The Peace Corps Prep program will prepare you for an international development career and potential Peace Corps service. To accomplish this, you’ll build four core competencies through interrelated coursework in an International Development minor (21 crs.), 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 choose your Peace Corps Prep work sector, plan of study in the International Development minor, and preferred hands-on experience. 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!

### Step I: International Development Minor (21 credits)

Visit the Director of International Studies during office hours in Mowrey 208 for advising on PC Prep and to declare an International Development minor. If you have already chosen a work sector, you can submit the online Declaration of Major, Minor, & Other Credentials form before the meeting. Bring the PC Prep application to the meeting. For questions, email: ism@ship.edu.

**1. Academic training (9 credits) and experience in a specific work sector**

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 a 3-course concentration in the International Development minor that aligns with a specific Peace Corps work sector. 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 ([www.peacecorps.gov/volunteer/volunteer-openings](http://www.peacecorps.gov/volunteer/volunteer-openings)) in which you’d like to serve, then review the positions’ required and desired qualifications and build them up by fulfilling the PC Prep academic and 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 field experience in that sector. The field experience can take the form of volunteering, an internship, student teaching or paid employment. We recommend locating volunteer opportunities through the Career, Mentoring, and Professional Development Center (CMPD). Student teaching and for-credit internships are tracked in Degree Audit. Hours spent volunteering, being a paid employee, or pursuing a non-credit internship should be logged into the SHIP Link or SHIP Career Connection website.

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!

**OPTION 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 sub-options that earn credit toward your International Development minor:*

- Early Childhood/Elementary Ed (restricted to majors)
- English Secondary Ed (restricted to majors)
- Mathematics Education
- Elementary/Middle Level Ed (restricted to majors)
- Science/Math Education
- Special Education
- Teaching English as a Foreign Language (TEFL)

*Required courses (9 credit hours):* See the International Development Minor Requirements sheet for the list of courses in each sub-option.

*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 should be related to your sub-option.
- Some examples of opportunities in the Shippensburg region are:
  - The Learning Center, provides tutoring for Shippensburg undergraduates
  - Reach Out Service-Learning at Pathways to Learning School in Santo Domingo, DR
  - Service-Learning in Jamaica at early childhood centers and a special education school
  - HIRE ME program: undergraduate volunteers supervise high school students with disabilities in practice work settings around Shippensburg campus.
  - PASOS Program: undergraduate volunteers tutor migrant students from Chambersburg High School.
  - Chambersburg Hispanic American Center (CHAC)
  - Employment Skills Center in Carlisle, has ESL, Adult literacy, GED programs
  - The Vista School, Hershey
  - Hilltop Academy, Mechanicsburg, Capital Area Intermediate Unit
- Yellow Breeches Educational Center, various locations
- Volunteer tutoring in local public schools*
- Boys and Girls Club of Shippensburg and Chambersburg
- Franklin County Head Start, Inc.

*Volunteering and course-based field placements in local public schools need to be coordinated through the Office of Field Experience and Partnerships. Prior to the first field placement, students must obtain teaching clearances, including a criminal background check, costing approximately $125.

**OPTION 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 sub-options:*  
  - Biology/Pre-med  
  - Disability Studies  
  - Exercise Science

*Required courses (9 credit hours):* See the International Development Minor Requirements sheet for the list of courses in each sub-option.

*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  
  - Some examples of opportunities at or near Shippensburg:  
    - Service-Learning at Gros Mangles village in rural Haiti (medical clinic project)  
    - Shadowing in regional hospitals and medical clinics (Dr. David Long, pre-med adviser in the Biology Department, will help Peace Corps Prep students with placements.)  
    - Chambersburg Hospital

**OPTION 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 sub-options:*
Required courses (9 credit hours): See the International Development Minor Requirements Sheet for the list of courses in each sub-option.

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
- Some examples of opportunities at or near Shippensburg are:
  - Shippensburg Community Farm
  - King’s Gap State Park
  - Geography/Earth Science Organization (GESO)
  - PA Association of State Forests
  - Appalachian Trail Association in Boiling Springs
  - South Mountain Partnership
  - County Conservation Offices in PA
  - Harpers Ferry National Historic Park
  - Middle Spring Watershed Association
  - Volunteering, internships and service-learning at Chincoteague Bay Field Station in Wallops Island, VA in summers
  - Service-Learning at Gros Mangles village in rural Haiti (with self-designed project)

OPTION 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 in this option (9 credit hours): See the International Development Minor Requirements sheet for the list of courses in this option.

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
- Some examples of opportunities at or near Shippensburg are:
  - Shippensburg Community Farm
  - USDA Office in Carlisle
OPTION 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 sub-options:

- Family Studies
- Human/Community Development
- Social Work Development

Required courses (9 credit hours): See the International Development Minor Requirements sheet for the list of courses in each sub-option.

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
- Some examples of opportunities at or near Shippensburg are:
  - Reach Out Service-Learning at Pathways to Learning School in Santo Domingo, DR
  - Service-Learning at Gros Mangles village in rural Haiti (with self-designed project)
  - Chambersburg Hispanic American Center (CHAC)
  - Shippensburg Parks and Recreation
  - Chambersburg Memorial YMCA
  - Boys and Girls Club of Shippensburg and Chambersburg
  - Girls on the Run
  - Chambersburg Youth Soccer Association
  - Franklin County Head Start, Inc.

