

PEACE CORPS PREP PROGRAM

In 2011, the U.S. Peace Corps partnered with The University of Montana's IDS program to offer the first Peace Corp Preparatory Program (PCPP) at a public university. Peter Koehn and Tenly Snow, then Peace Corps representative on the UMT campus, negotiated partnership details. Under the agreement, UMT students completing all academic requirements for the IDS minor can elect to receive a PCPP certificate from the campus Peace Corps representative. UMT students also have the option of completing specialized coursework that prepares them for service in one or more of the Peace Corps' special assignment areas. **For program details, see www.cas.umt.edu/ids/**

PCPP NEWS RELEASE



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NEWS RELEASE

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UM OFFERS PEACE CORPS PREP PROGRAM FOR POTENTIAL VOLUNTEERS

MISSOULA —

The University of Montana has partnered with the United States Peace Corps to offer the first Peace Corps Preparatory Program at any public university in the country.

Starting with the current semester, any UM student can earn a Peace Corps certificate through participation in the international development studies minor in UM's College of Arts and Sciences.

Preparatory coursework will help increase volunteer effectiveness and better equip students interested in serving low-income countries through the Peace Corps.

“We are deeply honored that the Peace Corps has recognized the instructional expertise and efforts of IDS faculty members by designating UM as its first public university to offer Peace Corps Prep certification,” said Peter Koehn, IDS program director. “Given the amazing degree of interest in service in low-income countries that exists on this campus and the doors that open upon completion of a PC assignment, I expect that many more UM students will elect to complete the IDS minor and one of the new Peace Corps Prep options.”

The special designation grew out of UM’s long-standing relationship with the Peace Corps and the popularity of its interdisciplinary international development studies minor. Historically, UM has produced 765 Peace Corps volunteers, and currently there are 33 active volunteers among its graduates. Additionally, per capita, Missoula ranks first in the nation for metropolitan areas in producing Peace Corps volunteers, making UM a natural choice for the preparatory program.

“Peace Corps is excited to welcome The University of Montana to the Peace Corps Prep Program,” said B.J. Whetstine, Peace Corps national outreach specialist. “This new initiative only serves to strengthen an already thriving partnership. UM currently offers two Peace Corps Master’s International Programs. Peace Corps Prep will extend new opportunities to undergraduate students.”

The existing international development studies minor provides a strong framework for the general Peace Corps certificate program. In cooperation with Tenly Snow, the Peace Corps strategic representative on campus, IDS is developing opportunities for students to complete additional coursework to prepare for service in the Peace Corps’ special assignment areas: environment, health and HIV/AIDS, youth and community development, business and information communication technology, agriculture/forestry, education, and civic engagement.

Peace Corps recently reactivated its preparatory program to give students an advantage in its highly competitive application process. Currently only one out of every three applicants is accepted to

become a volunteer. Considering this challenge, a Peace Corps Prep certificate will give UM students a distinct advantage when seeking an assignment. Two private schools, Knox College and Wittenburg University, began their programs in 2007 and 2010, respectively.

Since 1961, more than 187,000 Peace Corps Volunteers have helped promote a better understanding between Americans and the people of the 139 countries where volunteers have served. Peace Corps volunteers must be U.S. citizens and at least 18 years old. Peace Corps service is a 27-month commitment.

PEACE CORPS NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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New 'Peace Corps Prep' Program Starts at University of Montana

UM One of Three Universities in U.S. to Offer Globally-Minded Certificate

MISSOULA, Mont. – The Peace Corps Prep program started at University of Montana (UM) this semester, making it one of only three universities in the U.S. to offer the globally-minded curriculum.

UM is the first public school to provide a Peace Corps Prep certificate, which is also available at Knox College in Illinois and Wittenberg University in Ohio.

Through the new program – which is part of the international development studies minor in the College of Arts and Sciences – students can earn a Peace Corps certificate upon completing the outlined coursework.

Additionally, students will have the opportunity to study areas to make them more competitive in the Peace Corps application process. These areas of study include agriculture, forestry, the environment, health, education, and business, youth and community development.

“We’re delighted to see the University of Montana leading the way with this new and innovative program,” said Janet Allen, regional office manager for the Peace Corps Northwest Regional Office in Seattle. “The university is already one of our top Peace Corps schools and a valued partner through our Peace Corps Master’s International program. This provides another opportunity to showcase the commitment to service we continue to see from University of Montana students and alumni.”

Since 1989, the UM has partnered with the Peace Corps through the [Peace Corps Master’s International \(PCMI\) program](#) which allows students to combine a master’s degree with a Peace Corps assignment in their area of study. PCMI programs at the UM are offered in the College of Forestry and Conservation and through the Intercultural Youth and Family Development Program.

Currently, 33 UM alumni are serving in the Peace Corps, [ranking the university No. 14](#) in the country among medium-sized universities (5,000 to 15,000 undergraduates). Historically, 765 Grizzlies have served in the Peace Corps.

Per capita, Missoula ranks No. 1 in the nation among metropolitan areas for Peace Corps volunteers serving while the state of Montana ranks No. 3 per capita.

About the Peace Corps:

President John F. Kennedy established the Peace Corps on March 1, 1961, by executive order. Throughout 2011, the Peace Corps is commemorating 50 years of promoting peace and friendship around the world. Historically, more than 200,000 Americans have served with the Peace Corps to promote a better understanding between Americans and the people of 139 host countries. Today, 8,655 volunteers are working with local communities in 77 host countries. Peace Corps volunteers must be U.S. citizens and at least 18 years of age. Peace Corps service is a 27-month commitment. Visit www.peacecorps.gov for more information.