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Knowledge Level and Attitudes of University Faculty Regarding Assistance Animals Compared to the General Population

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Murray State University Honors Program

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Knowledge Level and Attitudes of University Faculty Regarding Assistance Animals Compared to the General Population

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Abstract

Assistance animals are becoming a greater presence on college campuses. The purpose of the following study was to explore university faculty's confidence in defining different types of assistance animals, their knowledge of legal mandates, and their attitudes regarding assistance animals. A survey was issued to university faculty utilizing an online program and included measures from a previous study done by Schoenfeld-Tacher, Hellyer, Cheung, and Kogan (2017), as well as added questions to more specifically address the research questions and sample. This study was used to compare faculty knowledge and the knowledge of the general population. 91 participant responses were analyzed. Overall, faculty were most confident and most knowledgeable in defining service dogs and were most accepting of service dogs within the classroom environment, as compared to emotional support dogs and therapy dogs. Further, faculty confidence in defining assistance animals was lower than the general public's, but faculty within our sample were more accurate in their knowledge than the general public.

Keywords: assistance animals, faculty attitudes, legal knowledge, service animals, service dogs, emotional support animals, emotional support dogs, therapy dogs

Knowledge Level and Attitudes of University Faculty Regarding Assistance Animals Compared to the General Population

The prevalence of service animals and emotional support animals is often a topic of great discussion, both within the public space as well as within a university setting (Levine, 2018). There is often confusion as to where certain types of animals are allowed within the public setting, whether it be in a university classroom or dorm, a place of business, housing, or an aircraft (Schoenfeld-Tacher et al., 2017). Based on previous studies, the general public often has a misunderstanding regarding assistance animal laws and regulations (Schoenfeld-Tacher et al., 2017). This misunderstanding may also be prevalent among university faculty. In order to determine the levels of knowledge people contain about these issues, federal laws governing service animals and emotional support animals must first be reviewed.

College and university campuses have a challenging task in accommodating a rising number of animals on their campuses and within dormitory environments. Von Bergen states that "…psychological disorders account for the second greatest number of disability claims after musculoskeletal assertions" (Von Bergen, 2015, pg. 16). Other research has shown that five to eight times as many college students scored above a 70 on at least one clinical scale in 2007 compared to 1938 (Twenge et al., 2010). This could be due to the disclosure of a mental illness becoming more acceptable, and a greater number of support services being available to assist students with severe diagnoses through school. As such, many of these students have taken to requesting emotional support animals (ESAs) and other assistance animals in order to help them cope with the stressors that college life imposes upon students. University administrators, staff, and faculty must be sure that they understand and are able to comply with the various disability laws covering assistance animals, or else they open themselves up to possible legal action. There

have been several incidents of universities taken to court over complaints of discrimination by students whose ESAs or psychiatric service animals were denied. In two of the three cases reviewed by Von Bergen, the university lost their case. Incidents such as these highlight the importance of not only understanding service animal and ESA laws, but also being able to apply them in various types of situations (Von Bergen, 2015).

Americans with Disabilities Act

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), originally passed in 1990, is the primary federal law governing service animals in public facilities. Under the ADA, a service animal is defined as "… dogs that are individually trained to do work or perform tasks for people with disabilities" (ADA Revised Requirements: Service Animals, 2011). The ADA definition of a service animal refers only to dogs, and no other type of animal. This means that dogs are the only species that may qualify as a service animal, with one exception. The 2010 revision to the ADA adds a provision specifically for "…miniature horses that have been individually trained to do work or perform tasks for people with disabilities" (ADA Revised Requirements: Service Animals, 2011). It is important to note that, under this provision, those entities that are covered by the ADA must make reasonable accommodations for service miniature horses, just as they would for a service dog. However, for the purposes of this literature review and subsequent study, reference will be limited to service dogs. There are no breed limitations in the ADA for what dogs can become service dogs.

