps Prep Program

STUDENT GUIDE



Peace Corps

PEACE CORPS PREP PROGRAM

Program Overview

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.**

PEACE CORPS WORK SECTORS

There are six sectors in which Peace Corps Volunteers serve. More information on these sectors is available on the [Peace Corps website](#).

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!



EDUCATION



HEALTH



ENVIRONMENT



AGRICULTURE



YOUTH IN DEVELOPMENT



COMMUNITY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

1

Training and experience in a specific work sector



3 approved courses + 50 hours of related experience

Leveraging concrete knowledge and skills is central to on-the-ground international development work. Through this Peace Corps 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 Peace Corps 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.

Education

Teach lessons that last a lifetime. Education is the Peace Corps'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 three courses from one of the following areas:

- Elementary, Secondary or Special Education
- English or Linguistics
- TEFL/TESL
- Math
- Computer Science
- Engineering
- Any Physical or Biological Science

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 such as under the auspices of the UWF's community partnership with the Santa Rosa County School District on a tutor/mentor program to provide reading support to K-12 students in the area.
- Tutoring/providing English language support and intercultural communicative skills to international students enrolled in the Intensive English Program on campus.
- The subject of the teaching may be English as a Foreign/Second Language, special education, drama, or a STEM subject.

RECOMMENDED COURSES

DEP 3103	Child Development
DEP 4305	Psychology of Adolescence
DEP 2004	Human Development Across the Lifespan
EDF 3234	Applied Foundations of Education
EDG 4077	Learning In Community Education Environments
EDG 4334	Universal Design for Learning in Comm. Learning Environments
EDG 4373	Elementary and Special Education Integrated Arts
EDG 4413	Effective Learning Environments
EDG 4064	Teaching At-Risk Learners
EEX 3070	Methods in Inclusion and Collaboration
EDG 2041	Exploring Inquiry Teaching
EDG 3323	Methods of K-12 Literacy Instruction
TSL 4080	ESOL Principles and Practices
ESE 4322	Instruction, Management, and Assessment: Secondary Education
EDF 2085	Teaching Diverse Population
TSL 4081	Teaching English to ESOL Students (TEFL/TESL)

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
- Health Education
- Pre-med
- Biology

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. For UWF this would specifically mean serving as a Wellness Services Peer Educator.
- Significant experience in mechanical repairs, construction, carpentry, masonry, plumbing, hydrology, or set design.
- Volunteering with health-related student organizations such as Students for Health Education and Promotion, Exercise Science Club, Physical Education Club.

RECOMMENDED COURSES

HSC 4104	Health Aspects of Stress Management	HSC 4633	Current Issues in Health Promotion
HSC 4211	Human Environmental Health	HSC 4584	Health Promotion Strategies and Funding
HSC 4300	Changing Health Behaviors	HSC 3034	Current Issues in the Health Sciences
HSC 4500	Epidemiology	HSC 3510	Data Analysis in the Health Sciences
HSC 4551	Communicable and Degenerative Diseases	PHC 4101	Essentials of Public Health
HSC 4572	Nutrition and Health	HSC 3535	Medical Terminology
HSC 4581	Health Promotion and Planning	MCB 4276	Epidemiology of Infectious Disease
HSC 4583	Theoretical Foundations of Health Promotion and Planning	PHC 4109	Diseases in Human Populations
		PHC 4140	Public Health Planning and Analysis

PEACE CORPS TIP

If you intend to apply to the Peace Corps, the best way to ensure 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 Peace Corps Prep experiential requirements!

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
- Natural Resources
- Conservation
- Park Administration
- Wildlife Biology
- Natural Resources or Wildlife Management
- Forestry
- Biology, Botany or Ecology
- 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 (such as the biannual Bioblitz organized by GTU)
- Gardening, farming, nursery management, organic or low-input vegetable production, or landscaping (e.g. volunteering with the UWF Community Garden)
- Providing technical assistance and training in natural resource management
- Participating in Student Environmental Action Society and/or GTU Honor Society service activities
- Volunteering with local non-profits (estuary program, Ocean Hour, Bream Fishermen, 350 Pensacola, etc.)

