



# Frequently Asked Questions

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## Q: What is ISEP and who's involved?

**A:** ISEP is a worldwide network for international education, consisting of 300 member universities in the United States and 42 other countries. ISEP is a nonprofit membership organization providing affordable study abroad and exchange options for over 34,000 students to date.

Each ISEP member university designates a staff member to be the **ISEP Coordinator**. Your on-campus ISEP Coordinator will advise you and help you through the application and placement process. There will also be an ISEP Coordinator at the host university who will help with your academic and housing arrangements, provide an on-site orientation, and serve as your local resource.

The ISEP Staff in Washington, DC evaluate students' applications, make placements, and facilitate the exchange process by serving as the communication link between the ISEP Coordinators in the U.S. and around the world. ISEP also sends the transcript from your host to home university.

## Q: Where can I go?

**A:** ISEP has year, semester, and summer options in 42 countries around the world! See [www.isep.org](http://www.isep.org) for destinations and details.

## Q: What kind of program is ISEP?

**A:** The ISEP experience is a unique opportunity to really learn about another country through immersion in the host culture. Students are fully integrated in the host university, and typically enroll in the same courses and live similarly to the students of that country. Students on ISEP programs welcome the differences and challenges that life in another culture brings, and have the maturity and flexibility to succeed in a more independent type of study abroad program.

## Q: How much does it cost?

**A:** ISEP is one of the most affordable ways to study abroad. Federal financial aid is usually applicable to all ISEP programs; institutional scholarships and other aid are sometimes also awarded. Please see your study abroad and financial aid offices for details. ISEP has two types of programs with different fee structures:

- **ISEP-Exchange** programs allow you to pay your regular home university tuition, room and board fees, and then take the place of a university student abroad; an international student will take your place in the USA. A non-refundable \$360 placement fee is required with your application.
- **ISEP-Direct** programs are only available for certain ISEP destinations, and students pay an affordable, established program fee directly to ISEP instead of exchanging places with an international student. A non-refundable application fee of \$60 is required with your application; a \$500 deposit is required upon acceptance; the program fee is invoiced one month before departure. Please see the ISEP website for a listing of ISEP-Direct fees.

Additional costs include transportation, ISEP health insurance, visa fees, books, and personal expenses.

## Q: Am I eligible?

**A:** ISEP programs are available for undergraduate and graduate students at member institutions who have completed at least one year of university coursework. The GPA requirement for most programs is a 2.75, although some host universities may require a higher GPA or foreign language prerequisites. Your home university may have additional requirements.

**Q: Will I get credit for the classes?**

**A:** When you apply to ISEP, you will list the classes you wish to take. Once you've been accepted to the program, you will follow the procedures at your university to have your classes conditionally pre-approved before you go. After you return, ISEP will send an official transcript to your home institution, and the credits will be transferred according to procedures set by your university.

**Q: Do I have to be fluent in another language?**

**A:** If you speak another language, there is a world of possibilities awaiting you. To study in the host language with other native students, you should have taken at least 2 years of college-level language courses, and feel very comfortable speaking, reading, and writing in that language. For students in the beginning levels of language learning, there are many options to take language courses in conjunction with other courses taught in English.

If you prefer to study only in English, there are still a host of options. Courses in English are available not only in English-speaking countries but also in **Austria, Belgium, Botswana, Bulgaria, China, the Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Fiji, Finland, Germany, Ghana, Hungary, Iceland, India, Italy, Japan, Korea, Latvia, Malta, Mexico, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, South Africa, Sweden, Thailand, and the United Arab Emirates.** Many of these courses are also open to native students so that you will still feel a part of local university life even if you do not speak the language.

**Q: What are my chances for being accepted?**

**A:** You should check the "Sites Open for Applications" page of the ISEP website to see which programs have openings and also read the notes in the ISEP online Directory pages about the particular institution. Some sites have more limited space than others, so you should apply by the deadline and be flexible by having some alternate choices. Students are usually placed in one of their top choices if the site is available and if their language and academic needs are a good match.

**Q: How do I apply?**

**A:** The first step is to meet with your ISEP Coordinator. You can then obtain a copy or download the application from the ISEP website. Applications are submitted to the ISEP Coordinator.

For most programs the deadlines are as follows, but see the ISEP website for exceptions:

- The priority deadline for study abroad in the **Spring is September 1.**
- The priority deadline for study abroad in the **Fall or Academic-year is February 1.**
- The deadlines for study abroad in the **Summer vary from March 1 to June 15.**

Applications are taken after the deadline as long as space is available and there is sufficient time for processing your application and obtaining your travel documents.

**Q: How long until I know if I'm accepted?**

**A:** The ISEP placement process consists of several steps. First, your home university forwards your application to ISEP. ISEP reviews your application and determines which of your choices is the best fit, and then sends the application to the host university abroad. This process may take some time because often specific academic departments also evaluate your application. Once the host institution accepts you, ISEP will forward acceptance materials to your home university. You should receive your acceptance packet within six to eight weeks after your application arrives at ISEP.

**Q: What can I expect as an ISEP participant?**

**A:** Students should think carefully about what life is like abroad and prepare to integrate into their host university and culture. ISEP benefits include full-time enrollment in the host institution, 19 meals per week or an equivalent stipend, and housing typical to that of other local students. ISEP students receive advising and a predeparture orientation from their home ISEP Coordinator, and an on-site orientation and local support as needed from the host ISEP Coordinator.

**Q: Who do I contact for more information?**

**A:** Since each university has a designated on-campus ISEP Coordinator, they will serve as your point of contact for advising and information throughout the process. Information about specific programs, how to apply, and student resources can be found on the ISEP website. The ISEP Central Office in Washington, DC serves as a resource to the ISEP Coordinators at each university.