OPTION 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 Development, take three courses from one of the following sub-options:

- Business
- Accounting, Banking or Finance
- International Business
- Mass Communications
- Public Administration
- Graphic Design
- Computer Science
Required courses (9 credit hours): See the International Development Minor Requirements sheet for the list of courses in each sub-option.

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
- Some examples of opportunities at or near Shippensburg are:
  - Reach Out Service-Learning at Pathways to Learning School in Santo Domingo, DR (fundraising committee)
  - Service-Learning at Gros Mangles village in rural Haiti (fundraising committee or self-designed project on site)
  - VITA – Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (Accounting Club)
  - Enactus Club (annual project, past projects include financial literacy for high school and college students, consulting services for local businesses, and resume writing and interviewing workshops for the homeless and unemployed)
  - Employment Skills Center in Carlisle, has workplace readiness and computer training
  - YWCA of Greater Harrisburg
  - American Red Cross
  - Carlisle CARES
  - The Salvation Army of Carlisle and Chambersburg
  - Women in Need (WIN)
  - Goodwill Keystone Area
  - Drew Michael Taylor Foundation
  - Habitat for Humanity in Franklin County

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 (3 credits)

Peace Corps Prep Requirements and Recommendations vary by placement region

International Development Minor Requirement (3 crs.):

- 1 foreign language class at any level (may earn general-education credit)

The International Development Minor’s foreign language requirement is meant to show that you have the willingness and ability to learn a foreign language. If you are confident that you can learn a foreign language, you will be willing to pursue a Peace Corps placement that requires a less commonly taught language, such as Khmer (Cambodia) or Wolof (West Africa).
Additional Peace Corps Prep Foreign Language Requirements and Recommendations:

*Students seeking to serve in Latin America, West Africa or China should follow these requirements and recommendations to become a stronger applicant:*

- **Latin America**: Two 200-level courses of Spanish is the minimum required. A Spanish certificate (12 crs. at 200-level or higher) or Spanish minor (18 crs. at 200-level or higher) is recommended.
- **West Africa**: One 200-level course of French is the minimum required. A French certificate (12 crs. at 200-level or higher) or French minor (18 crs. at 200-level or higher) is recommended.
- **China**: CHN 103 Intermediate Chinese is recommended.

### 3. Intercultural competence (9 credits)

![3 courses: INT 200 (3 crs) + Global Perspectives (3 crs) + Area Studies (3 crs)](image)

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. Take the required core course plus one global perspectives course and one area studies course:

**Required Core Course (3 crs.):**
- INT 200 Introduction to International Studies

**Global Perspectives Elective (3 crs.)**
- See the International Development Minor Requirements sheet for the list of courses.

**Area Studies Elective (3 crs.)** Choose one course in the world area where you would like to serve in the Peace Corps. See the International Development Minor Requirements sheet for the list of courses in each world area:
  - African & Middle Eastern Studies
  - Asian Studies
  - Eastern Europe
  - Latin American & Caribbean Studies

*Is there another course in the catalog or one taken while studying abroad that you feel meets this requirement? Please discuss it with the Director of International Studies. Substitute courses require an Exception Form signed by Director of International 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.
Step II: Professional and leadership development (non-credit Peace Corps Prep requirements)

Visit the Career, Mentoring, and Professional Development Center (CMPD) in CUB 108 for advising on professional and leadership development, signature, and submission of the completed application. To schedule an appointment, call the office at (717) 477-1484 or drop by CUB 108 from Monday through Friday, 8:00 am to 4:30 pm.

Resume and interview support + Leadership experience

Peace Corps service and similar international development work opportunities are highly professional and selective. PC Prep requires six specific activities that will strengthen your candidacy for the Peace Corps (or any other professional endeavor):

1. **Hands-on experience in the same work sector selected in the International Development minor** (see suggested placement options above).
2. **Resume**: Set up an appointment with the CMPD to review Peace Corps resume guidelines. Have your resume critiqued during a CMPD one-on-one resume review. Please note all appointments are tracked and logged through SHIP Career Connection.
3. **Essay**: Set up an appointment with the CMPD to review Peace Corps essay guidelines. Have your essay critiqued during a CMPD one-on-one essay document review. Please note all appointments are tracked and logged through SHIP Career Connection.
4. **Interview skills**: Set up an appointment with the CMPD to review Peace Corps interview guidelines. Perform an online mock interview through SHIP Career Connection and obtain feedback on interview during a CMPD one-on-one interview review. Also, engage in a professional interview with a Peace Corps Representative at a Career or Study Abroad Fair or local Returned Peace Corps Veteran. Please note all appointments are tracked and logged through SHIP Career Connection.
5. **Leadership Training**: Sign-up to participate in Leader@SHIP to become a certified student leader through the nationally accredited Student Leadership Challenge. Leader@SHIP is a two-semester, five-step program, which can be completed in the form of weekly meetings or through an intensive weekend retreat each semester. This program is focused on engaging students outside of the classroom in an empowering way and provide challenging experiences that promote intellectual, social, ethical, and psychological growth.
   https://www.ship.edu/cub/leader/leader/
6. **Leadership Experience**: Commit to at least one significant leadership experience on or off-campus. Potential on-campus opportunities include: Study Abroad Ambassador; Peace Corps Campus Ambassador; STARS Ambassador (Tour Guides and Admissions Representatives); New Student Orientation Leader; Resident Assistant; Peer Mentor for a Living/Learning Community or First Year Experience; Officer of a student club/organization; Organizer of a campus event; Student Senate representative.