

# Student Pharmacist Interest in a Pharmaceutical Industry Preparation Elective Course: A Cross-sectional Survey

Mimi Thelma Osei Larbi, PharmD Candidate; April Adkins, PharmD Candidate; Christopher Herndon, PharmD; Stephanie Hunziker, PharmD

## Introduction

- The profession of pharmacy provides graduates with the opportunity to practice in several areas including community, hospital, ambulatory care, among others
- As the pharmacist job market becomes more competitive for graduating students, nontraditional career pathways are becoming more attractive
- Exposure to pharmaceutical industry opportunities for pharmacists is variable among colleges and schools of pharmacy

## Objective

The purpose of this study is to assess the interest of pharmacy students and pre-pharmacy students at Southern Illinois University Edwardsville (SIUE) in pharmaceutical industry careers and a potential elective course.

## Methods

- Study Design: 10-question cross-sectional survey
- Data Source: SIUE School of Pharmacy students, alumni, and Pre-Pharmacy Association members
- Study Period: August 2022 to September 2022
- Study Measures:
  - Awareness of pharmaceutical industry careers
  - Interest in a pharmaceutical industry elective
- Descriptive data is presented

## Results

- 292 students and alumni responded to the questionnaire
- Responses by group:
  - 16.7% from current SOP students
  - 12% from SIUE pre-pharmacy association member students
  - 71.2% from SOP alumni

