



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, or "learning objectives," are the following:

- Training and experience in a work sector
- Foreign language skills
- Intercultural competence
- 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!**

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.

For each sector, we have highlighted only a small number of the volunteer and/or work experiences that are available to Truman students. For more information, consult serve.truman.edu online, or visit their office on the first floor or the Student Union Building to confer with a student staff member there. You can also join their [e-mail list](#), to get weekly updates on new service opportunities on and off-campus, as they become available. You are also, of course, welcome to seek out or create your own opportunities, on or off campus, in or far from the Kirksville community!

***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 identify the type of assignments in which you'd like to serve through this [interactive tool](#) (www.peacecorps.gov/openings), then review the positions' 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—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 (www.peacecorps.gov/volunteer/learn/whatvol/edu_youth/assignments/)



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:

- o **Education:** The Education faculty recommends selecting from the following courses:
 - ED 393: Clinical Experiences in Education
 - ED 394: Field experience
 - ED 605/SED 530: Psychology of the Exceptional Child
 - ED 621: Psychology of Reading
 - ED 622: Integrating the Language Arts
 - ED 625 – Human relations in education
- o **Special Education:** ***Note:** Only three courses (SED 530, 535, 581) are available for undergraduates, and these require senior status. SED 535 is offered in the Fall only.

SED 530 is a prereq for SED 581. Both SED 535 and 581 require significant field experiences in conjunction with course enrollment.

- o **Communication Disorders** : *Note: This option is only available to CMDS majors.
- o **English**: Any three ENG courses numbered 200 or above.
- o **ESL**: Three courses specific to English Grammar and/or ESL instruction:
 - LING 250: English Linguistics for the Classroom (prereq: LING 238)
 - LING/CML 308: Principles of Second Language Instruction (prereq: LING 238)
 - LING 412: Practicum: Teaching English as a Second/Foreign Language (prereq: LING/CML 308)
 - LING 608: Management of Instruction: ESOL
 - LING 620: ESOL Assessment Strategies for K-12 Learners
- o **Linguistics**: Any three LING courses.
- o **Mathematics**: Any three MATH courses numbered above 180. MATH 240: Concrete Behavioral Foundations of Math is particularly recommended.
- o **Statistics**: Any three STAT courses.
- o **Computer Science** : Any three (three-or-more credit) CS courses numbered 170 or above.
- o **Physics**: Any three PHYS courses.
- o **Chemistry**: Any three CHEM courses.
- o **Biology**: Any three BIOL courses.
- o **Natural Science**: *Note: Truman offers only three NASC courses (140, 331, 501), and the availability of these within a given time frame is not guaranteed.

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. Check with professors who teach the Intro sections of the relevant courses at Truman – you may be able to devote your scholarship hours to tutoring.
- Thanks to a growing number of immigrants to our area, there are many different opportunities to teach/tutor ESL. Among the organizations providing ESL instruction to area Spanish-speakers are United Speakers, Migrant English Language Learners, and (for those with access to public transportation) Milan Centro Latino. Students in the LING 412 TESL Practicum tutor ESL in the Kirksville R-3 school district, which has also seen a sudden influx of French-speaking Congolese students.
- Our SERVE center partners with over twenty different community agencies providing a wide variety of educational services to the community. From early childhood (including opportunities with Bright Beginnings, the Early Childhood Center, the Kirksville Child Development Center and Hickory Hills Headstart Center) through the school years (including, for those who have access to private

transportation, schools in Brashear, Milan, and Novinger) to working with adults (e.g., at the Kirksville Area Technical Center and the MO Career Center's Division of Workforce Development).

- Options for undergraduates include study abroad experiences which simultaneously provide a stronger Intercultural experience, such as a program in which students teach English in China (for credit): CHN 330/530G [Issues in International Education China: Education among the Hakka in Southeast China](#), or our Taiwan Connect experience, in which you tutor English remotely with a students in Taiwan. Obviously, our MAE internships also satisfy this goal! (<http://www.truman.edu/majors-programs/graduate-studies/masters-in-education/masters-in-education-field-opportunities/>).

