1 
11/13/13 
Skidmore College 
Emotional Support Animal Policy 
 
 
Emotional Support Animals (ESA) 
Emotional Support animals mean any animal that provides comfort or alleviates one or more symptoms 
or effects of a disabling condition for a person with a qualified disability. Examples include but are not 
limited to lessening depression for those with depressive disorders, improve attention for those with 
Attention Deficit disorder, increase socialization and attention span for those with Autism or Asperger's. 
 
Qualifications and Process 
As a reasonable accommodation a student with a disability may request to have an ESA in a Skidmore 
residence hall or apartment and/or classrooms. If there is no one who will room with the student and 
the assistance animal, the student may be liable for the cost of a single. Only animals that do not pose a 
direct threat to the health and safety of others, would not cause substantial physical damage to College 
property or the property of others, or do not fundamentally alter housing operations or academic 
programs will be considered for purposes of reasonable accommodation. 
 
 The request must be made to the Coordinator for Student Access Services in advance to allow a 
thorough review; an animal that is brought to campus without advance approval will not be 
allowed into a hall. 
 
 The request must include documentation from a licensed mental health professional (i.e., 
psychologist, psychiatrist, social worker) who has provided treatment for the disability and must 
include the following. 
 
o Evidence of the disability and the DSM diagnosis related to the use of an assistance 
animal; the dates of treatment and the date at which the diagnosis was first made; the 
symptoms for which treatment was needed; treatment(s) other than use of an 
assistance animal that have been used for symptom reduction; and the date on which 
the use of an assistance animal was prescribed. 
 
o Evidence of the connection between the diagnosis/symptoms and the use of the 
support animal. 
 
o Evidence that the student will not be able to use and enjoy the residence hall or to 
participate in the services or programs if the assistance animal is not allowed. 
 
 The request must include a physical description of the animal including height and weight and 
confirmation that the animal is housebroken or confined such that housebreaking is not 
necessary (e.g., fish in a fishbowl). Also include any equipment that will be needed for the care 
of the animal. 
 
 
 The request will be reviewed by a committee that is composed of representatives from 
Residential Life, the Counseling and Health Services, and Student Academic Services.