International Pharmaceutical Students’ Federation Student Exchange Program (SEP) Outgoing Students Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

1. How do you apply for the Student Exchange Program?
The US SEP consists of a two part process. The first part includes a pre-application form. The pre-application is free of cost, and is used to select the qualified students that the US will be sending on the exchange. Pre-application forms can be found at www.pharmacist.com, in the student pharmacist section, under IPSF. Information about deadlines and required materials are reported on the pre-application. The second part of the process will only occur if you are selected to participate in the program and consists of a formal application form, to be filled out electronically on the SEP database. **IMPORTANT: Do not make an account on the SEP database without being told to do so by the national student exchange officer.**

2. Who is eligible to apply for the Student Exchange Program?
All students who are members of APhA-ASP are automatically members of IPSF. IPSF membership allows you to apply for SEP. This applies for pre-pharmacy students who are members of APhA-ASP as well.

3. What happens after I get accepted from the pre-application process?
If selected, you will receive an e-mail from the APhA-ASP/IPSF Student Exchange officer with further directions on how to proceed. The secondary application process usually takes about 10-15 days to complete and has an application fee of $65.00.

4. What countries can I go to if I wish to participate in the Student Exchange Program?
A list of countries participating in SEP can be found at http://sep.ipsf.org/associations. You will be allowed to pick up to three official countries to submit in your secondary application form.

5. How long is the exchange for the Student Exchange Program?
The duration of SEP varies depending on the country you participate with. Exchanges are usually between one and three months in duration, though some are as short as two weeks.

6. What costs am I responsible for?
Students are responsible for all travel expenses including visa fees, immunizations, and insurances. In some countries, cost of housing is covered by the home association. SEP host sites are encouraged to find housing for their exchange students at little to no cost, but this is not required.

7. What kind of financial aid is available?
The US does not have financial aid for SEP, however there is a SEP grant that is available for all students worldwide. Details about the SEP grant application can be found at: http://www.ipsf.org/student_exchange_grant

8. Would I be able to receive class credit for the Student Exchange Program?
Class credit for the Student Exchange Program will vary by pharmacy school. The Student Exchange Program does not officially provide any educational credits, however, some universities will work with you so that you can. You will have to speak with your university to find out what options are available to you.

9. Does the Student Exchange Program help to set up visas?
The Student Exchange Officer in the country you are going to will provide you with an official letter of invitation, should you need to apply for an entry visa. Students are responsible for visa applications. More information can be obtained about visas after the home association places your application.

10. Am I guaranteed placement after I am accepted from the pre-application process?
No. While the Student Exchange Officer will make every attempt in contacting your three choice countries to get you placed, there is no guarantee of placement just because you are selected during the pre-application process. If your application does not get placed, there is a partial refund of your secondary application fee of $25.00. In past years, at least 90% of students who filled out an application were able to participate in an exchange program with SEP.

11. Can I participate in the Student Exchange Program without going through the pre-application process?
No. This is what IPSF considers as undercover SEP and is punishable on a National as well as International level with IPSF-SEP. All students that wish to be part of SEP must first be selected by the US pre-application process. Attempts to contact Student Exchange Officers of other countries without a formal application will be reported to the APhA-ASP/IPSF National Student Exchange Officer and the IPSF Chairperson of Student Exchange.

12. What is the general timeline of events after I submit my official application form on the SEP database?
Timeline of events can vary depending on how quickly your application form gets reserved and placed. After submission of your application form, your first choice country can see your application for 1 week, after that one week, your first and second choice country can see your application, after two weeks, all three of your choices can see your application. For some students, the process is complete and the student is able to make plans to go by March/April. For other students, the process can take as long as up to June. Please be aware that the APhA-ASP/IPSF Student Exchange Officer has no control over how quickly this occurs after the
submission of your application form. Please be aware that you will need to have some patience with the process, but every attempt will be made for you to try and have it completed in a timely manner.

13. On the secondary application in the SEP database, what is the difference between the different application statuses of approved, reserved and placed?
   “Approved” - After submission of your application on the SEP database, your application status will have the status of Approved.

   “Reserved” - If one of your three host associations chooses to reserve your application, the status will change to “Reserved”. Being reserved means the host association is attempting to find a place for you to have your exchange, but is not guaranteeing placement. Applications on reserve are ONLY visible to the country that has reserved it, and can be reserved for a max period of 30 days, before the database automatically un-reserves the application. Applications can be re-reserved by associations for as long as they require to determine if they have a placement for you. The Student Exchange officer should be in contact with you during this period of time.

   “Placed” - If the country is able to find a place for you, they will set your dates of exchange and your work site, and change your application status to “Placed”. At this point, the process is complete, and you should begin working with the host country to arrange travel plans and accommodation.

14. There is no one at my school that wants to travel abroad, but are we still allowed to create a host site to host a foreign student?
   YES! Any school can set up a host site regardless of whether students from that school are going to other countries through SEP. For more information about host sites, please refer to the IPSF section of www.pharmacist.com.

15. Where can I find out more information about the Student Exchange Program?
   You can visit the following sites:
   i.  http://www.ipsf.org/student_exchange

   You can e-mail the APhA-ASP/IPSF Student Exchange Officer at usaispsfseo@gmail.com and/or the APhA-ASP National Contact Person at usaipsfcp@gmail.com with any questions.