Peace Corps Prep Program at Iowa State University

Iowa State University, along with the United States Peace Corps, is pleased to announce the Iowa State Peace Corps Prep Program. In this program, students are prepared and equipped for potential service in the Peace Corps or other global organizations.

The Peace Corps Prep Program allows Iowa State students to prepare to further their goals of helping those in need around the world. Iowa State students gain additional expertise in the field of international cooperation through appropriate courses, foreign language experience, and experiences in the field. This academic development program prepares highly qualified graduates for the Peace Corps or similar work in global societies. With successful completion of the program, Iowa State graduates will find themselves thoroughly equipped for the international workforce, demonstrating exceptional skills and invaluable global competence.

The program also creates strong applicants to the Peace Corps following graduation. The program does not ensure acceptance into the Peace Corps, but students will stand above the crowd in the large pool of applicants as a Peace Corps Prep Program graduate and one who has gained the rare qualities Peace Corps is searching for.

Steps to joining the Peace Corps Prep Program:

- **Step 1: Complete "Peace Corps Prep Program Introduction Worksheet"**
- **Step 2: Meet with your academic adviser** regarding planned coursework for PC Prep- including any training/work sector courses, world language courses, or intercultural competency courses
- **Step 3: Meet with Catherine Swoboda, PC Prep Program Adviser** to discuss course of study; set up an appointment through pcprep@iastate.edu. Dr. Gail Nonnecke, PC Prep Program Coordinator, can also assist.
- **Step 4: Fill out "application" with help from the student guide**-both are found on the Global Resource Systems webpage (www.globe.iastate.edu) and in this packet
- **Step 5: Submit an application,** electronic application may be submitted to pcprep@iastate.edu, paper application may be submitted to **Dr. Gail Nonnecke, PC Prep Program Coordinator,** 106 Horticulture Hall, Iowa State University, Ames, IA 50011

Requirements to complete Peace Corps Prep Program

- 3 Specific Work Sector Courses and 50 hours related experience
- 3 Intercultural Competence Courses
- Foreign Language Courses –requirements vary by language
- Professional and leadership development through leadership experience and Career Services workshops
- Student must have application completed and be enrolled at Iowa State for at least two semesters (academic year) before graduation date

Peace Corps Prep Program at Iowa State University
Introduction Worksheet

The Peace Corps Prep Program (PCPP) prepares Iowa State University students for various aspects of the Peace Corps application through four different aspects of coursework and experience: training in a specific work sector, foreign language skills, intercultural competence, and professional development. As students consider the PCPP it is helpful to reflect on how one would meet requirements in each of these categories in addition to the necessary coursework.

Specific Work Sector

In the PCPP, students pursue one of six work sectors including: Education, Health, Environment, Agriculture, Youth in Development, Community Economic Development. Throughout the program students will gain 50 hours of related experience.

Which Work Sector do you plan on pursuing?

_____

How will you gain Hands-on Experience? (See examples in the Peace Corps Prep Student Guide)

_____
_____
_____
_____

Foreign Language

In the PCPP, students study a foreign language depending upon desired Peace Corps volunteer placement site. Requirements depend upon desired Peace Corps volunteer placement site. (1) *Spanish-speaking countries* two 200-level courses. (2) *French-speaking countries* one 200-level course in any Romance Language. (3) *Everywhere else* no explicit requirements, but language skills are a plus.

Which Foreign Language do you plan to study? _____

Intercultural Competence

Students majoring in Global Resource Systems will participate in one GLOBE course as well as two approved global competency courses focusing on culture, history, politics and economics in which students emphasize a global region outside the United States. Other majors will require three global competency courses. Work with your academic advisor to consider what courses you may pursue!

Professional and Leadership Development

PCPP students will develop at least one significant leadership experience and prepare to discuss it thoughtfully (i.e., organizing an event, serving on an executive board, or leading a project).

What form of leadership experience do you plan to pursue?

_____
_____
_____

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:

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 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, and these are 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:

- Ag-Education
- Language Arts
- English or Linguistics
- Family and Consumer Science
- Health
- History-Social Studies
- Mathematics
- Physical Education
- Reading
- Science-All Areas
- Special Education

*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.
- Teaching in Iowa State's Service Learning in Uganda Program where students work with the teachers to develop curriculum to promote the study of agriculture, science, health and nutrition to the children at local primary schools.
- Teaching in Iowa State's EARTH program on the US Virgin Islands where students have the opportunity to teach horticulture, environmental science, and culinary arts to K-12 classes.

#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:

- Nutrition or Dietetics
- Health Education
- Pre-professional Health
- Athletic Training
- Diet and Exercise

- Food Science
- Kinesiology
- Biology or Microbiology
- Biochemistry
- Biophysics

- Technical Education
- Environmental or Sanitary Engineering
- Industrial Arts

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

- Volunteering 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 adviser 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.
- Engaging in health-related projects in Iowa State's Service Learning in Uganda Program.

