



Peace Corps Prep Student Guide

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The Peace Corps Prep program at Clark University will prepare you for international development fieldwork and potential Peace Corps service. To accomplish this, you will build three core competencies through interrelated coursework, hands-on experience, and professional development support. The three competencies are the following:

1. **Training and experience in a specific work sector**
2. **Intercultural competence**
3. **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.***

Please note that the courses and descriptions do not necessarily reflect the official policy or positions of the Peace Corps. This content is for educational purposes.

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 Peace Corps 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 Peace Corps Prep, you need to complete at least **3 courses that align with one of the six work sectors**. 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 paid work experience in that same sector**, preferably in a teaching or outreach capacity.

Course offerings at Clark change frequently, so it is challenging to maintain an accurate list of courses that are relevant to each work sector. The following pages provide examples of courses that would be considered relevant. However, there are many other relevant courses that are not listed here. Please communicate with the Peace Corps Prep Coordinator (pcprep@clarku.edu) to confirm that each of your three courses will be considered relevant for your work sector.

Peace Corps Tip!

When applying 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 (<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 Peace Corps 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 and 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!



Education

Teach lessons that last a lifetime. Education is the Peace Corps' 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 relevant courses from the following areas:

- Education (EDUC)
- International Development (ID)
- Psychology (PSYC)

Examples of relevant courses:

- EDUC 005: Our Future, Our Learning
- ID 214: Education and Youth in Global Context
- PSYC 120: Introduction to Cognition

You may also take courses in a subject you hope to teach, for example:

- Biology (BIOL)
- Chemistry (CHEM)
- Computer Science (CSCI)
- English (ENG)
- History (HIST)
- Math (MATH)
- Theater Arts (TA)

Build 50 hours of related 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
- Teaching at the African Community Education or Worcester Education Collaborative
- Volunteering as an after-school tutor at the Worcester Boys & Girls Club or YMCA



Health

Serve on the front lines of global health. Health Volunteers work with clinics and healthcare providers in their communities to develop strategies to promote nutrition, maternal and child health, hygiene, water and sanitation, malaria prevention, and HIV/AIDS education.

If you choose Health, take 3 relevant courses from the following areas:

- Biology (BIOL)
- Environmental Science (EN)
- International Development (ID)
- Psychology (PSYC)
- Sociology (SOC)

Examples of relevant courses:

- BIOL 050: Human Growth and Development
- ID 108: What is Public Health?
- ID 121: Culture, Health & Development
- PSYC 138: Health Psychology

Build 50 hours of related experience through an activity such as:

- Volunteer or work experience in such areas as health outreach, hospice, nutrition counseling, emergency medical technician (EMT) or CPR teaching/certification, maternal health, or hands-on caregiving in a hospital, clinic, or lab technician setting
- Counseling or teaching in health subjects such as HIV/AIDS or family planning
- Working as a resident advisor in a dormitory, as a peer nutritionist, or as a peer health counselor
- Significant experience in mechanical repairs, construction, carpentry, masonry, plumbing, hydrology, or set design
- Join the Clark University Rapid Response Team
- Conduct an internship at the City of Worcester Division of Public Health
- Volunteer for the Family Health Center of Worcester

Peace Corps Tip!

Nearly 2/3 of Peace Corps Volunteers serve in Education or Health. Coursework and meaningful experience in one of these areas — especially teaching English as a Second Language — produce some of the strongest candidates.



Environment

Create a more sustainable world. Volunteers promote efforts to protect natural resources at the local level and strengthen understanding of environmental and sustainability issues.

If you choose Environment, take 3 relevant courses from the following areas:

- Biology (BIOL)
- Climate, Environment & Society (CES)
- Economics (ECON)
- Environmental Science (EN)
- Geography (GEOG)

- International Development (ID)
- Philosophy (PHIL)

Examples of relevant courses:

- BIOL 084: Biodiversity
- CES 101: The Future of Our Planet
- EN 101: Environmental Science & Policy Introductory Case Studies
- GEOG 017: Environment and Society

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
- Contributing to ongoing faculty research in Clark's Hadwen Arboretum
- Volunteering for Mass Audubon at Broad Meadow Brook Sanctuary or Wachusett Meadows
- Working at National Grid's Sustainability Hub, the New England Botanical Garden at Tower Hill, or the Ecotarium



Agriculture

Strengthen food security. Agriculture Volunteers work with farmers to support programs in food security, nutrition, and sustainable livelihoods.

If you choose Agriculture, take 3 relevant courses from the following areas:

- Biology (BIOL)
- Chemistry (CHEM)
- Geography (GEOG)
- Economics (ECON)
- Environmental Science (EN)
- International Development (ID)

Examples of relevant courses:

- CHEM 030: Kitchen Chemistry
- EN 105: Understanding the Water-Food-Energy Nexus
- GEOG 102: Weather and Climate

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
- Volunteer or work at Many Hands Organic Farm or Global Village Farms
- Conduct an urban agriculture internship with the Regional Environmental Council



Youth in Development

Empower the next generation. Volunteers work with youth in communities to increase youth community engagement and strengthen leadership, life, and

employability skills, guiding young people to realize their social, economic, and civic potential.

