



UNIVERSITY OF
Nebraska
Lincoln



PEACE CORPS PREP STUDENT GUIDE

The Peace Corps Prep Program at the University of Nebraska–Lincoln (Nebraska/UNL) 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

To round out your experience in Nebraska's PC Prep Program, you will complete a one-credit course in your final semester.

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.

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 Nebraska's 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. This requirement can be completed in various ways. Each sector lists some of the opportunities available through UNL or our community partners. These are not exhaustive lists, and you are likely to find more opportunities that match this requirement in [Handshake](#), or upon having a conversation with your academic advisor, career coach, or a faculty member who is an expert in the field.

**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](http://www.peacecorps.gov/volunteer/what-volunteers-do/) (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.

Students from all majors are encouraged to apply to work in any sector. However, your chances of working in your desired sector will increase significantly if you can demonstrate knowledge in the specific subjects. We encourage you to work with PC Prep Coordinator Rebecca Baskerville and your academic advisor to identify courses that fit the spirit of the requirements.

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:

- Education and Human Sciences; Teaching, Learning, and Teacher Education, Special Education; or Child, Youth, and Family Studies
- English
- Math or Statistics
- Computer Science and Engineering
- Engineering
- Speech Language Pathology
- Any Physical or Biological Science

Recommended courses:

- CEHS 200: Families, School, and Communities
- CEHS 265: International Perspectives Seminar
- CYAF 380: Working with Families in the Communities and Schools
- EDPS 250: Fundamentals of Child Development for Education
- EDPS 251: Fundamentals of Adolescent Development for Education
- SLPA 488: Linguistic Needs of Bilingual and Culturally Different Students
- SPED 201: Intro to Special Education
- TEAC 259: Instructional Technology
- TEAC 330: Multicultural Education
- TEAC 331: School and Society
- TEAC 413P: Teaching English as an International Language

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
- Becoming a volunteer ESL teacher with [Lincoln Literacy](#)

- Helping UNL’s international students learn English and acclimate to their new life in the United States with [UNL’s Programs in English as a Second Language](#)
- Working with refugees and immigrants at [Lutheran Family Services of Nebraska](#), [Asian Community and Cultural Center](#), [Catholic Social Services](#), and more.
- Teaching English or citizenship courses with [El Centro de las Americas](#)
- Becoming a [Peer Mentor](#) with Center for Academic Success and Transition

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:

- | | | |
|------------------------------|-----------------------------|----------------------|
| ○ Humanities in Medicine | ○ Biochemistry, Biological | ○ Psychology |
| ○ Nutrition | Sciences, Life Sciences, or | ○ Sociology |
| ○ Food Science and Nutrition | Microbiology | ○ Biological Systems |
| ○ Gerontology | ○ Anthropology | Engineering |

Note: Students interested in the health sector could consider completing one of the [Pre-Health](#) tracks with a view toward entering a healthcare profession.

Recommended courses:

- ANTH/GLST/MODL 214: Food and Culture
- ANTH 260: Global Health
- ANTH 265: Pandemics
- ANTH 422: Medical Anthropology
- COMM/NUTR 364: Communication, Medicine and Health Equity
- CYAF 458: Family Stress & Crisis, Coping and Recovery
- EDPS 320: Happiness & Well-Being through Positive Psychology
- GERO 447: Mental Health and Aging
- NRES 330: Environmental Health
- NUTR 230: Peer Health Education
- NUTR 251: Nutrition Through the Life Cycle
- NUTR 253: Cultural Aspects of Food & Nutrition
- NUTR: 256: Addressing Health Disparities through Health Literacy
- PHIL 213: Medical Ethics
- PSYC 428: Health Psychology
- SOCI 252: Health, Medicine, and Society
- SOCI/ETHN 454: Physical Health Disparities
- TEAC 380: Health and Wellness the Elementary Classroom

*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
- Serving as a Big Red Resilience and Well-Being [Wellbeing Coach](#)
- Joining a health-related student organization to find ways to connect to the community.
 - Explore Center has an extensive list of pre-health-oriented organization and other opportunities listed [HERE](#).
 - Pre-Health Explore Center Advisors work closely with students to identify specific opportunities that will help you gain experience outside the classroom
- Volunteering at [Clinic with a Heart](#)

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:

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|--|------------------------------------|-----------------|
| ○ Environmental Science or related field | ○ Grassland Ecology and Management | ○ Horticulture |
| ○ Natural Resources | ○ Animal Science | ○ Meteorology |
| ○ Fisheries and Wildlife | ○ Soil Science | ○ Water Science |
| | | ○ Geology |

Recommended courses:

- ANTH 474: Human Rights, Environment and Development
- ENVR 319: Environmental Engagement and the Community
- METR 180: Environment, Energy, and Climate Change
- NRES 211: Conservation Biology
- NRES 311: Wildlife Ecology and Management
- NRES 348: Wildlife Damage Management
- NRES 434: Environmental Education & Interpretation
- NRES 438/838: Grassland Conservation
- NRES 452/852: Climate and Society
- NRES 467: Global Climate Change
- NRES/ENVR 249: Individual and Cultural Perspectives on the Environment
- SOIL 109: Water in Society

*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
- Gaining useful field experience at [Cedar Point Biological Station](#)

- Becoming an active member of the [Environmental Studies Student Advisory Committee](#)
- Learning with other environmentally minded students through [Environmental Studies Learning Community](#)
- Engaging with the Office of Sustainability and joining a [student club or organization](#) such as Sustain UNL, UNL Green Fund, Soil and Water Resources Club, or UNL Wildlife Club
- Gaining experience with [UNL Environmental Leadership Program](#)

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 or Plant Biology | ○ Agribusiness | ○ Agricultural Leadership, Education, and Communications |
| ○ Horticulture | ○ Agricultural Economics | ○ Soil Science |
| ○ Insect Science | ○ Business or economics | |
| ○ Agricultural Sciences | ○ Life Sciences (Biology) | |

Recommended courses:

- AECN 346: World Food Economics
- AECN: 367: Agricultural Development in Developing Countries
- AECN: 420: International Food and Agricultural Trade
- AGRI 282: Introduction to Global Agricultural and Natural Resources Issues
- AGRO 107: Invasive Plant Species – Impacts on Ecosystems
- ALEC 494: Undergraduate Seminar in Agricultural Education
- ANTH/GLST 214: Food and Culture
- ENSC 110: Energy in Perspective
- GEOG 408: Microclimate: The Biological Environment
- NRES 104: Climate in Crisis
- NRES 435: Agroecology
- SOIL 109: Water in Society
- SOIL 153: Soil Resources

*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
- Participating in the [Rural Fellows Program](#).
- Exploring one of the many opportunities offered through College of Agricultural Sciences and Natural Resources. The complete list of experiential opportunities is available [HERE](#).

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
- Educational Psychology
- Women's and Gender Studies
- Education and Human Sciences
- Human Rights and Humanitarian Affairs
- Psychology
- Special Education
- Child, Youth, and Family Studies

Recommended courses:

- CYAF 160: Human Development & the Family
- CYAF 280: Family Science
- CYAF/WMNS 447: Working with Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual and Transgender (GLBT) Youth in Professional Context
- EDPS 250: Fundamentals of Child Development for Education
- EDPS 251: Fundamentals of Adolescent Development for Education
- EDPS 450: Child Psychology
- PSYC 289: Developmental Psychology
- PSYC 489: Child Behavior and Development
- THEA 337: Creative Drama: Improvisation with Youth
- WMNS/SOCI 226: Family and Society
- WMNS 250: Sex and Gender Around the Globe
- WMNS 325: Contemporary Family Issues

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
- Lead a [Nebraska Honors Afterschool Club](#) (open to all undergraduates)
- Apply to serve as a volunteer or intern with the [Malone Center](#)
- Consider volunteering to work with children at [Educare Lincoln](#) or [LPS CLCs \(Community Learning Centers\)](#)
- Gain experience in residence management by serving as a Resident Assistant with [University Housing](#)
- Gain experience in [New Student Enrollment](#) helping students transition into college life

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 Administration
- Advertising and Public Relations
- Agribusiness
- Accounting or Finance
- Computer Science and Engineering
- Graphic Design
- Mass Communications
- International Business
- Economics
- Entrepreneurship
- Global Studies

Recommended courses:

- ANTH/GLST/HRHA: Development in Theory and Practice
- AECN 367: Agricultural Development in Developing Countries
- CRPL 480: Economic Development Planning
- CRPL 481: Planning in Developing Countries
- ECON 423: Economics of the Less Developed Countries
- ECON 440: Regional Development
- ENTR 421: Identifying and Exploring Entrepreneurial Opportunity
- ENTR 423: Business Plan Development and Decision Making
- GLST/HRHA 415: Grant Writing and Fundraising for Social Good
- HRHA 440: Human Rights, Conflict and Community Changemaking
- MNGT 398: Fostering Entrepreneurial Creativity
- MNGT 411: Leading People and Projects
- POLS 375: Conflict and Development in Africa