A task is defined under the ADA as something the dog has been trained to do that directly relates to their handler's disability. The task, or tasks, can vary widely depending on the disability itself, as well as the severity. Examples include calming an individual with Post Traumatic Stress Disorder, guiding the blind, and alerting their handler to an oncoming seizure

(ADA Revised Requirements: Service Animals, 2011). The ADA specifically states that solely providing emotional support and/or comfort, such as an ESA, companion animal or therapy dog, does not qualify as a task or work. These animals, therefore, do not qualify as service animals, and are not granted the same protections and access. It must be noted that there are some "tasks", such as room sweeping/blocking for PTSD handlers and seizure alert, that are considered controversial. For example, room sweeping and blocking are considered by some mental health professionals to provide a crutch for handlers, rather than helping them learn to cope with their anxiety and interact in public as someone normally would (Associated Press, 2016). Further study is needed in some areas to determine the effectiveness of certain tasks; however, the law makes no distinction between tasks.

Local governments, state governments, businesses, and non-profits that serve the public must allow service animals to accompany their handlers wherever the public is allowed access. This includes restaurants, classrooms, waiting or patient rooms in a hospital, and grocery stores. Exclusions can be made on a very limited basis, especially in a lab setting where sterile environments cannot be compromised (i.e. biology or chemistry lab). The service animal must be under the control of the handler at all times. The animal "… must be harnessed, leashed, or tethered, unless these devices interfere with the service animal's work or the individual's disability prevents using these devices" (ADA Revised Requirements: Service Animals, 2011). For example, a handler with PTSD may allow their service dog to do a "room sweep", or enter a room unleashed to look for any other humans, or any potential threats in the room before returning to the handler. In such cases, the ADA specifies the animal must be in control of the handler using voice commands or other similar control methods.

Entities under the jurisdiction of the ADA, such as businesses and other public places, should understand their rights as well as the individual's in regard to service animals. If the work or task of a service animal is not immediately apparent, the staff of a public entity may ask only the following questions: "Is the dog a service animal required because of a disability?" and "What work or task has the dog been trained to perform?" (ADA Revised Requirements: Service Animals, 2011). The staff may not ask about the handler's disability, require any form of medical documentation from the handler, ask for any form of ID or documentation regarding the animal's training, or request that the dog demonstrate the work or task.

It should be noted that having staff or patrons who are allergic to or afraid of dogs is not grounds for asking for the removal of a service animal. In this situation, both the handler and the patron/staff must be accommodated to the best of the facility's ability by assigning them to different locations either within the same room or to different rooms within the same facility. Facilities that do not allow animals for health code reasons (such as restaurants) must allow service animals. A handler with a service dog cannot be asked to remove their service animal "… unless: (1) the dog is out of control or (2) the dog is not housebroken" (ADA Revised Requirements: Service Animals, 2011). If one of these reasons is applicable and the dog is removed from the premises, the staff is required to offer the handler services and/or goods without the animal being around.

If a fee or deposit is required for a business' customers with pets, this fee or deposit must be waived for those with service animals. The handler may be charged for damages caused by a service animal if the business normally charges for such damages. Those with service animals cannot be isolated within a facility, given lesser service than other patrons, or charged extra fees than those charged to other patrons without pets. The business staff is not required to provide any

food or care for a service animal. This is the responsibility of the handler (ADA Revised Requirements: Service Animals, 2011).

Fair Housing Act

The Fair Housing Act (FHA) is a second important federal law that governs the use of assistance animals. The FHA applies to those who provide housing accommodations, such as a leasing office or landlord. Entities such as universities may fall under the jurisdiction of both the ADA and FHA. Closely associated with the FHA is Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act. There are key differences with these laws that must be understood, so as not to confuse them with the ADA.

Those with assistance animals, including both service animals and emotional support animals, "… may request a reasonable accommodation…." for their animal (U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, 2013, p. 1). If both the ADA and FHA apply to a situation, the housing provider (university, leasing office, etc.) must meet the obligations under both laws. Unlike the ADA, the FHA and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (Section 504) do not require an assistance animal to be individually trained, as per the ADA service animal definition. Further, assistance animals under the FHA and Section 504 are not limited to dogs (U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, 2013).

After receiving a reasonable accommodation request for an assistance animal, the housing provider is required to answer two questions: "1. Does the person seeking to use and live with the animal have a disability – *i.e.*, a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities?" and "2. Does the person making the request have a disability related need for an assistance animal? In other words, does the animal work, provide assistance, perform tasks or services for the benefit of a person with a disability, or provide emotional

support that alleviates one or more of the identified symptoms or effects of a person's existing disability?" (U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, 2013, pg. 3).