#2 [Health](#) (www.peacecorps.gov/volunteer/learn/whatvol/health/assignments/)



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:** *Note: The Nursing faculty has recommended a set of courses that are relevant and can be completed by non-majors. The first of these, NU 185 (Dimensions of Professional Nursing), is available to non-majors in the Spring semester only. Non-majors will require overrides to register for the subsequent courses, NU 250 (Life Span Development) and NU311 (Human Nutrition).
- **Exercise Science:** *Note: ES courses are available for Health & ES majors only.
- **Athletic Training:** *Note: AT courses are available for AT majors only.
- **Health Science:** *Note: HLTH courses are available for HLTH, ES, and AT majors only.
- **Biology:** Any three BIOL courses.

*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
- Volunteer work at Hope's Kitchen, Food Bank for Central and Northeast Missouri, Food Depot, La Plata Food Bank, or other food bank/nutrition services.

- The SERVE center partners with over a dozen area agencies to provide health, nutrition, and counseling services. Opportunities include work with the Adair County Health Department, American Red Cross (NEMO), Behavioral Health Services, Hospice of Northeast Missouri, Kirksville Veteran's Clinic, NEMO Area Health Education Center, NEMO Rural Health Network, Preferred Family Healthcare Center, as well as (for those with private transportation) opportunities in neighboring communities of Edina and Milan.
- There are several major-or-minor-specific study abroad experiences which allow students in those fields to increase their Intercultural competence while delivering important health services, e.g. PHI 300: Nursing Experience in the Philippines, and MEX 510: Communication Disorders Experience in Mexico.
- Truman students who have successfully completed SPAN 367: Spanish for the Medical Professions may participate in a study abroad practicum in La Paz (Mexico) or in Quetzaltenango (Guatemala), in which you can increase your linguistic and cultural competence while delivering health care to indigenous populations. Typically, these are students majoring in Nursing, Pre-med, or Health studies with an emphasis in Community Health, who are minoring in "Spanish for the Professions."
- Truman has both a GlobeMed and a Student Public Health Association chapter that work to support public health education and health initiatives.

#3 [Environment](http://www.peacecorps.gov/volunteer/learn/whatvol/env/assignments/) (www.peacecorps.gov/volunteer/learn/whatvol/env/assignments/)



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:

- o **Environmental Science:** Any three ENVS courses.
- o **Biology:** Any three BIOL courses.
- o **Natural Science:** *Note Truman offers only three NASC courses (140, 331, 501), and the availability of these within a given time frame is not guaranteed.

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

- Truman's Environmental Campus Organization regularly organizes programs and activities to educate the public. ECO has founded other now-independent organizations such as the Bike Co-op and the Communiversity Garden.
- The Kirksville Permaculture Education center provides classes, support, and resources to educate people on permaculture, sustainability and simplicity. Read more at www.kvpermaculture.org.
- Conducting biological surveys of plants or animals
- Gardening, farming, nursery management, organic or low-input vegetable production, or landscaping, including
 - the Communiversity Garden,
 - Ray Miller's Green Thumb Project,
 - the University Farm,
 - the Rot Riders Compost Project,
 - the Farm-to-School Vegetable Production Program.
- Providing technical assistance and training in natural resource management. Truman offers several study abroad experiences in which you can accomplish fieldwork in resource management while also strengthening your Intercultural competence:
 - AFR 300/501G Conservation and Game Management for African Mammals (***Note:** BIO 108 or the equivalent is a prereq for either of these).
 - CA 300 Tropical Ecology & Conservation in Honduras
 - ECU 355 Tropical Field Research and Natural History of Ecuador (***Note:** this has a prerequisite of Botany (BIOL 103), Zoology (BIOL 106), or Introductory Biology II (BIO 108). Completion of BIOL 301: Introduction to Ecology is also recommended.)

#4 [Agriculture](http://www.peacecorps.gov/volunteer/learn/whatvol/agr/assignments/) (www.peacecorps.gov/volunteer/learn/whatvol/agr/assignments/)



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:

- o **Agricultural Science:** Any three AGSC courses *except 152-154 (the horsemanship classes)*. For non-majors, the AGSC faculty recommends selecting from the following courses:
 - AGSC 110: Principles of Plant Agriculture
 - AGSC 121: Livestock Management
 - AGSC 215: Principles of Animal Agriculture
 - AGSC 218: Intro to Horticulture
 - AGSC 260: Agricultural Markets and Products

- AGSC 314: Soil Science
- AGSC 332: Vegetable Production
- o **Business Administration:** *Note: this option is available for BSAD and ACCT majors/minors only.
 - BSAD 325: Principles of Marketing
 - BSAD 301: Introduction to Financial Management (for minors) or BSAD 329: Principles of Finance (for majors)
 - BSAD 349: Organizational Behavior
- o **Economics:** Any three ECON courses.
- o **Biology:** Any three BIOL courses.

