The Peace Corps Prep program will prepare you for international development fieldwork and potential Peace Corps service. To accomplish this, you will 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**

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** in which Peace Corps Volunteers serve:

Westfield offers students the follow work sectors: Education, Health, Environment, Youth in Development, and Community Economic Development. **Due to a lack of appropriate courses, Westfield will not offer the Agriculture sector as an option. 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
- Your Liberal Studies areas

**Recommended courses:**

**EDUCATION METHODS COURSES**

- EDUC 0335 LITERARY INSTRUCTION – ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS
- EDUC 0260 INTERNATIONAL SERVICE LEARNING PROJECT
- EDUC 0360 SERVICE LEARNING
- EDUC 0363 SHELTERED ENGLISH IMMERSION
- EDUC 0370 LANGUAGE COMMUNICATION DEV AND INTERVENTION
- EDUC 0380 MULTICULTURAL EDUCATION
- ENGL 0221 WORLD LITERATURE I
- ENGL 0222 WORLD LITERATURE II
- ENGL 0338 YOUNG ADULT LITERATURE IN ELA CLASS

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

*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
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:

- Biology
- Movement Science
- Nursing
- Nutrition or Dietetics
- Health Education
- Psychology
- Sociology
- Social Work

Recommended courses:

- BIOL 0104 HUMAN BIOLOGY
- BIOL 0209 MEDICAL MICROBIOLOGY
- BIOL 0239 HUMAN ANATOMY AND PHYSIOLOGY
- BIOL 0282 PARASITOLOGY
- BIOL 0282 SEMINAR: FOOD, HEALTH, AGING
- BIOL 0319 IMMUNIGOLOGY
- MOVP 0100 INTRO TO EXERCISE SCIENCE
- MOVP 0212 CONCEPTS OF NUTRITION
- MOVP 0303 HEALTH EDUCATION IN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL
- NURS 0300 NURSING CARE
- NURS 0310 COMMUNITY HEALTH NURSING
- NURS 0320 NURSING CARE
- NURS 0355 NURSING LEADERSHIP
- PSYC 0101 INTRO TO PSYCHOLOGY
- PSYC 0202 CHILD DEVELOPMENT
Is there another course in the catalog that you feel meets this requirement? Please discuss it with your PC Prep Coordinator.

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.
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
- Wildlife Biology
- Natural Resources or Wildlife Management
- Forestry
- Biology, Botany, or Ecology
- Geology

*Recommended courses:*

- BIOL 0102 ENVIRONMENTAL BIOLOGY
- BIOL 0201 GENERAL ECOLOGY
- BIOL 0202 CONSERVATION BIOLOGY
- BIOL 0204 GIS FOR NATURAL SCIENCE
- BIOL 0206 PLANTS AND HUMAN SOCIETY
- BIOL 0219 AQUATIC BIOLOGY
- BIOL 0279 TOPICS IN ENVIRONMENTAL STUDIES: COSTA RICA
- BIOL 0281 SEMINAR: TROPICAL ECOLOGY OR SEMINAR: WETLANDS
- BIOL 0282 SEMINAR: ENDANGERED SPECIES
- BIOL 0334 ANIMAL BEHAVIOR
- BIOL 0377 RESEARCH EXPERIENCE: ANIMAL BEHAVIOR METHODS
- RESEARCH EXPERIENCE: FOREST ECOLOGY
- ECON 0321 NATURAL RESOURCE ECONOMICS
- ENVS 0101 PRINCIPLES OF ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCE
- ENVS 0105 NATURAL HISTORY AND FIELD TECHNIQUES
ENVS 0180  INTRODUCTION TO ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCE SEMINAR
ENVS 0225  NATURAL RESOURCE CONSERVATION MANAGEMENT
ENVS 0233  ENVIRONMENTAL LEGISLATION
ENVS 0238  ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ANALYSIS
ENVS 0240  WRITING FOR ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCE
ENVS 0251  WATER RESOURCE MGMT PLANNING: WATERSHED
ENVS 0300  WETLANDS ASSESSMENT/PLANNING
ENVS 0309  WILDLIFE ECONOMY AND MANAGEMENT
ENVS 0390  ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCE SENIOR SEMINAR
GARP 0101  WORLD REGIONAL GEOGRAPHY
GARP 0105  INTRODUCTION TO COMMUNITY PLANNING
GARP 0106  INTRODUCTION TO ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS
GARP 0204  HOUSING IN AMERICA
GARP 0210  CULTURAL GEOGRAPHY
GARP 0216  THE (UN)JUST CITY
GARP 0219  LAND USE AND RESOURCE PLANNING
GARP 0236  ENVIRONMENT ANALYSIS II
GARP 0238  ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ANALYSIS
GARP 0244  INTRODUCTION TO GEOGRAPHIC INFORMATION SYSTEMS
GARP 0311  GEOGRAPHY OF LATIN AMERICAN AND THE CARIBBEAN
GARP 0325  FOOD SYSTEMS PLANNING
GARP 0331  SEVERE AND UNUSUAL WEATHER
GARP 0344  ADVANCE GEOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION SYSTEMS
GEOL 0108  GENERAL OCEANOGRAPHY

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

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
#4 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:*