If the answer to Question 1 OR Question 2 is no, then the reasonable accommodation may be denied, and the housing provider is not required to alter a "no pets" policy. Further, this request may be denied if the individual animal is a health and/or safety threat, or will cause physical damage to others' property, provided these threats cannot be reduced or eliminated through another reasonable accommodation. The determination of this threat must be based on objective evidence that applies to that specific animal. If the answers to Question 1 AND Question 2 are "yes", then the provider is required to either modify or waive a "no pets" policy for the person with a disability to live with their assistance animal, and use them in all areas of the facility where people are normally allowed. This must be followed "… unless doing so would impose an undue financial and administrative burden or would fundamentally alter the nature of the housing provider's services" (U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, 2013, pg. 3).

Policies regarding breed, weight, or size limitations may not generally apply to the assistance animal. Further, other restrictions that apply to pets may not apply to an assistance animal.

A reasonable accommodation may not be denied because of uncertainty regarding the individual's disability. If there is an uncertainty, a housing provider may ask the individual for reliable documentation of their disability and how the assistance animal assists with their disability. If the disability is apparent but the need for an assistance animal is not, reliable documentation of this need may be requested. A detailed document of the disability and/or access to medical records may not be requested. This documentation may not be requested if the

disability or related need for an assistance animal is obvious, or already known. Reasonable requests may not be unreasonably denied, require a fee or deposit, or be unreasonably delayed (U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, 2013).

Due to differences between service animals (as defined by the ADA) and assistance animals (as defined by FHA and Section 504), service animal-related requests to ADA-covered institutions and facilities "…must not be handled as a request for a reasonable accommodation under the FHA or Section 504" (U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, 2013, pg. 4). If the animal qualifies as a service animal under the ADA, then it may be allowed into the ADA-covered facility.

Entities that are covered by both the ADA, the FHA, and/or Section 504 (including, but not limited to public housing, educational institution housing, and assisted living facilities) must meet the requirements of all applicable laws. ADA service animal requirements must be tested first, before testing for FHA assistance animal requirements. This is to prevent unlawful questioning of an individual with a service animal, as referred to by the ADA. If the animal does not qualify as a service animal under the ADA, then the provider must follow FHA guidelines regarding reasonable accommodations for assistance animals. Knowledge of and compliance with all applicable laws is the responsibility of the provider. Neither the FHA nor Section 504 discuss the legality of ESAs in a classroom setting (U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, 2013).

Air Carrier Access Act

The final federal law that governs access to public places by assistance animals is the Air Carrier Access Act, or the ACAA. This law is specific to airlines and governs the access of assistance animals to the cabin of the aircraft to fly with their individuals, rather than fly in the

cargo hold like animals that are not classified as assistance animals. The ACAA, unlike the ADA, defines a service animal as either an animal that is individually trained to assist an individual with a disability, or an animal who provides emotional support to an individual. This broadens the scope of animals who are allowed on the aircraft to both service animals (as defined by the ADA) and emotional support animals (U.S. Department of Transportation, 2017). For the purposes of this literature review, the collective term of "assistance animals" will be used to include both types of animals.

The ACAA allows few restrictions on the types of assistance animals that are permitted onto the flight. As long as the animal meets species regulations for both the airline and a destination (such as a foreign country), it may be allowed in the cabin given that it is not too large and/or heavy for cabin accommodations, does not cause a significant disruption while in the cabin, and is not posing a direct health/safety threat to other passengers or staff in the cabin. Animals that are not within these guidelines, however, can be denied. For example, in January of 2018, Dexter the emotional support peacock made international headlines when his owner attempted to take him with her on a flight to Los Angeles. Even though the woman offered to buy a ticket for the bird, Dexter was still denied due to his exceeding size and weight restrictions. Rather than flying, the bird and his owner were land-bound, and his owner drove across the country with him rather than leave him in New Jersey (Emotional support peacock, 2018).

Per the ACAA, an airline is able to determine if an animal is a service animal by doing one or more of the following (U.S. Department of Transportation, 2017):

- Acquiring "the credible verbal assurances of an individual with a disability using the animal;"
- "Looking for physical indicators such as the presence of a harness or tags;"

- "Requiring documentation for psychiatric support animals and emotional support animals;"
- "And observing the behavior of animals"

In the case of ESAs or psychiatric service dogs (such as those for veterans with PTSD), airlines may request certain documentation of the animal and/or a forty-eight-hour advance notice of these types of service animals.