Figure 1: When Participants Learned about Careers in Industry

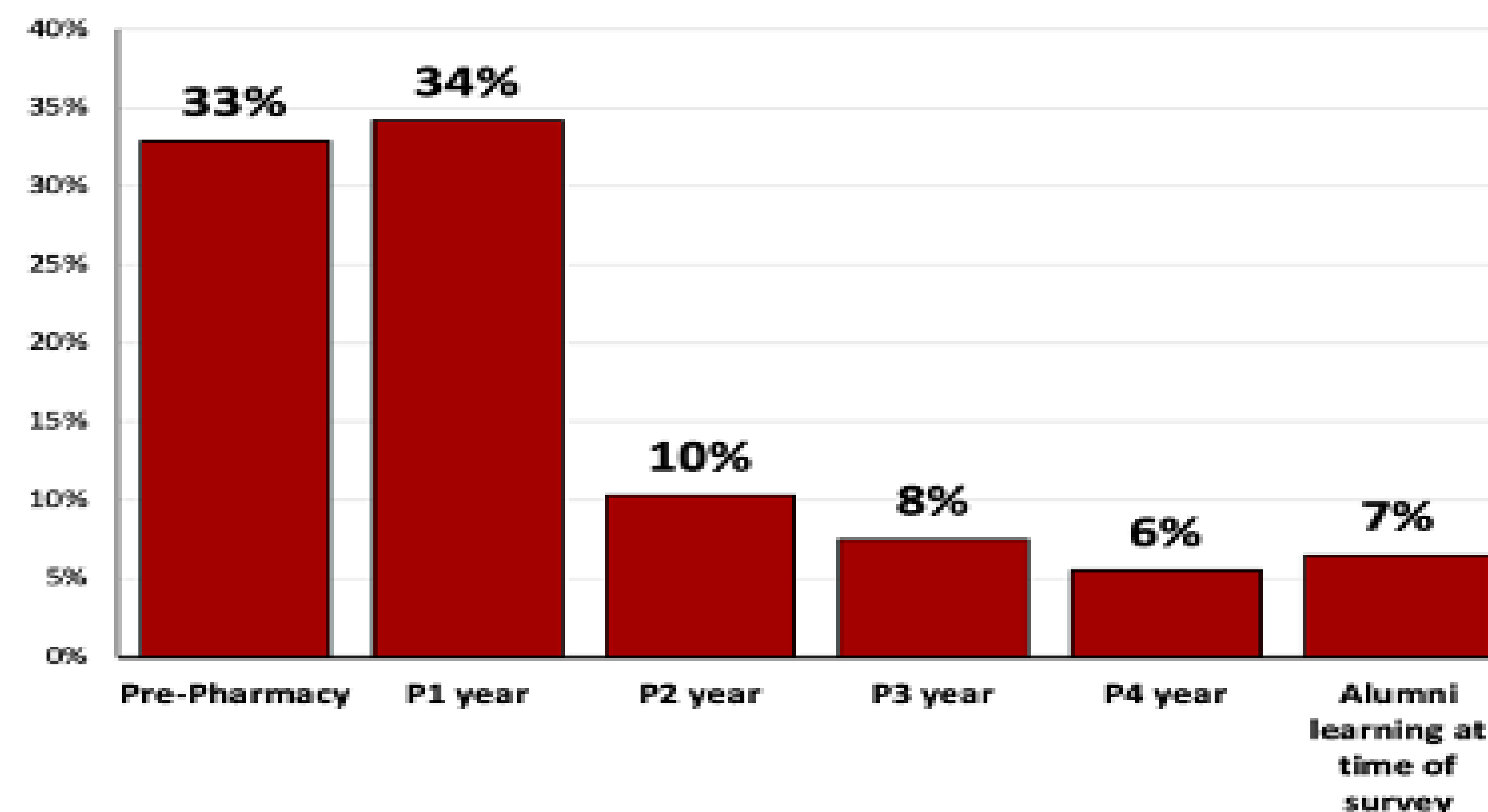
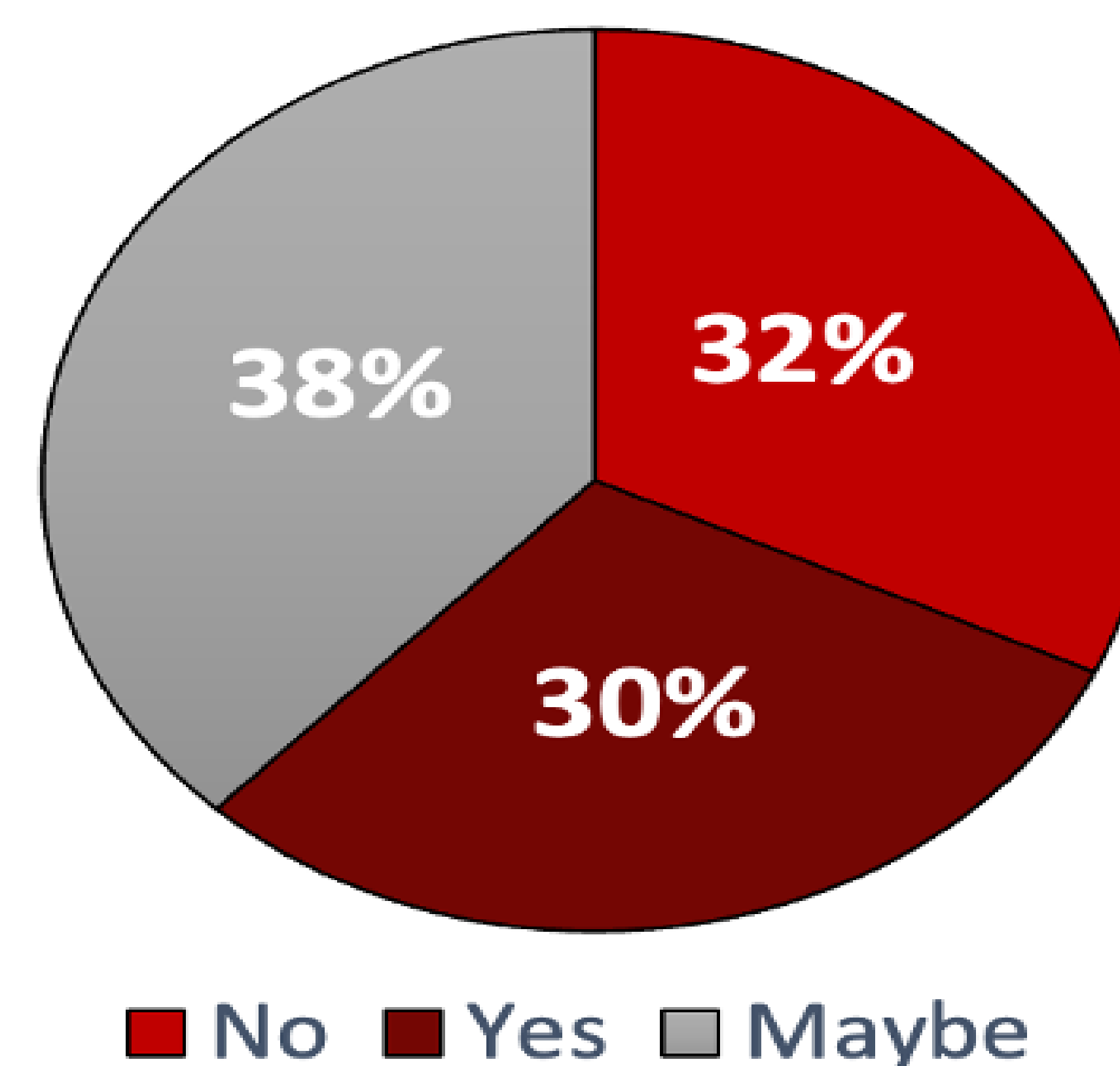


Figure 2: Student Interest in Industry Elective



## Discussion

- Results from similar studies reveal that pharmacy students who enroll pharmaceutical industry related courses while in school are more likely to pursue careers in industry as they are well informed of the opportunities available to them, and feel prepared to pursue this path.<sup>1,2</sup>
- To promote more awareness at SIUE, survey participants suggest inviting more guest speakers in industry, sharing information on internship opportunities, and having more industry rotation sites.
- Study limitations include a) single study site, b) small sample size, and c) limited student response.

## Conclusion

- Feedback from this survey helped justify a potential industry-related elective course at SIUE SOP.
- Survey results revealed that a significant number of students have some knowledge of pharmaceutical industry careers despite the lack of significant curricular attention. However, there is a need for more education on industry pathway.
- An industry-focused elective would provide more education to students on the various careers available within the pharmaceutical industry.

## References

1. Hartman R, Blustein L, Morel D, Davis L. A pharmaceutical industry elective course on practice experience selection and fellowship pursuit by pharmacy students. *Am J Pharm Educ.* 2014 Aug 15;78(6):126.
2. Jacob B, Peasah SK. An Elective Course for Student Pharmacists on Pharmaceutical Industry Practice. *Am J Pharm Educ.* 2019 Oct;83(8):7037.