#3 ENVIRONMENT (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 Agronomy
- o Environmental Science
- o Forestry
- o Horticulture
- o Natural Resources Conservation

- o Park Administration
- o Wildlife Biology
- o Natural Resources or Wildlife Management
- o Forestry
- o Biology or Microbiology

- o Earth Science
- o Geology
- o Sustainability

*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.
- Participating in Iowa State's Costa Rica's Natural Heritage Tour to discover the natural diversity of Costa Rica and sustainability of its landscape.
- Joining Iowa State's Skunk River Navy to learn about water resources and invest in Iowa's natural water resources.
- Engaging in an agroforestry, irrigation, or beekeeping project in Iowa State's Service Learning in Uganda program.
- Participating in Iowa State's school gardening/service-learning EARTH Program (Education and Resiliency Through Horticulture) on St. John, U.S. Virgin Islands.

#4 AGRICULTURE (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:

- Agronomy
- Horticulture
- Earth Science
- Entomology
- Environmental Science

- Agricultural Science
- Agribusiness
- Agricultural Economics
- Business or Economics
- Biology or Microbiology

- Biochemistry or biophysics
- Biological Systems Engineering
- Ag Engineering

*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 or working in hands-on activities at the Iowa State Horticulture Farm, Agronomy Farm, Student Organic Farm, or Ag 450 Farm.
- Teaching or tutoring the public in environmental or agricultural issues/activities
- Working on the business management or marketing side of a commercial farm
- Engaging in an agroforestry, irrigation, and/or beekeeping project in Iowa State's Service Learning in Uganda program
- Studying abroad with one of Iowa State's numerous Agriculture Travel Courses
- Participating in Iowa State's school gardening/service-learning EARTH Program (Education and Resiliency Through Horticulture) on St. John, U.S. Virgin Islands.

#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 Sociology
- o Child, Adult and Family Services
- o Communication Studies

- o Family & Consumer Sciences
- o Political Science
- o Ag and Life Sciences Educ.

- o Community and Regional Planning
- o Psychology
- o Women's 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
- Volunteering at Youth & Shelter Services, Inc. in Ames, providing a broad range of services to youth and their families in the local community
- Aiding youth at Beloit Residential Treatment Center or Woodward Academy
- Working in 4-H
- Working or volunteering at the Boys & Girls Club of Ames

#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 areas:

- o Business or Public Administration
- o Management
- o Accounting, Banking or Finance
- o Economics
- o Event Management
- o Finance
- o Financial Counseling and Planning

- o Hospitality Management
- o Marketing
- o Supply Chain Management
- o Computer Science and related majors
- o Graphic Design
- o Mass Communications
- o International Business

*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
- Studying abroad in one of Iowa State's Agriculture Business Travel Courses to Argentina, Spain, or Australia
- Participating in Iowa State's Entrepreneurship Around Iowa Industry Tour to gain local entrepreneurial experience
- Becoming involved with Iowa State's Agricultural Entrepreneurship Initiative developing new agricultural programs both domestically and abroad

Peace

Corps

Tip!

Nearly two-thirds of Peace Corps Volunteers serve in Education or Health. Coursework, a minor or 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 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 the foreign language requirement, but be prepared to demonstrate your language skills.

3. Intercultural competence

3 approved courses

Engaging thoughtfully 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: Iowa State's Global Resource Systems curriculum requires 15 credits of coursework to develop global competencies, including courses in history, politics, sociology, economics, religious studies, anthropology, etc., in which students emphasize a global region outside the United States. Up to 3 credits may be earned through travel courses. Courses in the WLC Language and Cultures for Professions are also eligible. Students who fulfill the graduation requirements for the GRS program do not need to take additional classes to fulfill the intercultural competence portion of the PC Prep program because the 3-course requirement is met in the curriculum.

International Perspective courses are listed at The Office of the Registrar's webpage at Iowa State University.

    <u>**You'll take at least 3 courses:**</u>

- _____
- _____
- _____

Is there another course in the catalog that you feel meets this requirement but is not listed as an international perspective course? Please discuss it with your PC Prep Coordinator.

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. <u>Professional and leadership development</u>

> **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 someone in an Iowa State University Career Services office.

2. Attend a workshop or class on **interview skills** at Iowa State University – check out opportunities in an Iowa State University Career Services office.

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, gaining a Community Leadership and Public Service certificate, completing an Iowa State leadership program or minor, or serving on the executive board of a student organization.

PEACE CORPS PREP PROGRAM STUDENT APPLICATION

Name: _____ Student ID: _____ Date: _____

Phone: _____ E-mail: _____

Major(s): _____ Minor(s): _____

Expected Graduation (month and year): _____ Cumulative GPA: _____

1. Training and experience in a specific work sector

Please check the box of the sector in which you would like to serve in within the Peace Corps:

❑ **Education**   ❑ **Agriculture**   ❑ **Community Economic Development**

❑ **Health**   ❑ **Youth in Development**

❑ **Environment**

Note: Actual Peace Corps assignments are based on local needs, and thus may or may not align seamlessly with your qualifications. Flexibility is key to the Peace Corps experience!