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, livestock care and management, or fish cultivation and production; e.g.,
 - the University Farm
 - The Communiversity Garden
 - Ray Miller Elementary's Green Thumb Project
 - The Farm-to-School Vegetable Production Project
- Teaching or tutoring the public in environmental or agricultural issues/activities
 - The Kirksville Permaculture Education center provides classes, support, and resources to educate people on permaculture, sustainability and simplicity. Read more at www.kvpermaculture.org.
- Working on the business management or marketing side of a commercial farm

#5 [Youth in Development](#)

(www.peacecorps.gov/volunteer/learn/whatvol/youth/assignments/)



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:

- o **(Counseling: *NOTE:** the Counseling program at Truman is currently on hiatus.)
- o **Developmental Psychology:**
 - PSYC 166: General Psychology
 - PSYC 332: Child Development *Note: Psychology majors have priority for registration in fall and spring semesters. There are no restrictions on summer registration.
 - PSYC 377: Developmental Psychology. *Note: Psychology, Communication Disorders, Exercise Science, and Health Science majors have priority for registration in fall and spring semesters. There are no restrictions on summer registration.

- o **Women's and Gender Studies:** Any three WGST courses, including
 - Any course with a WGST prefix
 - Interdisciplinary courses recognized as WGST, e.g. JINS 311 (Race, Class, & Gender), JINS 314 (Economics of Gender).
 - Disciplinary courses recognized as WGST, e.g. LING 325 (Language and Gender), POL 252 (Women, Gender, and Politics), SOAN 232 (Anthropology of Gender).

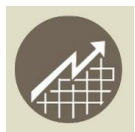
For a complete listing of all WGST courses, see the "Women's & Gender Studies Minor" section of the current catalog.

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

- Teaching or counseling in at-risk youth programs, e.g. The SERVE center partners with the Adair County Juvenile Office, Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA) of Adair County, Preferred Family Healthcare, and other organizations providing services to at-risk youth.
- 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.
- There are many local opportunities for working with youth, including 4-H Clubs, Boy Scouts of America, Girl Scouts of Eastern Missouri, YMCA of Adair County, and many opportunities listed under "education" above.

#6 Community Economic Development

(www.peacecorps.gov/volunteer/learn/whatvol/busdev_01/assignments/)



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:

- o **Business Administration:** *Note: this options is available for BSAD and ACCT majors/minors only.
 - BSAD 325: Principles of Marketing
 - BSAD 301: Introduction to Financial Management (for minors) or BSAD 329: Principles of Finance (for majors)
 - BSAD 349: Organizational Behavior
- o **Economics:** Any three ECON courses

- o **Accounting:** The ACCT faculty have identified a set of courses that could be completed (in sequence) by nonmajors:
 - BSAD 107: Computer Applications
 - ACCT 220: Introduction to Financial Accounting
 - ACCT 221: Introduction to Management Accounting
- o **Computer Science:** Any three three-(or more)-credit CS courses numbered 170 or above.
- o **Visual Communication:** The ART faculty has identified the following courses as relevant, as well as ones that can be completed by non-majors:
 - ART 201: Design, Software and Process
 - ART 220: Typography
 - ART 320: Visual Communications I
 - ***Note:** ART 219: Illustration is also relevant and open to non-majors, but requires advanced art-making skills.
- o **Communication:** ***Note:** This option is restricted to COMM majors or minors.
 - COMM 250: Mass Communication
 - COMM 251: Media Writing (prereqs COMM 250 and COMM 245: Rhetoric and Civic Life)
 - COMM 353: Public Relations (prereq COMM 251)

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. Local opportunities include SERVE center partnerships with the City of Kirksville, the Kirksville City Council, the Kirksville Leadership Institute, Kirksville Regional Economic Development Incorporated (KREDI), Kirksville Tourism/Chamber of Commerce, Missouri Rural Enterprise and Innovation Center, and Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA).
- Starting and running your own business or other entrepreneurial activity
- Training others in computer literacy, maintenance, and repair. Local opportunities include work with Truman's Information Technology Service (ITS service desk), Pickler Library's Media Lab, and Truman's Learning Technologies office. Truman's Free Software club organizes install-fests and other educational opportunities.
- Website design or online marketing.
- Founding or leading a community- or school-based organization
- Working in publishing. On-campus opportunities include The *Index*, *Detours* Magazine, Fine Arts Design, Printing Services, Truman Media Network, and the Truman State University Press.
- Students who have successfully completed SPAN 366: Spanish for the Business may participate in a study abroad practicum at the Universidad de las Americas-Puebla (Mexico), increasing their intercultural competence while gaining field

experience. Typically, these are Business majors or minors with a “Spanish for the Professions” minor.