Certain types of documentation may be requested of individuals travelling with an emotional support animal or psychiatric service animal. This documentation may be required to have an issue date that is less than a year old from the flight date, and states that the individual has a disability recognized by the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM-5) and requires the ESA for travel accommodations or while at your destination. This assessment must have been performed by a licensed mental health professional who is providing care for the individual, and the mental health professional's license date, type, and jurisdiction must be included (U.S. Department of Transportation, 2017).

An assistance animal cannot block an area such as an aisle or an emergency exit for safety reasons. Further, the airline is not required to upgrade the individual's service class in order to provide more space for the assistance animal. As long as the animal is well behaved for the duration of the flight, the animal is permitted to remain in the cabin, regardless of whether or not the animal makes passengers or staff uncomfortable, such as a large dog.

ESA Evaluation

In addition to guidance in federal laws, recent practice standards for mental health providers who evaluate clients for ESA accommodations have also been proposed. University counselors and therapists may be asked to provide a letter stating a student's need for an ESA

while they are on campus. When applying for a reasonable accommodation for ESAs in particular, it is often required that the individual present some sort of paperwork, usually from a mental health professional, that states the individual has a legitimate need for the ESA due to an emotional or mental issue. As such, it is imperative that mental health professionals understand all that goes along with an ESA. A prevalent problem within the community of mental health professionals is a lack of knowledge regarding ESA law, as well as a lack of standardized assessment practices. Ethical considerations, such as whether or not the client is truly in need of an ESA, and the maintenance of the therapeutic alliance must also be taken into account (Younggren, Boness, Bryant, & Koocher, 2019).

There are four components to assessing for an ESA. The authors stress that each component should inform the others, rather than following a step-by-step process. The first component of the assessment is ensuring that the mental health professional understands the laws governing ESAs and is able to apply them effectively. This includes the fact that a person, by law, must qualify as having a disability which the ESA assists with. If this provision is followed, the mental health professional must recognize the fact that the person cannot function normally in daily life without the ESA, and medical records in the future should address that disability accordingly. Due to the disability requirement for an ESA, the mental health professional is responsible for providing a thorough assessment establishing a true disability of the client, how the disability affects the client's ability to perform normal tasks of daily life, and establish an ESA-dependent benefit, before issuing the certification (Younggren et al., 2019).

The animal being proposed as an ESA should be assessed for its ability to fill the role of an ESA. This includes an appropriate temperament and ability "… to cope with the stresses of exposure to the public and alien environments…" (Younggren et al., 2019, pg. 5). A mental

health professional should seek outside assessments of the animal by those qualified, such as a dog trainer or animal behavior specialist, when appropriate. The mental health professional should assess whether or not the interaction between the animal and the client has a truly therapeutic benefit, rather than basing the assessment solely on the client's claim of such a benefit. This should include an assessment of the client's symptoms, and the severity of those symptoms both with and without the animal's presence (Younggren et al., 2019).

Knowledge and Attitudes of the General Public

While the ADA, the FHA, Section 504 and the ACAA are all extremely important laws to be knowledgeable of for business owners and those in public spaces who may come into contact with individuals needing accommodations, the general public is often unaware of the rules and regulations that protect these individuals (Schoenfeld-Tacher et al., 2017). Further, they often have their own perceptions of the appropriateness these laws that may vary from the legislation in place.

Schoenfeld-Tacher and colleagues (2017) distributed a survey to an anonymous online population of US adults who do not own a service animal. This survey was used as a baseline for developing the measures for the current study, and findings for the perceived confidence and knowledge of legal questions measures will be directly compared between the current study and the previous study. The researchers asked what the public's understanding of each type of assistance dog roles is, and what their perception was of assistance dog legitimacy. Variation in understanding and law perception was expected by the authors in this observational study After answering a question to rate their ability to define service dogs, ESAs and therapy dogs, respondents were provided with the correct definitions for the remaining questions on the survey.

Demographics from the survey show an about equal gender split, with ages being mostly between 26 and 35 years of age. Most respondents had at least an undergraduate degree. Slightly over half of the respondents owned pet dogs, and 38% reported having a family member or friend with an ESA. 49.6% of respondents had minimal prior exposure to assistance dogs in public in the year preceding the data collection, while 19.4% reported no exposure in public. Only 31.0% of participants reported five or more interactions and/or sightings of assistance animals within the year prior to data collection.