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
- Volunteering at one of the many community centers and nonprofit organizations such as [Yazda](#), [Asian Community and Cultural Center](#), [South of Downtown](#), etc.
- Leading a [Nebraska Honors Afterschool Club](#) (open to all undergraduates)
- Participating in the [Rural Fellows Program](#)
- Joining [Jacht](#), a student-run Ad Agency, to gain valuable experience managing advertising campaigns and project for clients

**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

Working across cultures often entails verbal and nonverbal languages distinct from your own. 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. It is strongly encouraged for you to complete *at least* SPAN 203 and SPAN 204.
- ❑ *West Africa*: Students indicating an intention to serve in French-speaking African countries must build proficiency in French language, having completed two 200-level courses or learned French through another medium.
- ❑ *Everywhere else*: While Peace Corps does not have specific language requirements for all volunteer placement sites, you will likely learn and utilize another language during your service. Therefore, it is helpful and important to have experience learning another language. In order to fulfill this requirement for PC Prep at Nebraska, students need to complete at least two courses in the same language at any level. Depending on the region where you wish to serve, you may choose a language that is spoken in the region, for example Arabic, Czech, or Russian.

You may be able to acquire proficiency in other languages through education abroad experiences. Please speak with your PC Prep Coordinator about which education abroad opportunity is the best fit for you and your regional interests.

The University of Nebraska–Lincoln requires all students to complete at least two units of language study. This requirement can be fulfilled through two *years* of language study in high school, or two *semesters* of foreign language at the university. Students who completed two or more years of language prior to attending the university can communicate with the [Department of Modern Languages and Literatures](#) about completing a proficiency exam. This exam will allow the student to complete the foreign language requirement without additional coursework, or in the case of Spanish or French find out their level or proficiency. Students who have already taken and passed foreign language courses or who have tested out of their language requirements for Nebraska may count those courses toward the completion of this PC Prep requirement.

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

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 a mix of courses and experience, 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 will work with the PC Prep Coordinator and your academic advisor to identify courses, or courses and experiences, that will best fulfill this requirement.

Core course (pick 1)

- ANTH/ETHN 212: Introduction to Cultural Anthropology
- ANTH/ETHN/SOCI 217: Sociology of Race and Ethnicity
- ANTH/GLST 280: Colonization, Decolonization and Globalization
- BSAD 420: Global Leadership and Culture Map
- COMM 311: Intercultural and Intergroup Communication
- ETHN 100: Introduction to Ethnic Studies
- GEOG 431: Cultural Geography
- GLST 201: Introduction to Global Studies
- GLST/HRHA 101: Human Rights in a Global Context
- GLST/HRHA 350: Refugees, Displaced Persons and (Im)migrants
- GLST/MODL/POLS 381: Cultures in Transit
- POLS 476: Ethnic Conflict and Identity

Note: Students may request to substitute another [Achievement-Centered Education \(ACE\) 9 course](#) as a core course. ACE 9 courses have been pre-approved to give students an opportunity to “exhibit global awareness or knowledge of human diversity through analysis of an issue.”

Elective 1: Regional Knowledge (pick 1)

Eastern Europe and Central Asia

- HIST 262: Russia: The Nineteenth Century to the Present
- RUSS 301: Russian Cultural Studies
- RUSS 331: Russian Politics and Society after the Revolution

- HIST 285 / ETHN 285: Africa Since 1800
- HIST 459 / ETHN 459 / WMNS 459: Women and Gender in African Societies
- POLS 375 / ETHN 375: Conflict and Development in Africa
- GEOG 380: Geography of Africa

East Asia

- ANTH/ETHN 351: Exploring Cross-Cultural Diversities
- HIST 181 / POLS 171: Introduction to East Asian Civilization
- HIST 282: Modern East Asia
- RELG 180: Culture, Religion, and Society in Contemporary Asia

Middle East and North Africa

- ANTH/ETHN 351: Exploring Cross-Cultural Diversities
- ARAB / WMNS 288: Exploring Love, Sexuality and Femininity in the History of Arabic Culture
- HIST 214 / RELG 214: History of Islam
- HIST 217 / JUDS 217 / RELG 217: Israel: The Holy Land
- HIST 367: History of the Modern Middle East
- RELG 208: Introduction to Islam

