



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!**

### 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 (which 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](http://www.peacecorps.gov/volunteer/what-volunteers-do/) ([www.peacecorps.gov/volunteer/what-volunteers-do/](http://www.peacecorps.gov/volunteer/what-volunteers-do/)) in which Peace Corps Volunteers serve.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> As of Fall 2018, Education is the only training and experience work sector offered at FSU.

*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.

- **Academic areas:** you will take two courses from the Department of **Teacher Education**, in FSU's College of Education, to learn the basic work of the teacher and to learn about teaching diverse populations, as befits the PC Prep Program. In addition, you will take one course from the **Department of Educational Psychology and Learning Systems** to understand child/human development and the learning process. These required courses are:
  - EDF 1005 - Introduction to Education course (with 15 hours of field experience) (3 credits)
  - EDF 2085 – Teaching Diverse Populations (with 15 hours of field experience) (3 credits)
  - EDF 4210 – Educational Psychology (3 credits)
- **Field/volunteer experience:** The first EDF two courses listed above each come with a required field-based service learning experience of 15 hours per course. The cumulative 30 hours will consist of service experience in schools and classrooms in the region. Additionally, 20 of the required volunteer hours must come from volunteer experiences in the area of education, (some these hours can also support learning area 4 (leadership development)). There are multiple opportunities on the FSU campus for students to enhance their training and experience in education, including working/volunteering in the **Campus Tutoring Cooperative**, FSU's **Center for Intensive English Studies (CIES)** Conversation Partners program, the Department of English's **Reading Writing Center**. In addition, FSU's **Center for Leadership & Social Change** offers students multiple opportunities to serve the Tallahassee community in a variety of fields. Students are encouraged to meet with the Peace Corps recruiter and campus advisors for ideas on how to fulfill the service requirement.

## 2. Foreign language skills

Minimum requirements for Peace Corps service vary by placement region

Most students must hone their capacity to interact professionally using a non-English language. For the PCP certificate, students are required to take any 2 foreign language courses. Languages in demand by the Peace Corps are: Spanish, French, Arabic, Swahili, as well as Asian and indigenous languages, although there is no specific language required by PCP.

- ❑ Latin America: Students indicating an intention to serve in Spanish-speaking countries must build strong intermediate proficiency, having completed **two 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 at least **one 2000-level course** or learned the language through another medium.
- ❑ Everywhere else: Students indicating an intention to serve anywhere else are not obligated to study any specific language, but are still required to enroll in two foreign-language courses.
- ❑ *\*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! We will also consider most alternative language study programs for languages not offered by Florida State University. Please be sure to indicate your alternative learning process in your application.*

### 3. Intercultural competence

3 courses: 1 required course and 2 electives (to be selected from approved course list.)

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 and to understand some of the pressing development challenges and their relationship to education, within many PC and low-income countries of the Global South.

**Core Course:** EDF 2082: Introduction to International Development and Education

This course constitutes a basic overview of international development work in the education sector in societies of Asia, Africa, the Middle East and Latin America. The course explores different approaches to international development and how these shape and influence educational improvement initiatives for diverse populations in countries of the Global South. Using a development lens, the course considers cross-cultural communication and diversity issues, particularly as they relate to teaching and learning, the role of the teacher, equity in education, inclusion, Education for All (including marginalized populations) as well as diversity and language issues in education. Overall, the course looks at the challenges many countries face in balancing the forces of globalization in education with national social, cultural and economic priorities and values. This course is geared as an introductory course for students interested in international development, international relations, cross-cultural studies and comparative and international education. (Please note that the theme of diversity is also emphasized in FSU’s PC Prep program through the *course Teaching Diverse Populations*, with its 15 hours of required service learning, under the Training and Experience requirement above.)

**Electives:** Students are able to select from a wide variety of courses offered at FSU to fulfill the two electives in this area of Intercultural competence. A list of approved courses to select from is attached in Annex 2.

Students, fill in the courses (electives) you plan to take in addition to the core course.

- [EDF 2082] Introduction to International Development and Education

Electives:

• [ ]

• [ ]

**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 at FSU
2. Attend a workshop or class on **interview skills** at your 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. FSU offers a plethora of volunteer opportunities for students, many of which expressly nurture the development of leadership skills and demand the exercise of leadership. One option for FSU students to fulfill this requirement is to get involved with the Center for Leadership & Social Change at FSU.