***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.

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 want to serve in a country that speaks your same language, you can skip this requirement!

Intercultural competence

3 approved courses

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.

NOTE that it is very easy to turn your “3 approved intercultural competence” courses into a full-fledged minor in International Studies, if you plan ahead! Why not do it?

Truman State University offers a wide variety of study abroad experiences, all of which count towards fulfilling the “intercultural competence” requirement. **Study abroad experiences that feature service-learning opportunities and/or interacting with marginalized populations are particularly encouraged, e.g.:**

- CHI 401: Chile: Globalization and Culture Change
**Note:* prereq SPAN 201 or equivalent proficiency.
- CHN 330: Education among the Hakka of Southeast China
- MEX 510: Communication Disorders Experience in Mexico
**Note:* CMDS majors only; prereq CMDS 380.
- PHI 300: Nursing Experience in the Philippines
**Note:* NU majors only; prereq completion of junior-level nursing courses.
- SPAN 398: Spanish Practicum for the Professions offers several study abroad options. The Medical Spanish program in La Paz, Mexico and The Asociación Pop Wuj (Medical Services) program in Quetzaltenango, Guatemala are available to students who have successfully completed SPAN 367: Spanish for the Medical Professions and have a strong background in community health (nursing, pre-med, health majors and minors). The Business Practicum at the Universidad de la Americas-Puebla (Mexico) is available to students who have successfully completed SPAN 366: Spanish for the Business and have a strong background (major or minor) in Business.

In addition to study abroad, we have over one hundred courses taught on campus that have been approved to meet the Intercultural requirement. For a full listing of these courses, please see the online catalog.

While we recognize the value of studying Art, Music, and History from an Intercultural Perspective, we encourage Peace Corps Prep candidates to satisfy intercultural requirements by taking courses that focus on contemporary socio-cultural, social scientific and communication issues across the globe.

At least one of the courses used to fulfill the Intercultural requirement must be international in focus, if not through study abroad, then through a course such as one of the following:

- COMM 420: Intercultural Communication

***Note:** prereq COMM 170 (Public Speaking) or equivalent, and at least junior status.

ECON 308: Economics of the European Union

***Note:** prereq ECON 130, 200, 201, or 205.

ECON 348: Economics of East Asia

***Note:** prereq ECON 200 or 205.

JINS 300: Cultural Crossroads

JINS 317: Women's Movement in Intercultural Perspective

POL 171: Introduction to Political Science

POL 250: Introduction to International Relations

POL 251: Peace and Security

POL 352: International Political Economy

POL 355: Politics of Sub-Saharan Africa

SOAN 191: Anthropological Inquiry

SOAN 232: Anthropology of Gender (offered Fall semesters only)

SOAN 253: Comparative Cultures (offered Spring semesters only)

In addition to building international awareness, PC Prep candidates are welcome to include intercultural coursework relating to marginalized populations, e.g.

DS 120: Introduction to Disability Studies

ENG 434: Queer Theory

***Note:** prereq ENG 230 or advanced standing and permission of instructor.

JINS 311: Race, Class, and Gender

JINS 338: Race and Ethnicity

POL 252: Women, Gender, and Politics

SOAN 190: Sociological Inquiry

SOAN 215: Social Problems (offered Fall semesters only)

SOAN 265: Structured Inequalities (offered Spring semesters only)

SOAN 267: Social Psychology (offered Fall semesters only)

WGST 200: Issues in Women's and Gender Studies

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.*

Professional and leadership development

Resume and interview support + Leadership experience

International development is a highly professional sector. It is difficult to break into and demands great initiative and leadership to advance professionally within the field. 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 Dr. Shapiro
2. Attend a workshop or class on **interview skills** at the Career Center, and/or complete a mock interview and get feedback from a skilled interviewer 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. Students are encouraged to explore leadership opportunities available through the service fraternities, academic honors societies, the Center for Student Involvement (*csi.truman.edu*) and the SERVE center (*serve.truman.edu*).