

Peace Corps Masters International Program at Michigan State University

Program

Participants in the program will combine Master's degree study with service in the U.S. Peace Corps. They will complete a Master of Science (MS) degree in one of three departments in the College of Agriculture and Natural Resources at Michigan State University: Agricultural Economics, Crop and Soil Sciences, or Community, Agriculture, Recreation, and Resource Studies. Program Participants will also be able to choose among several graduate specializations, including: Agribusiness, International Development, Environmental and Resource Economics, Environmental Science and Policy, and Ethics and Development.

Each MS program will require a minimum of 30 to 33 credit hours, made up of 24 to 30 credits of course work and 3 to 6 credits of research, depending on the program pursued. Students will complete one year of academic study prior to the Peace Corps, and a minimum of eighteen (18) credit hours in the designated major. Three to six (3 to 6) credit hours will be granted for Peace Corps service based on enrollment for independent study credit. The research requirement will be completed in 1-2 semesters at the University following the student's Peace Corps service.

Curriculum

Before beginning their Peace Corps assignments, Program Participants will be expected to meet the academic requirements of the Program stated above. The Program will be designed to prepare them for Peace Corps service, and volunteer activities generally. A typical course of study for the Program is shown on the back of this page.

Eligibility and Admissions Process

To qualify for the Program, students must meet the admissions requirements of the department sponsoring the master's degree program, and the requirements established by the Peace Corps for Volunteer service. Applicants must therefore be U.S. citizens. Prospective participants should apply to both the MSU academic department and to Peace Corps nine months prior to the Fall Semester in which they intend to enroll in the MS program. In some cases, enrolled students will be able to apply to the Peace Corps as a Program applicant during their first semester of graduate study. A diverse pool of applicants and participants to the Program is encouraged.

Program Participants entering the Peace Corps will complete approximately 12 weeks of pre-service training. Upon successful completion of training, Program Participants will become Peace Corps Volunteers and begin a two-year tour of service in their country of assignment.

Funding

While registered at MSU as Master's degree candidates, participants will be eligible for department research assistantships and fellowships. These are allocated on a competitive basis.

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APPENDIX A: Typical Program of Study

MS Plan A

Total credit hours = 30, of which:

24 credit hours of courses

6 credit hours of thesis research

Academic Year 1:

Fall Semester = 9 credits of courses

Spring Semester = 9 credits of courses

Summer Semester = 3 credits of courses or independent study

Peace Corps service period = 3 credits of independent study

Return to MSU (1-2 semesters) = 6 credits of research

MS Plan B (not available through the Department of Crop and Soil Sciences)

Total credit hours = 33, of which:

30 credit hours of courses

3 credit hours of Plan B research

Academic Year 1:

Fall Semester = 9 credits of courses

Spring Semester = 9 credits of courses

Summer Semester = 6 credits of courses or independent study

Peace Corps service period = 6 credits of independent study

Return to MSU (1-2 semesters) = 3 credits of research

Sample Course Program in Agricultural Economics

12 credits of agricultural economics subject matter courses chosen from:

Agribusiness Strategy and Management:

AEC 851—Agribusiness Operations Management

AEC 857—Strategic Management in Agribusiness

Agricultural Markets and Price Analysis:

AEC 841—Food Systems Organization and Performance

AEC 845—Commodity Market Analysis

Environmental and Resource Economics:

AEC 829—Economics of Environmental Resources

AEC 891—Environmental Economics Methods

Finance and Production Economics:

AEC 853—Financial Management in Agriculture

AEC 855—Agricultural Production Economics

International Agricultural Development:

AEC 861—Agriculture in Economic Development

AEC 865—Agricultural Benefit-Cost Analysis

3 credits of economic theory (EC 805—Microeconomic Theory)

9 credits of quantitative methods

EC 801—Math for Economists

STT 430—Probability and Statistics¹

AEC 835—Introduction to Econometrics

3 to 6 credits of master's research (AEC 898 for Plan B, AEC 899 for Plan A, respectively)

¹ Alternatives that cover similar material but do not use calculus are STT 421 or 422.

Sample Course Program in Crop and Soil Sciences

9 credits from the following plant science courses:

- CSS 441—Plant Breeding and Biotechnology
- CSS 819—Plant Breeding
- CSS 821—Crop Evolution
- CSS 842—Population Genetics, Genealogy and Genomics
- CSS 853—Plant Mineral Nutrition

9 credits from the following soil science courses:²

- CSS 440—Soil Biophysics
- CSS 825—Clay Mineralogy and Soils Genesis
- CSS 840—Soil Physics
- CSS 841—Soil Microbiology
- CSS 850—Soil Chemistry

6 credits in quantitative analysis:

- STT 464—Statistics for Biologists
- CSS 870—Techniques of Analyzing Unbalanced Research Data

6 credits in CSS 899—Master's Thesis Research

Contact: Graduate Program Coordinator, Department of Crop and Soil Sciences, Michigan State University, East Lansing, MI 48824-1325. Tel. 517-355-0271 ext 1111; e-mail: house@msu.edu

Sample Course Program in Community, Agriculture, Recreation and Resource Studies

6 credits of CARRS required courses:

- ACR 800—Foundations of CARRS
- ACR 802—Survey of Research Methods

15 credits of courses in one of the following three **degree focus areas** (graduate specializations):

- International Development
- Ethics and Development
- Gender, Justice and Environmental Change

3 credits of technique or skill-building course work

3 credits of ACR 895, Section 1—Peace Corps, Case Studies in CARRS

3 credits of ACR 898, Master's Plan B Research

Contact: Graduate Program Coordinator, Department of Community, Agriculture, Recreation and Resource Studies, Michigan State University, East Lansing, MI 48824-1222. Tel. 517-432-0275; e-mail: davisdia@msu.edu

² A possible choice in this or the previous field would be CSS 431—Soil and Plant Resources for Sustained World Food and Fiber Production.