- Communication
- Education
- Environmental Science
- Ethnic and Gender Studies
- Geography
- English
- Management
- Psychology
- Social Work
- Sociology

**Recommended courses:**

- **COMM 0340** ORGANIZATIONAL COMMUNICATIONS
- **EDUC 0260** INTERNATIONAL SERVICE LEARNING PROJECT
- **EGST 0101** INTRODUCTION TO COMPARATIVE ETHNIC STUDIES
- **EGST 0102** INTRODUCTION TO WOMEN'S AND GENDER STUDIES
- **EGST 0213** CONTEMPORARY ISSUES IN ISLAMIC STUDIES
- **EGST 0217** CULTURE AND PERSONALITY
- **EGST 0221** WOMEN IN MODERN ORGANIZATIONS
- **EGST 0390** ETHNIC AND GENDER STUDIES
- **ENGL 0103** SPEECH
- **ENVS 0101** PRINCIPLES OF ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCE
- **ENVS 0233** ENVIRONMENTAL LEGISLATION
- **GARP 0105** INTRODUCTION TO COMMUNITY PLANNING
- **GARP 0106** INTRODUCTION TO ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS
- **MGMT 0108** SOFTWARE APPLICATIONS IN MANAGEMENT
- **MGMT 0308** ORGANIZATIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND BEHAVIOR
- **MGMT 0314** HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT
- **MGMT 0342** ENTREPRENEURSHIP
Is there another course in the catalog that you feel meets this requirement? Please discuss it with your PC Prep Coordinator.

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
Commmunity 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:

- Accounting, Finance
- Communication
- Computer Science
- English
- Geography
- Graphic Design
- Management
- Philosophy
- Political Science

Recommended courses:

ACCT 0104 INTRODUCTION TO ACCOUNTING I
ACCT 0105 INTRODUCTION TO ACCOUNTING II
ART 0108 COMPUTER GRAPHICS I
CAIS 0101 COMPUTERS IN SOCIETY
COMM 0101 INTRODUCTION TO MASS COMMUNICATION
COMM 0102 INTRODUCTION TO HUMAN COMMUNICATION
COMM 0203 PRINCIPLES OF PUBLIC RELATIONS
COMM 0204 WRITING FOR THE MEDIA
COMM 0207 COMMUNICATION ETHICS
COMM 0322 PROFESSIONAL COMMUNICATION
ECON 0101 PRINCIPLES OF MACROECONOMICS
ECON 0102 MICROECONOMICS
ECON 0300 MONEY AND BANKING
ECON 0318 INTERNATIONAL ECONOMICS
ECON 0321 NATURAL RESOURCE ECONOMICS
EDUC 0260 INTERNATIONAL SERVICE LEARNING PROJECT
Is there another course in the catalog that you feel meets this requirement? Please discuss it with your PC Prep Coordinator.

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

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.

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.

*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! *With Advisor approval, students might satisfy this requirement with a semester abroad in a non-English-speaking country.*
3. **Intercultural competence**

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 1 of these core Intercultural Competence courses:

- **POLS0209** INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS
- **POLS 0224** POLITICS OF DEVELOPING COUNTRIES

And choose 2 additional electives from these below:

- **ART 0357** ISLAMIC ART
- **COMM 0209** GLOBAL COMMUNICATION
- **COMM 0213** GLOBAL FILM STUDIES
- **COMM 0222** INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATION
- **COMM 0306** INTERNATIONAL COMMUNICATION
- **COMM 0321** POLITICAL COMMUNICATION
- **ECON 0318** INTERNATIONAL ECONOMICS
- **ENGL 0327** CONTEMPORARY CROSS-CULTURAL LITERATURE
- **ENGL 0240** CULTURAL STUDIES
- **EGST 0102** INTRODUCTION TO WOMEN’S AND GENDER STUDIES
- **EGST 0206** INTRODUCTION TO ISLAMIC STUDIES
- **EGST 0211** INDIAN CINEMA
- **EGST 0213** CONTEMPORARY ISSUES IN ISLAMIC STUDIES
- **EGST 0217** CULTURE AND PERSONALITY
- **ENGL 0221** WORLD LITERATURE I
- **ENGL 0222** WORLD LITERATURE II
- **ENGL 0287** WORLD DRAMA
- **ENGL 0327** CONTEMPORARY CROSS-CULTURAL LITERATURE
- **GARP 0101** WORLD REGIONAL GEOGRAPHY
- **GARP 0210** CULTURAL GEOGRAPHY
Is there another course in the catalog that you feel meets this requirement? Please discuss it with your PC Prep Coordinator.

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.
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 Center
2. Attend a workshop or class on **interview skills** at the Career Center
3. Engage in a professional interview with a Peace Corps representative or local returned Peace Corps volunteer.
4. 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. Other examples include:
   - Serving as a Peer Mentor for international students
   - Act as a Resident Assistant for a residence hall Living/Learning Community
   - Act as a program leader in a Diversity and Inclusion program
   - Act as a Peace Corps Preparatory program recruitment leader
   - Act as a Study Abroad Mentor
   - Act as an assistant for a global service-learning project
   - Serve on the Student Government Association
   - Serve as a student representative on a campus Governance committee
   - Serve on the Executive Board of a student organization or on the Planning Committee for a big campus event