Service Dogs in the Classroom  
Faculty Information

According to the revised ADA regulations put into effect in 2010, service dogs are defined as:

“dogs that are individually trained to do work or perform tasks for people with disabilities.... Service animals are working animals, not pets. The work or task a dog has been trained to provide must be directly related to the person’s disability. Dogs whose sole function is to provide comfort or emotional support do not qualify as service animals under the ADA.”

Classroom Etiquette

Faculty Do’s:

- Ask the handler if he or she wants to introduce the dog to the class and explain the rules to the class regarding interacting with the dog
- Remain calm and behave normally around the dog
- Speak directly to the handler, not the dog, using a normal tone of voice
- If the handler asks to be guided somewhere, ask whether s/he would like you to walk in front of the dog or walk together with the handler
- Allow the handler to complete whatever task s/he and the dog are engage in before asking a question
- Leave doors either completely open or completely closed
- Notify the Academic Resource Center if your classroom does not have adequate space or cannot be arranged to allow the service dog to remain next to its handler

Faculty Don’ts:

- Pet, tease, touch, or otherwise distract the dog while it is harness or leashed
- Offer food, treats, or toys to the dog
- Call out to the dog or obstruct its path, especially while it is leading its handler
- Interfere with the handler’s corrections of the dog (typically a combination or verbal rebuke/praise or leash or harness maneuvers)
- Attempt to separate the handler and the dog
Dog Handler Responsibilities:

- Keep the dog on leash or harness while on University property
- Remain in control of the dog at all times
- Clean the dog and dispose of dog waste
- Ensure that the dog has current vaccinations and ID tags
- Care for and supervise the dog inside and outside of the classroom
- Refrain from grooming, feeding, and playing with the dog in the classroom

ADA Regulations Regarding Dogs in the Classroom

Faculty members may not ask about the student’s specific disability or ask that the dog demonstrate its ability to perform the work or task.

The ADA regulations state that only two specific questions may be asked regarding the necessity of having the dog in the classroom. A faculty member may ask:

1. Is the dog a service animal required because of a disability?
2. What work or task has the dog been trained to perform?

A dog cannot be asked to leave unless (1) the dog is out of control and the handler does not take effective action to control it, (2) the dog is not housebroken, (3) the dog is physically ill or unreasonably dirty, or (4) if the dog tries to enter a place on campus that could be dangerous for the dog, the handler, or other community members. Other students’ fear of dogs or allergy to dogs are not reasons to have the dog removed. Students who do have a fear or allergy should be allowed to sit away from the dog.

Students who require service dogs are typically documented through Webster’s Academic Resource Center. In addition, these dogs will usually wear special collars and harnesses.

For questions or concerns about any individual student or situation, please contact Shelley Wolfmeyer, ADA Coordinator, at 314-246-7700 or shelleywolfmeyer@webster.edu.