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 (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
- TESOL
- Math
- Computer Science
- Engineering
- Any Physical or Biological Science

Recommended courses:
- EDC 102 Introduction to American Education
- EDC 103G Education and Social Justice
- EDC 429 Storytelling in a Global Society

*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.
- Volunteering at *URI Child Development Center* on campus, which offers opportunities for URI students to work with pre-kindergarten aged children.
- Participating in *Jumpstart*, which is a national early education organization that provides language, literacy, and social-emotional programming for preschool children from under-resourced communities. URI assists students to become involved.
- Tutoring at the *Mentor/Tutor Internship* (MTI) program at URI, which seeks to provide disengaged youth and children with a safe haven to explore social and economic issues. The mentors assist students in discovering their goals and support the process of attaining those goals. In addition, the mentors create and bolster connections with the school and the community.

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 Sciences
- Pre-med
- Biology
- Pharmacy
- Environmental or Biomedical Engineering

Recommended courses:
- HLT 100 Introduction to Public Health and Health Studies
- KIN 123 Foundations of Health
- HLT 200 Interdisciplinary Approaches to Health

*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.
- Participating in an internship opportunity through the *URI Academic Health Collaborative*, which includes Colleges of Pharmacy, Nursing and Health Sciences. They provide many internship opportunities for their students in organizations such as the American Cancer Society, Juvenile Diabetes Association, Rhode Island Blood Center, and Rhode Island Geriatric Center. Or consider volunteering with the *RI Department of Health Public Health Scholars Internship* program.
- Joining with the *URI Feinstein Center for a Hunger Free America*, which is an educational center committed to developing solutions to the problem of hunger in Rhode Island and nationwide. The center promotes education, research, and outreach on the causes and the consequences of hunger and the study of policies and programs aimed at alleviating hunger. The Hunger Center provides an avenue for students and the community to work together to understand the issues facing low-income people.
- Volunteering with *Engineering World Health*, an organization that provides students from around the world with the life-changing experiences to improve global health.

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 or related field
- Natural Resources Conservation
- Oceanography or Marine Sciences
- Wildlife Biology
- Environment and Natural Resource Economics
- Biotechnology
- Biology, Botany, or Ecology
- Geology

Recommended courses:

- NRS 100 Natural Resource Conservation
- EEC 105 Introduction to Natural Resource Economics
- CVE 477 Environmental Sustainability and Green Engineering (for Engineering majors)

*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.
- Engaging in *URI's Coastal Fellowship Program*, which provides undergraduates the opportunity to get involved in research and applied research efforts focusing on solving current coastal and environmental challenges.
- Working with *SAVE THE BAY Foundation* in Rhode Island, which takes on many interns for environmentally related projects around the state.
- Joining the URI Cooperative Extension's *Energy Fellows Program*, which engages and trains students passionate about a career in sustainable energy.

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:

- Agronomy
- Horticulture
- Botany
- Entomology
- Agricultural Science
- Sustainable and Agricultural Food Systems
- Business or economics
- Biology

Recommended courses:

- o AFT/AVS/PLS 123G Sustainable Agriculture and Food Systems
- o AVS/PLS 275 Pasture and Grazing Management in Sustainable Agriculture
- o PLS 385 Agroecology and Global Food Systems

*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.
- Joining the *RI Food Policy Council* to help with the "Local Food to Institution" Project.
- Interning with the *URI Master Gardener Program*, which is one of URI Cooperative Extension's largest train-the-trainer programs, with the mission to educate citizens in environmentally sound horticultural practices through the dissemination of research-based information. This internship position will help to empower volunteer educators throughout RI to think globally and act locally.

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:

- o Gender and Women's Studies
- o International Development
- o Community Development
- o Developmental Psychology
- o Kinesiology
- o Human Development and Family Studies

Recommended courses:

- o KIN 121 Principles of Youth Fitness
- o PSY 232 Developmental Psychology
- o HDF 202 Research Perspective in Human Development and Family Studies

*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.
- Joining the URI Cooperative Extension *Learning Landscape Program,* which conducts educational workshops for youth in topics related to the environment and health.

- Getting trained at the *URI Gender and Sexuality Center* to help facilitate Safe Zone workshops that are offered to the campus community regarding basic issues affecting the LGBTQ community.
- Tutoring at the *Mentor/Tutor Internship* (MTI) program at URI, which seeks to provide disengaged youth and children with a safe haven to explore social and economic issues. The mentors assist students in discovering their goals and support the process of attaining those goals. In addition, the mentors create and bolster connections with the school and the community".

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:

- o Business or Public Administration
- o Entrepreneurial or Global Business Management
- o Accounting, Banking or Finance
- o Computer Science and related majors
- o Graphic Design
- o Mass Communications
- o International Business

Recommended courses:
- o BUS 149 Introduction to Entrepreneurship
- o BUS 220 Financial Management
- o BUS 304G Social Entrepreneurship and Innovation

*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.
- Get engaged with the *URI Launch Lab,* which is a place to grow ideas into social impact and new ventures and connect with aspiring innovators.
- Meet with the Economics Specialist at the *URI Center for Careers and Experiential Education* and find an internship opportunity related to this field. Or, intern through the *URI Department of Economics* in organizations such as the RI Economic Development Corporation, the Providence Community Action Program or the State of RI Office of Economic Recovery.

| **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 of interest

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 200-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 one 200-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 complete the Program, but they should still be encouraged to study a foreign language.