(1) Coursework. List the number and name of 3 courses in this same sector that you plan to take, and the semester in which you plan to take them (it is fine if you've already taken them).

Note: The courses you include on this application may change, but it's good to have a plan.

1. Course: _____ Semester and year: _____

2. Course: _____ Semester and year: _____

3. Course: _____ Semester and year: _____

(2) Hands-on experience in that <u>same specific work sector</u> – the box you checked on page 1 (must total at least 50 hours).

Describe what you plan to do:

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

2. <u>Foreign language skills</u>

Requirements depend upon desired Peace Corps volunteer placement site.

(1) *Spanish-speaking countries*→ **two 200-level courses. (2)** *French-speaking countries*→ **one 200-level course in any Romance Language. (3)** *Everywhere else*→ **no explicit requirements, but language skills are a plus.**

Please list the foreign language you plan to study: _____

List the last 2 foreign language courses you plan to take:

Course 1: _____   Semester and year: _____

Course 2: _____   Semester and year: _____

Or describe your alternative learning process (e.g., native speaker, received official credit for courses previously completed or nationally accepted higher education examinations):

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

3. Intercultural competence

List three approved global competency courses, which you plan to take:

Course 1: _____ **Semester and year:** _____

Course 2: _____ **Semester and year:** _____

Course 3: _____ **Semester and year:** _____

4. Professional and leadership development

1. **Professional resume feedback: When do you plan to meet with the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences Career Services Office or another Iowa State college's Career Services Office for a one-on-one resume review?**

   Month and year: _____

2. **Professional interview prep: When do you plan to participate in a College of Agriculture and Life Sciences Career Services or another Iowa State college's Career Services Office interview workshop?**

   Month and year: _____

3. **Describe a leadership experience that you intend to pursue:**

For example, leading a work or volunteer project, serving on the executive board of a student organization, or organizing a major campus event. Also consider participating in or completion of a university leadership program or minor or the Global Resource Systems Leadership Fellows Program.

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

_____   _____

Signature of Student   **Date**

_____   _____

Signature of Peace Corps Prep Program Coordinator   **Date**

Attach your current resume   ☐   [Check box ✓   if attached]

EXIT CHECKLIST

Below are the Peace Corps Prep certification requirements. If you apply to Peace Corps, please *scan and attach this signed form to your application with the name "PC Prep Checklist."* If you apply to Peace Corps before completing a requirement below, write: "[Activity]: planned [month/year]."

1. Training and experience in a specific work sector

Please check the box of the sector in which you have prepared yourself to serve:

❑ Education ❑ Environment ❑ Youth in Development
❑ Health ❑ Agriculture ❑ Community Economic Development

(1) Coursework. List the 3 highest approved sector-aligned course #s and titles you took:
1._____ 3. _____
2. _____

(2) Hands-on experience in that same sector. Total Hours (must be at least 50)**: _____**
Description of experience:

2. Foreign language skills

Requirements depend upon desired Peace Corps volunteer placement site. (1) *Spanish-speaking countries*→ two 200-level courses. (2) *French-speaking countries*→ one 200-level courses in any Romance Language. (3) *Everywhere else*→ no explicit requirements, but language skills are a plus.

Language: _____ **List your 2 highest level course #s and titles:**

1. _____ 2. _____
Or describe your alternative learning process (e.g., native speaker):

3. Intercultural competence

List your 3 approved courses/experiences that bolstered your intercultural competence:
1. _____ 3. _____
2. _____

4. Professional and leadership development

1. **Professional resume feedback:** ❑ Yes ❑ No   Date: Where:
2. **Professional interview prep:** ❑ Yes ❑ No   Date: Where:
3. **Demonstrated leadership experiences** (i.e., student orgs, work, volunteer, etc.) **Describe:**

_____ _____ _____ _____
Signature of Student   Date   Signature of PC Prep Coordinator   Dat

RELEASE OF INFORMATION FORM

With your approval, the Iowa State University Peace Corps Preparatory (PC Prep) program will release information on a regular basis to the Peace Corps, including details about the participants in this program and other relevant data that help the Peace Corps evaluate the effectiveness of PC Prep. These educational records are subject to the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), a Federal law designed to protect the privacy of a student's educational records. This Act prohibits college officials from disclosing any records, including grade reports, academic standings, transcripts of records, or any other records, which contain information directly related to the student and from which the student can be individually identified without the student's consent. Consistent with FERPA guidelines, Iowa State University will not release records related to your performance in the PC Prep program, other than those enumerated in this disclosure agreement.

I hereby permit Iowa State University to disclose personally identifiable information to Peace Corps regarding my participation in the Peace Corps Preparatory program for the purposes of evaluating PC Prep. This information will be limited to my name, date of admission to PC Prep, the coursework and other activities I pursued to satisfy PC Prep requirements, date of graduation, and whether I successfully completed the PC Prep upon graduation. If I do not ultimately enter the Peace Corps, Iowa State University may report post-graduation career information to the extent that Iowa State University has that information.

Student Name (printed): _____

Student Signature: _____

Date: _____