RECOMMENDED COURSES

EVR 4023	Coastal and Marine Environments	GEO 3210	Geomorphology
EVR 4035	Environmental Law	GEO 3372	Conservation of Natural Resources
EVR 4039	Community Engagement through Environmental Science	GEO 4004	Environmental Science
EVR 4412	Environmental Aspects of Urban Growth	GEO 4005	Environmental Management & Planning
EVR 4823	Environmental Impact Assessment	GEO 4221	Coastal Morphology and Processes
EVR 4870	Urban Planning	GEO 4250	Weather and Climate
EVR 4941	Practicum in Environmental Studies	GEO 4251	Advanced Climatology and Climate Change
EVR 4949	Co-op Work Experience	GEO 4260	Geography of Soils
EVS 4192C	Environmental Soil Science	GEO 4280	Basic Hydrology
GLY 4240	Geochemistry	GEO 4333	Seminar in Environmental Issues
GLY 4244	Biogeochemistry	GEO 4357	Environment and Economy

“Through the Peace Corps Prep program at the University of West Florida, students can develop skills specifically targeted to Peace Corps service and careers in the international development and service communities.”

—Jody Olsen, Peace Corps Director

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:

- Botany
- Business or economics
- Biology
- Environmental Science

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 with the Community Supported Agriculture Program at From the Ground Up Garden or volunteering with the UWF Community Garden
- Tabling opportunities at campus events to educate the public about local food options.

RECOMMENDED COURSES

PCB 3043+L	Ecology (+Lab)
PCB 4673	Principles of Evolution
PCB 4922	Biology Seminar
BOT 4503+L	Plant Physiology (+Lab)
BOT 4374+L	Plant Developmental Biology (+Lab)
BOT 4734+L	Plant Biotechnology (+Lab)
PCB 4990	Plant ecology
GEO4260	Geography of Soils
EVS 4192C	Environmental Soil Science

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
- Counseling
- Sports Management
- Developmental Psychology
- Human Development
- Family Studies

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
- Case management with at-risk children and families (Florida Department of Children and Families; Families First Network; Lakeview Center Inc.; Children's Home Society; Lutheran Services).
- Providing supportive social services within a school setting (C. A. Weis school; Santa Rosa School Board; Children's Home Society; Ferry Pass Elementary; Camelot School)
- Running groups for children that teach life skills, communication, and/or emotional regulation (Lakeview Center Inc.; Camelot School; C. A. Weis After School Program; Pathways for Change Family Center)
- Engaging in preventative services relating to substance use, health, or human trafficking within the school system (CDAC Behavioral Health Care (The RISE Program; The Secret Place; Children's Home Society)
- Exercise Science Club, Physical Education Club

RECOMMENDED COURSES

SOW 3103	Human Behavior in the Social Environment
SOW 4111	Adolescents at Risk
SOW 3113	Families and Family Treatment
DEP 3103	Child Development
DEP 4305	Psychology of Adolescence
SPM 2010	Sport in Global Society

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 one of the following areas:

- Business or Public Administration
- Nonprofit Management
- Accounting, Banking or Finance
- Computer Science and related majors
- Graphic Design
- Mass Communications
- International Business

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 the International Business Honors Society
- Providing tutoring services either for Accounting and Finance courses or the Louis Maygarden Center for Financial Literacy

RECOMMENDED COURSES

EVR 4870	Urban Planning	GEB 3453	Business Ethics and Stakeholder Management
ACG 2021	Principles of Financial Accounting	GEB 4361	International Business
ACG 2021	Principles of Managerial Accounting	GRA 2111C	Introduction to Graphic Design
ACG 3082	Accounting for Non-Majors	GRA 2208C	Typography
ACG 3180	Financial Statement Analysis	CIS 2530	Introduction to Cybersecurity
ACG 4501	Governmental and Non-Profit Accounting	CIS 3325	Information Technology Infrastructure Analysis and Recommendation
BTE 4401	Special Methods of Teaching Business Education	CGS 3183	Basic Web Applications
GEB 1011	Introduction to Business	CGS 3464	Programming Using Visual Basic
GEB 3032	Business Foundations for Non-Business Majors	CGS 3853	Web Page Design

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

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 (such as SPN 2200 Intermediate Reading and Translation and SPN 2210 Intermediate Composition and Conversation) 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 2000-level course (such as FRE 2200 Intermediate Reading and Translation or FRE 2211 Intermediate Composition & Conversation) 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!

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.