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!

Interested in gaining foreign language proficiency by studying abroad? URI students have a strong track record at winning regionally and nationally competitive scholarships to fully or partially fund their studies abroad. **For guidance and feedback on draft applications, contact the URI Office of National Fellowships and Academic Opportunities.**

3. Intercultural competence

3 approved courses *or* 1-2 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** or **optional intercultural experience**(s), 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.

You'll take at least 1 of these core courses:

- NRS 300 Introduction to Global Issues in Sustainable Development
- CVE 323G Humanitarian Engineering

And choose 2 additional electives from these below:

- AAF 399: Introduction to Multicultural Psychology
- AAF 336: Social Inequality
- AAF 410: Issues in African Development
- AAF 408: African Governments and Politics
- APG 200: Language and Culture
- APG 203: Cultural Anthrhroplogy
- APG 220: Introduction to the Study of Language
- APG 301: The Anthropology of Nutrition
- APG 320: Sociolinguistics
- APG/SOC 329: Contemporary Mexican Society
- APG 413: Peoples of the Sea
- APG/SOC 415: Migration in the Americas
- ARH 565: Seminar in Cultural Heritage
- AVS 132: Animal Agriculture, Food Policy, and Society
- AVS 390: Wildlife and Human Disease
- BUS 317: International Business Communications Exchange
- BUS 428: Multinational Finance
- BUS 429: Global Investment Management
- BUS 441: Leadership Skills Development
- BUS 448: International Dimensions of Business
- BUS 468: Global Marketing
- COM 322: Gender and Communication
- COM 361: Intercultural Communication
- COM 402: Leadership and Motivation
- COM 461: Managing Cultural Differences in Organizations
- COM 462: Communication and Global Society
- ECN 338: International Economics
- ECN 344: Political Economy of Global Finance
- ECN 363: Economic Growth and Development
- ECN 386: The Economics of Race, Gender, and Class
- ENG 160: Literatures of the World
- ENG 247: Introduction to Literature of the African Diaspora
- ENG 360: Africana Folk Life

- ENG 364: Contemporary African Literature
- GEO 305: Global Climate Change
- GWS 150: Introduction to Gender and Women's Studies
- GWS 305: Current Issues in Women's Studies
- GWS 310: Race, Class, and Sexuality in Women's Lives
- GWS 325: International Women's Issues
- GWS 386: The Economics of Race, Gender, and Class
- GWS 430: Women and Human Rights Policy
- HDF 203: Introduction to Work with Children
- HDF 357: Family and Community Health
- HDF 412: Historical, Multi-Ethnic, and Alternative Leadership
- HDF 414: Leadership for Activism and Social Change
- HDF 416: Personal and Organizational Leadership
- HDF 434: Children and Families in Poverty
- HPR XXX: Honors Programs courses (list updated each semester, many with global themes)
- NVP 200: Nonviolence and Peace Studies Colloquium
- NVP 500: Theory and Research on Nonviolence and Peace
- NVP 425: Peace Psychology
- PHL 210: Women and Moral Rights
- PHL 217: Social Philosophy
- PHL 346: Existential Problems in Human Life
- PHP 143: Sustainable Solutions for Global Health Problems
- PSC 116: Introduction to International Politics
- PSC 403: Global Ecopolitics
- PSC 410: Issues in African Development
- PSC 422: International Political Economy
- PSC 435: Theories of International Conflict
- PSC 431: International Relations
- PSY 103: Towards Self-Understanding
- PSY 384: Cognitive Psychology
- PSY 480: Psychology of Women
- SOC 100: General Sociology
- SOC 212: Families in Society
- SOC 240: Race and Ethnic Relations
- SOC 242: Sex and Gender
- SOC 336: Social Inequality
- SOC 413: Gender Inequality

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

OPTIONAL: Intercultural experience in place of elective(s).
If you would like to substitute an intercultural experience in place of taking one/two courses above, be sure to **check with your PC Prep Advisor to get pre-approval**. Here are the guidelines:

- o **Studying or volunteering abroad** may count *if* you are 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) [www.peacecorps.gov/countries]).
    - ▪ Studying/volunteering abroad in these countries from one week to a summer may substitute for one course. URI has over 30 faculty-led programs during spring break, summer and the J-Term (2-3 week international travel opportunities each January) to consider.
    - ▪ Experiences that last a full semester may substitute for both electives. URI's *Office of International Education* provides you with the opportunity to study in more than 200 affiliated programs in over 60 different countries.
- o **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 40 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 an advisor in URI's *Center for Career and Experiential Education*. See **Contacts** on the PC Prep website for name of the PC Prep Advisor in the Center to make an appointment.

2. Attend a workshop or class on **interview skills** at URI's *Center for Career and Experiential Education.* See **Contacts** on the PC Prep website for name of the PC Prep Advisor in the Center to get more information.
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. URI's *Center for Student Leadership Development* provides guidance about opportunities. A Leadership Studies minor is also offered.