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 one of the following areas:

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

Recommended courses

- SCED 4004 - Elementary Science Teaching
- UNHL 3620 - Migration, Modernity, and Literacy
- LCRT 4001 - Elementary Literacy Instruction & Assessment 3rd-6th
- INTE 4320 - Games and Learning
- INTE 4000 - Design Thinking and Educational Innovation
- SCED 4400 - Theory and Pedagogy of Science Learning
- SCED 4401 - Inquiry Science Pedagogy and Practices

** This is a partial list. Please discuss additional recommendations with a 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
- Volunteer at CU Denver’s ESL Academy as a Conversation Partner
#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
- Nutrition or Dietetics
- Health Education
- Pre-med
- Biology
- Technical Education
- Environmental or Sanitary Engineering

Recommended courses:

- PBHL 2000 - Introduction to Public Health
- PBHL 2020 - Introduction to Environmental Health
- PBHL 3070 - Perspectives in Global Health
- PBHL 4040 - Social Determinants of Health
- NURS 3770 - The Nursing Profession: History, Role and Trends
- CHEM 2300 - Nutritional Chemistry
- ANTH 4040 - Anthropology of Food and Nutrition

** This is a partial list. Please discuss additional recommendations with a 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
- Volunteer at University of Colorado Hospital in any of the following ways: Unit Assistants; Administrative Assistants; Purposeful Visitation; Emergency Department; Patient Navigator; Newborn Hearing Screening; On-Call volunteer; Anschutz Cancer Pavilion
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

Recommended courses:
- ENVS 1342 - Environment, Society and Sustainability
- SUST 3011 - Toward a Sustainable Future
- ANTH 3006 - Sustainable Development and Equity
- ANTH 4070 - Culture of Development and Globalization
- GEOG 3440 - Ecotourism
- ECON 4530 - Economics of Natural Resources
- GEOG 3401 - Geography of Food and Agriculture

** This is a partial list. Please discuss additional recommendations with a 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
- Volunteer at The Growhaus in Denver
- Volunteer at Denver Urban Gardens
- Volunteer at Denver Urban Homesteading
#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:*  
- Agricultural Science  
- Agribusiness  
- Agricultural Economics  
- Business or economics

**Recommended courses:**  
- ENGR 3995 - Global Technology, Business & Culture  
- GEOG 3401 - Geography of Food and Agriculture  
- GEOG 4450 - Urban Food and Agriculture: Perspectives and Research  
- GEOG 4460 - Sustainable Urban Agriculture Field Study I  
- GEOG 4680 - Urban Sustainability: Perspectives and Practice  
- GEOG 4470 - Sustainable Urban Agriculture Field Study II  
- GEOG 4710 - Disasters, Climate Change, and Health

**This is a partial list. Please discuss additional recommendations with a PC Prep Coordinator.**

*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 at The Growhaus in Denver  
- Volunteer at Denver Urban Gardens  
- Volunteer at Denver Urban Homesteading
#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 one of the following areas:*
  - Social Work
  - Counseling
  - Community Development
  - Developmental Psychology
  - Human Development

*Recommended courses:*
  - SOCY 4640 - Sociology of Childhood and Adolescence
  - COMM 3275 - Family Communication
  - COMM 4262 - Mediation
  - ECON 3100 - Economics of Race and Gender
  - PSYC 3205 - Human Development I: Child Psychology
  - PSYC 4485 - Psychology of Cultural Diversity
  - ETST 3274 - Power, Poverty, Culture

**This is a partial list. Please discuss additional recommendations with a 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
  - Volunteer at the Phoenix Center at Auraria


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

Recommended courses:

- ISMG 2050 - Introduction to Business Problem Solving
- INTB 3000 - Global Perspectives
- MGMT 3000 - Managing Individuals and Teams
- PUAD 3004 - Managing Nonprofit Organizations
- PUAD 3005 - Collaboration Across Sectors
- FINE 2415 - Typography Studio
- COMM 2071 - Media Writing Skills

** This is a partial list. Please discuss additional recommendations with a 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
- Participate in CU Denver’s Inworks meetups at the innovation lab
- Participate in Posner Center’s Poverty Hack
- Participate in CU Denver’s Posner Center Independent Study course
- Volunteer at the Urban Land Conservancy
- Volunteer at Radian (community design firm)
- Volunteer at West Denver Renaissance Initiative partnering with CU Denver CAP

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.

*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

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<tr>
<th>3 approved courses or 1-2 courses + substantive intercultural experience</th>
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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 at least 1 of these core courses:**

- COMM 4270 - Intercultural Communication
- ANTH 3142 - Cultural Diversity in the Modern World
- COMM 4720 - Dynamics of Global Communication
- COMM 3271 - Communication and Diversity

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

- ANTH 3008 - Contemporary World Problems: An Anthropological Perspective
- GEOG 1102 - World Regions Global Context
- PSCI 4265 - Social Justice and Globalization
- SOCY 3720 - Global Perspectives on Social Issues

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

- **Studying or volunteering abroad** may count *if* the student is in a country that has at some point hosted Peace Corps Volunteers (see the list of current and past countries here [www.peacecorps.gov/countries]). Studying/volunteering abroad in these countries from one week to a summer may substitute for one course. Experiences that last a full semester may substitute for both electives.

- **Other intercultural experiences**, such as helping new immigrants/refugees acculturate to the U.S. or volunteering in diverse schools, may also count. If they also align with one of Peace Corps’ six sectors, these experiences may simultaneously count for that hands-on experiential requirement. Each distinct intercultural experience lasting at least forty hours may substitute for one elective.

**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 Career Center.
2. Attend a workshop or class on **interview skills** at the 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. Leadership opportunities can include (but are not limited to):

   - International Studies Student Club
   - Student Clubs and Programs
   - Student Government Association
   - CU Denver Leadership Programs
   - Peer Advocate Leaders (PAL) program
   - Colorado Student Leaders Institute
   - Puksta Foundation
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:
   
   - [ ] Education
   - [ ] Environment
   - [ ] Youth in Development
   - [ ] Health
   - [ ] Agriculture
   - [ ] Community Economic Development

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

   (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 200-level courses. (2) *French-speaking countries* → one 200-level courses in any Romance Language. (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. ____________________________
   2. ____________________________
   3. ____________________________

4. **Professional and leadership development**

   1. **Professional resume feedback:** [ ] Yes [ ] No Date: 
      
      Where: 
   
   2. **Professional interview prep:** [ ] Yes [ ] No Date: 
      
      Where: 
   
   3. **Demonstrated leadership experiences** (i.e., student orgs, work, volunteer, etc.) 
      
      Describe:

   ____________________________
   ____________________________
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   Signature of Student Date Signature of PC Prep Coordinator Date
RELEASE OF INFORMATION FORM

With your approval, the University of Colorado Denver 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, University of Colorado Denver will not release records related to your performance in the PC Prep program, other than those enumerated in this disclosure agreement.

I hereby permit University of Colorado Denver to disclose personally identifiable information to Peace Corps regarding my participation in the Peace Corps Preparatory 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, University of Colorado Denver may report post-graduation career information to the extent that University of Colorado Denver has that information.

Student Name (printed) ______________________________________________________

Student Signature_________________________________________________________

Date______________________