3 Intercultural competence



3 approved courses **or**
2 approved courses + 1 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 two introspective courses and one substantive intercultural experience 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 must take the core course:

The Platinum Rule

Participants will begin by exploring their personal life experiences and how it impacts their world view.

Plus one or more courses:

The Global Village

In our contemporary global society it is important to learn about cultural differences as what we have in common. This course will help offer participants tools they can use to improve communication and interaction with students, faculty and visitors from around the world.

dis/Ability

Participants will learn about working with individuals with disabilities and more about accessibility and accommodations for those with disabilities.

These pre-approved courses are part of the online C3 Cert. To enroll go to MyUWF, select "My classes", then "ELearning" in the top bar, then enroll in "C3 Certification" and the course will show up in your class listing.

Is there another course in the catalog that you feel meets this requirement? Please discuss it with your campus Peace Corps Prep Coordinator.



Peace Corps was a transformative experience, serving as a demarcation line in my life and career, and there's not a step I take that isn't in some way informed by my experiences. The genius of Peace Corps to embed you in a country in such a way that you experience its language, its culture, its history, and its people in ways few foreigners ever could has forever altered my perspective on the world and imbued me with a deep empathy for others around me.

—Christopher Walters, Peace Corps Volunteer

UWF Class of 2002, BA, Interdisciplinary Humanities.

And choose 1 substantive intercultural experience from the list below (in cases of events you must volunteer with the organization of the event and not merely attend):

- Global Block Party
- International Music Night
- Campus Conversation: International Student Perspectives
- Global Quarter Career Workshop Series
- Downtown Pensacola Gallery Night Lunar New Year
- Asia Exploration
- Global Quarter Coffee Hour
- International Soccer Night
- Welcome Back BBQ
- Argos Go Global Study Abroad Fair
- Reside in the Global Living Community
- Volunteer with the CA Weis Elementary SAIL Academy After school program (Spotlight on Countries, Olympic Event, International Festival)
- Volunteer with/Promote the You Belong Here Initiative
- Volunteer with the GRIT Pathway Program
- Volunteer with UWF Men and PEARL (a women's empowerment initiative)
- Volunteer with the Dixon School for the Arts and/or Montessori School of Pensacola cultural enrichment programming
- Studer Education Global Village Event
- Office of Equity and Diversity's Campus Conversations

DISCUSSING YOUR EXPERIENCE

You will be expected to elaborate on your leadership experience not only during the Peace Corps application process, but also throughout your career. Using the STAR technique can be an effective way to structure your response and provide proof that you have the experience and skills needed for the position at hand.

SITUATION: Define the situation or “set the stage”

TASK: Identify the task or the problem that needs action

ACTION: Describe the action that you took, illustrating the skills you used

RESULT: Summarize the outcome of the situation

Below is an example of how you might use the STAR technique to answer the question, “Tell me about a situation in which you demonstrated leadership skills.”

SITUATION “Last year, my student organization sponsored a fund raising project for a local after school program.”

TASK “I was asked to organize the project.”

ACTION “I recruited and chaired an eight-person committee to accomplish our goal under a tight deadline, which was successfully met. I led the committee in developing a fund raising plan, which included a budget. I then initiated the proposal of the plan to the Student Activities Board in order to seek approval.”

RESULT “The plan was approved, and the campaign generated more than \$3,000 for the after school program. Because the plan worked so well, I was asked to become a member of the Campus Activities Executive Board the following semester.”

For more career advice and resources available to you, visit uwf.edu/career.

4 Professional and leadership development

 3 approved activities

Peace Corps service and similar international development work opportunities are highly professional and selective. Peace Corps Prep requires three specific activities that will strengthen your candidacy for the Peace Corps (or any other professional endeavor):

- Have your résumé critiqued by someone in Career Development and Community Engagement.
- Attend a workshop or class on interview skills in Career Development and Community Engagement.
- Develop at least one significant leadership experience and be prepared to discuss it thoughtfully.
- Examples of leadership experience include tutoring/mentoring for UWF's community partnership with the Santa Rosa County School District to provide reading support to K-12 students in the area; serving during Argos Day of Service during Founders Week or Martin Luther King Jr. Day of Service); serving on the executive board of a student organization; engaging in undergraduate research formally through the Office of Undergraduate Research or directly with a faculty mentor and/or community partners can also count as a significant leadership experience.



uwf.edu/peacecorps