Sub-Saharan Africa

- ANTH/ETHN 351: Exploring Cross-Cultural Diversities
- ETHN 203: Introduction to Africa
- HIST 150 / ETHN 150: African Culture and Civilization

Latin America and the Caribbean

- ANTH/ETHN 351: Exploring Cross-Cultural Diversities
- ENGL 344D: Caribbean Literature
- ANTH 237 / ETHN 237 / LAMS 237: Ancient Mesoamerica
- HIST 171 / ETHN 171: History of Latin America
- HIST 272 / ETHN 272 / LAMS 272: Modern Latin America
- HIST 476A: Gender and Sexuality in Latin America
- HIST 476B / ETHN 476B: Race in Modern Latin America
- POLS 277 / ETHN 277 / LAMS 277: Latin American Politics
- SPAN 331 / LAMS 331: War and Human Rights in Latin America

Elective 2: Pick one additional course from the lists above.

Combination of Courses and Experience

You may choose to complete your intercultural competency requirement through a combination of coursework and experience. All students will take one core course but can substitute experiences for one or both of the electives.

- **Domestic Intercultural Experience** can include activities such as helping new immigrants/refugees acculturate to the U.S., volunteering with a local cultural center or diverse community center, or volunteering in diverse schools. The experience must last at least 40 hours. If the experience also aligns with one of Peace Corps' six sectors, these experiences may simultaneously count for that hands-on experiential requirement.
- **Education Abroad Experience** and associated credits can be substituted to fulfill this requirement. In order to satisfy the requirements, education abroad experiences must take place in a country that has at some point hosted Peace Corps Volunteers (see the list of current and past countries [here](http://www.peacecorps.gov/countries) [www.peacecorps.gov/countries]) and include academic credit. A short-term or summer experience will substitute for one elective, while a full semester will substitute both 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. University Career Services will work with PC Prep students throughout their time in the program. Students will build up their resume and interview skills over the course of several semesters.

- You will start out by writing a **resume** and having it critiqued by a [Career Services Career Advisor](#).
 - After completing the 50 required experience hours, you will revisit this resume, update it and have it critiqued again by a Career Advisor.
 - During your final semester, you will identify and write a cover letter for a specific opportunity, and you will complete a mock interview with University Career Services using an online platform where you can record yourself and re-watch your answers.
2. Attend at least one **interview skills** workshop presented by [University Career Services](#).
 - University Career Services offers numerous interview skills workshops throughout the year. While some will be shared with you directly, please also monitor their events page. The PC Prep Coordinator will communicate with our campus recruiter and notify you of upcoming events. If you are not able to attend one of these workshops, you may also meet individually with an advisor in the UNL Career Center, your college-based career coach, or PC Prep Coordinator.
 3. Get involved with a student organization or community organization.
 - Being involved on- or off-campus can help you 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, serving on an advisory board or committee within a specific school or college or serving on the executive board of a student organization. For a complete list of various student organizations, visit [NvolveU](#).

Completing the Program

After fulfilling the program course requirements, you will complete the program by checking off the following additional requirements:

1. Enroll in a 1-credit culminating course (GIST 091: Peace Corps Prep) for Peace Corps Prep.
2. Ensure all requirements are checked off and upload any necessary documents to the PC Prep Course in Canvas:
 - A. Work Sector Hour Verification
 - B. Interview Prep Verification
 - C. Resume Review Verification
3. Exit Checklist (Fillable PDF linked; Word Document version available via Canvas): Please include course titles on your Exit Checklist.
4. Schedule an appointment (rlbaskerville@unl.edu) to meet with PC Prep Coordinator Rebecca Baskerville to review and sign your checklist! This step is very important and is a requirement for completing the Peace Corps Prep program.

Over the course of your time in the PC Prep Program, you are encouraged to attend various **events** that touch on topics related to Peace Corps service. There are numerous activities and events on campus and in the community that critically engage with topics surrounding service, international development, and citizen diplomacy. Your PC Prep Coordinator, Rebecca Baskerville, will keep you updated on related events that you can attend. Furthermore, as part of PC Prep we will organize at least one event each semester in which we will discuss and critically engage with topics relevant to Peace Corps service. These events will be co-organized by PC Prep Coordinator Rebecca Baskerville and faculty advisor Dr. Emira Ibrahimasic.