

Peace Corps Prep Curriculum

The objective of the Peace Corps Prep curriculum is to complement your major course of study with work inside and outside of the classroom that will make you a competitive applicant for the Peace Corps, and a successful volunteer in the field. To think about how you do this, take a look at the “Opportunity Portal” on the Peace Corps web page.

You will see there that they ask you two basic questions: Where do you want to go? What do you want to do? And, at one level, that is what Peace Corps is about: making a commitment to share your life with a community—to *be* in a particular place—and to contribute your skills to that community’s efforts to make positive change—to *do* something.

Of course, *being* a member of a community and *doing* something about the issues that matter to that community are not separate efforts, but you can prepare for them in different ways. Foreign language preparation is fundamental to both, and all Peace Corps Prep students will meet a minimum standard of 4 semesters or the equivalent of foreign language study in a language relevant to Peace Corps service (Spanish and French in particular). Using that foreign language and gaining cross-cultural experience is also fundamental, and for that reason all Peace Corps Prep students will complete at least one international experience abroad (summer, semester, academic year).

Community engagement is the other essential element. It deepens your insight into the rewards and challenges of being part of a community and working with others for change. It also allows you to develop necessary practical skills. Tulane’s Peace Corps Prep students will gain experience in this field by fulfilling the university’s two-tier public service graduation requirement, and by participating in additional engagement activities both in New Orleans and during their study abroad experience.

What about courses? For purposes of this curriculum, we call the sorts of courses that help you successfully adapt to a new community abroad “**area/international/cultural studies**” courses. We call courses that develop skills you can offer to community development efforts “**sector-specific**” courses. Where you take the 3 additional courses to fulfill your Peace Corps Prep requirement depends on where your major fits into one of these two broad categories.

Are you, for example, a Business or a Public Health major? You will select your three courses (two of which must be at the 2000 level or above) from the “area/international/cultural studies” field to add cultural knowledge to the professional skills you will bring to volunteer service.

Are you a Spanish, History, or Philosophy major? You will select 3 courses from the “sector-specific” list to begin to develop additional professional skills to contribute to community development efforts.

Tulane offers many courses in both areas, as you can see in the [course list](#). Peace Corps Prep students, however, are not limited to this list. In consultation with the Program Coordinator new courses taken at Tulane or abroad may be applied to the program requirements.