



Peace
Corps

PREP

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!**

General information for ALL students interested in Peace Corps Prep

- PCPrep is open to students from all schools/colleges across the university. However, students must be of sophomore standing in order to apply for PCPrep at BGSU.
- We recommend that all participants speak with a member of the PCPrep committee BEFORE engaging in any activity intended to count as a PCPrep requirement including classes and extracurricular activities. While this guide is a starting point for the program, we would like to hear from each student directly about progress in the program.
- To identify relevant work sector experience, please speak with a PCPrep committee member, the <insert link to PC Prep Program site here>, Dr. V. Rosser and Dr. Beatrice Guenther in order to best utilize existing resources, contacts and connections.
- All students will need to verify the minimum of 50 hours of work sector training experience with [CCCE](#).
- Students are responsible for investigating and completing all prerequisites and requirements for the courses chosen within each work sector training area in

conjunction with the faculty mentors. Please note that the prerequisites and course offerings may change each semester.

Resources and Existing Programs

- <https://www.bgsu.edu/arts-and-sciences/international-studies.html>
- <https://www.bgsu.edu/center-for-community-and-civic-engagement.html>
- <https://www.bgsu.edu/arts-and-sciences/world-languages-and-cultures.html>
- <https://www.bgsu.edu/arts-and-sciences/english/graduate-programs/tesol-certificate-program.html>
- <https://www.bgsu.edu/international-programs-and-partnerships/education-abroad.html>
- <https://www.bgsu.edu/graduate/fellowships-scholarships-and-awards/paul-d-coverdell-peace-corps-fellows-program.html>
- <https://www.bgsu.edu/residence-life/learning-and-theme-communities/LaComunidad.html>
- <https://www.bgsu.edu/arts-and-sciences/romance-and-classical-studies/studies-in-french/la-maison-francaise.html>
- <https://www.bgsu.edu/arts-and-sciences/global-village.html>
- <https://www.bgsu.edu/honors-college.html>
- <https://www.bgsu.edu/arts-and-sciences/peace-and-conflict-studies.html>

Other volunteer opportunities to complete your minimum of 50 hours of work sector training can be found through the following websites:

- <https://www.bgsu.edu/alumni/get-involved.html>
- <https://www.bgsu.edu/international-programs-and-partnerships/education-abroad/work-teach-and-volunteer-abroad.html>

- <http://ustogether.us/>
- <https://laconexionwc.wixsite.com/laconexion>
- <https://www.unitedwaytoledo.org/>
- <http://www.weglobalnetwork.org/lucas-county-toledo/>
- <https://www.bgsu.edu/center-for-community-and-civic-engagement/events/alternative-breaks.html>

More opportunities are available through the [Center for Community & Civic Engagement](#).

Note: This document is intended as a **GUIDE** only. You do not need to align your PC Prep pathway exactly with the options or example courses/experiences shown below.

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 **5 courses** (for a total of 15 or more credits) 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, consider taking 5 courses from the following majors/minors:

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|--|--------------------------------------|--|
| ○ Early/Middle Childhood, AYA or Special Education | ○ World Language Education | ○ Higher Education Administration |
| ○ English or Linguistics | ○ Any Physical or Biological Science | ○ Cross-Cultural and International Education |
| ○ TESOL | ○ Workforce Education | ○ Curriculum and Teaching |
| ○ Math | ○ Classroom Technology | ○ Music Education |
| ○ Computer 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
 - The subject of the teaching may be English as a Foreign/Second Language, special education, drama, or a STEM subject
 - Teaching Practicum/Internship
 - Language Assistant/Teaching Assistant in Education, Sciences, Mathematics, TESOL/ESL or Linguistics
- Possible organizations to work with: Kumon Center in Perrysburg, BGSU, International Student Services, Global Connections, OMEC, Global Village, ACTION, La Conexion, Adelante.