If you choose Youth in Development, take 3 relevant courses from the following areas:

- Education (EDUC)
- International Development (ID)
- Psychology (PSYC)
- Sociology (SOC)

Examples of relevant courses:

- EDUC 153: Participatory (Action) Research with Youth
- ID 203: Youth Work: Practice and Social Justice
- PSYC 152: Adolescent Development

Build 50 hours of related field experience through an activity such as:

- Teaching or counseling in youth programs
- Activities that involve planning, organizing, assessing community needs, counseling, and leadership, in areas such as education, youth development, health, the environment, and/or business
- Volunteering to work with youth at Main Idea or the Boys & Girls Club
- Serving as a counselor for after-school programs at Worcester Refugee Assistance Project



Community Economic Development

Cultivate and grow local economic opportunities. Volunteers work to strengthen economic infrastructure through urban planning or supporting entrepreneurs and business owners.

If you choose Community Economic Development, take 3 relevant courses from the following areas:

- Accounting (ACCT)
- Business (multiple)
- Computer Science (CSCI)
- Economics (ECON)
- Entrepreneurship (ENT)
- Geography (GEOG)
- Management (MGMT)
- Marketing (MKT)

Examples of relevant courses:

- ACCT 101: Principles of Accounting
- ECON 128: Introduction to Economic Development
- ENT 110: Entrepreneurship and Social Responsibility

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
- Participating in Worcester Roots' Worker Co-op Academy
- Competing in Clark Tank

2. Intercultural Competence

Approved courses *or* a substantive intercultural experience or language skills (or a combination of all three)

Engaging thoughtfully and fluidly across cultures begins with one's own self-awareness. With this learning objective, you will deepen your cultural agility by taking three intercultural courses that provide opportunities to learn about others while reflecting upon your own self in relation to others. The goal is for you to build your capacity to understand multiple cultures and build intercultural competence.

Intercultural Courses

Students will deepen cultural agility through a mix of three self-reflective courses focused on global perspectives.

Take three of these intercultural courses:

- CMLT 130: The National Imagination
- CRES 230: Difficult Dialogues on Race and Racism
- GEOG 248: Social Justice in the City
- HIST 273: From Black Power to BLM
- ID 125: International Development and its Alternatives
- ID 227: Ideologies of Race in Development
- PSCI 104: Politics of Ethnicity and Identity
- PSYC 279: Ethnicity, Race, Culture, and Child Development

Is there another course in the catalog that you feel meets this requirement? Please discuss it with the Peace Corps Prep Coordinator (pcprep@clarku.edu).

Substitution Options

A maximum of two courses can be substituted with an Intercultural Experience or Language Course/Proficiency

Intercultural Experience

Engage in an intercultural experience—including studying, volunteering or teaching abroad or in a different cultural context from your own in the United States (including U.S. territories).

Select from these intercultural experiences:

- Learn at an international university or study center for a semester. Studying/volunteering abroad in these countries from one week to a summer may substitute for one course. Experiences that last a full semester may substitute for two courses.
- Other immersive and reflective intercultural experiences, such as teaching abroad or in the United States (including U.S. territories)
- Volunteer with a refugee support community or cultural organization in the Worcester community such as the African Community Education Program, Centro Las Americas,

Latino Education Institute, Refugee and Immigrant Assistance Center, Worcester RISE for Help, Southeast Asian Coalition, Worcester Cultural Coalition, or Worcester Refugee Assistance Program

Language Course/Proficiency

Develop language skills by taking courses in a language other than English. Please note that sign language or native/fluent experience with more than one language can also satisfy this requirement. All are encouraged to hone their capacity to interact professionally in more than one language.

The following languages are taught at Clark:

- American Sign Language (ASL)
- Arabic (ARAB)
- Chinese (CHIN)
- French (FREN)
- German (GERM)
- Hebrew (HEBR)
- Japanese (JAPN)
- Korean (KOR)
- Latin (LAT)
- Spanish (SPAN)

3. Professional and Leadership Development

Resume and interview support + leadership experience

Peace Corps service and similar international development work opportunities are highly professional and selective. Peace Corps Prep requires the following activities that will strengthen your candidacy for the Peace Corps (and other professional endeavors):

1. Have your **resume** critiqued at the Career Connections Center.
2. Attend a **workshop or class on interview skills** or participate in a **mock interview** with a career advisor at the Career Connections 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.
4. **Connect** with a Peace Corps Recruiter, Strategic Campus Recruiter, or Returned Peace Corps Volunteer about volunteer service, the application process, and benefits of service. All Peace Corps Prep participants interested in applying for Peace Corps should complete this online form at [Peace Corps Prep Connect](#) to connect with Peace Corps recruiters.

To be eligible for Clark's Peace Corps Prep Program, you must be in good academic standing at the time of application. If selected for participation, you must maintain such standing throughout your time at Clark.