#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 five courses from one of the following areas:

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|--------------------------|-------------------------|------------------------------|
| ○ Nursing | ○ Biology | ○ Health Care Administration |
| ○ Nutrition or Dietetics | ○ Environmental Science | |
| ○ Health Education | ○ Exercise Science | ○ Health Science |
| ○ Pre-med | | |

- Communication Disorders
- Public Health
- Neuroscience
- Physical Education
- Microbiology

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 (Teaching Assistant/Graduate Assistant in Public Health, Biology, Nursing, Life Sciences, Nutrition/Dietetics, Psychology, The Connection Center, ProMedica)
- Working as a resident advisor in a dormitory, as a peer nutritionist, or as a sexually transmitted infections counselor (Teaching Assistant in related field, The Wellness Connection Center, Resident Advisor)

#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 one of the following areas:

- Environmental Science
- Life Sciences
- Construction Management
- Environmental Policy and Analysis
- Ecology and Conservation Biology
- Marine and Aquatic Biology
- Biology
- Geology
- Chemistry

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
Possible organizations to work with are Habitat for Humanity, BGSU, Bowling Green Recycling Center, Bowling Green Community Development, Toledo Metroparks, Bowling Green Department of Transportation, Black Swamp Conservancy, a BGAB experience, Alternative Spring Breaks Experience.

#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:

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|-------------------------------|-----------------|----------------------|
| ○ Economics | ○ Biology | ○ Ecology and |
| ○ Business/Business Education | ○ Life Sciences | Conservation Biology |

*And build 50 hours of **related** field experience through an activity such as:*

- Working with an organization such as FLOC, 4H, Ohio Farm Bureau, Black Swamp Conservancy, OMEC, SoBee Honey Farm, Toledo/Perrysburg/Bowling Green Farmer's Markets, Klotz Flower Design and Garden, Phoenix Food Co-op or Riker Seed Farm.
- 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 (see above examples).
- Teaching or tutoring the public in environmental or agricultural issues/activities (with PUSH, Environmental Action Group, Food for Thought or other related community or student organization).

#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:

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|--|-------------------------------|---------------------------|
| ○ Social Work | ○ College Student | ○ Clinical Mental Health |
| ○ Counseling | Personnel | Counseling |
| ○ Psychology | ○ Women's, Gender & | ○ Communication Disorders |
| ○ Human Development and Family Studies | Sexuality Studies | ○ Psychology |
| | ○ Education (All disciplines) | ○ Sociology |

*And build 50 hours of **related** field experience through an activity such as:*

- Teaching or counseling in at-risk youth programs (Options include Adelante, YMCA Fort Meigs, IMAGE, OMEC, 4H, AmericaReads, Wood County Public Schools, Ohio Means Jobs, The Right Direction Youth Program, babysitting, afterschool counselor)
- 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

#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:

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|--------------------------|---------------------|------------------------------------|
| ○ Business | ○ Computer Science | ○ Leadership and Policy |
| ○ International Business | ○ Marketing | ○ Economics |
| ○ Public Administration | ○ Communications | ○ Accounting/Accounting Technology |
| ○ Accounting or Finance | ○ Actuarial Science | |

*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
- Possible organization to work with are Kumon Center, La Conexion tutoring, a BGAB experience, an Alternative Spring Breaks experience, AmericaReads,

***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 placement region

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 courses in Spanish, on which is a 2000-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 two courses in French, one which is a 2000-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 apply to Peace Corps, but must complete two courses

in a foreign language (including American Sign Language) to complete the Peace Corps Prep program at BGSU. One of these courses must be at the 2000 level.

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!

Many foreign language courses are offered at BGSU, including:

American Sign Language	Arabic	Chinese	French	German
Italian	Japanese	Korean	Russian	Spanish

3. Intercultural competence

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. Some example courses:

For this competency, we require **that all students take two courses from an approved course list and a substantive intercultural experience.**

- Students must take one course from the following list: INST 2100 OR INST 4000/5000
- Students must take one course from the following list: BGSU 1910; CCS 3030; COMM 4050; COMM 4080; COMM 4090; ETHN 1010-4550; PACS 4100
- Students must take part in an intercultural experience lasting at least 50 hours. The following options apply:
 - Studying or volunteering abroad (including Education Abroad)
 - Winter Session study abroad experience
 - Alternative Fall or Spring Break experience
 - Participation in a Learning Community
 - Volunteering, working or interning with an organization that supports immigrants, migrant workers, marginalized populations, ESL needs or other diversity and inclusion practices

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 BGSU Career Services.
2. Attend a workshop or class on **interview skills** at BGSU Career Services.
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.