Perceived confidence responses for this study are reported in Table 4 (p. 21) alongside data from the current study to allow for comparison. While 48.6% of respondents correctly identified you cannot ask what an individual's disability is, and 57.4% correctly identified you cannot ask for proof of the disability, only 39.8% correctly identified "Is your dog a service dog that is required because of a disability?" as a legal question. 56% correctly identified "What task is your dog trained to perform" as a legal question as well. Finally, only 28.5% correctly identified asking for proof of the dog's service dog status as illegal (Schoenfeld-Tacher et al., 2017). These findings suggest that while around half of the general public seems to be aware of the regulations stating you cannot ask about the individual's disability itself, fewer were able to identify the correct legality of questions regarding the animal and its status.

Overall, respondents were supportive of assistance dogs in housing, airplane cabins, and classrooms. The majority felt that service animals should have rights to access airplane cabins (60.6%), dorms at educational institutions (59.9%), and classrooms (57.4%). Emotional support dogs were less supported when asked if they should be given access rights to airplane cabins (40.1%), dorms (46.1%), and classrooms (34.5%). Finally, therapy dog access to these places was supported somewhat similarly to emotional support dogs. Less than half of respondents

believed therapy dogs should have access rights to airplane cabins (40.5%), dorms (39.4%), and classrooms (38.0%;Schoenfeld-Tacher et al., 2017). This increase in support for classroom access for therapy dogs could be due to media exposure to therapy animals being used in many school settings, such as helping children learn to read.

This study contributed to the current literature by establishing a better understanding of public perception and opinions regarding assistance animals and provided a baseline study to compare future studies to. Limitations include online recruitment strategies with a somewhat small sample size due to the lower number of useable responses. Not all participants answered every question, which was taken into account when calculating and analyzing the results.

Current Study

The current study is an exploratory look into the knowledge level of University faculty regarding assistance animal law, as well as their perceptions of what types of assistance animals and/or pets should be allowed within various campus environments. Knowledge level was assessed by asking questions that have a clear correct or incorrect answer regarding legal policies, rather than simply asking the faculty how comfortable they are in their knowledge. Two research questions were addressed in this study.

Research question one. What is the perceived confidence in defining, knowledge of appropriate questions to ask, opinions, past behavior, predicted behavior and knowledge of classroom policies regarding assistance animals of university faculty?

Research question two. How do faculty perceived confidence in defining assistance animals and knowledge of appropriate questions to ask compare to the general population? Comparisons will be made between faculty and the general public findings of Schoenfeld-Tacher et al. (2017).

Method

Participants

The target participants for the current study were university faculty, specifically classroom professors and teachers. Colleges and universities are facing rising numbers of ESA applications, as well as students reporting mental and emotional stress (Levine, 2018). As a result, university faculty will be more exposed to assistance animals than in the past. Universities should be aware of the knowledge and perceptions of their faculty in order to protect themselves legally, as well as protect the rights of their students.

101 faculty members completed the survey, but ten responses were removed for participants not answering all questions. The mean of age of faculty participants was 49.27 years of age, with a standard deviation of 12.00. The frequencies of age ranges are provided in Table 1, to provide a comparison with Schoenfeld-Tacher and colleagues' (2017) study. With regard to gender, thirty-nine (42.9%) participants identified as male, 51 (56.0%) as female, and one (1.1%) as non-binary. The school of involvement within the university is reported in Table 2.

Table 1. Age Range Frequencies

Age Range (years)	Frequency
18-25	0 (0.0%)
26-35	13 (14.3%)
36-45	25 (27.5%)
Over 45	51 (56.0%)

Note: Two participants did not provide a response to this item (n = 89).

Table 2. Academic College Frequencies

School of Involvement	Frequency
Arthur J. Bauernfeind College of Business	15 (16.5%)
College of Education & Human Services	13 (14.3%)
College of Humanities and Fine Arts	32 (35.2%)
Hutson School of Agriculture	8 (8.8%)
Jesse D. Jones College of Science, Engineering and Technology	12 (13.2%)
School of Nursing and Health Professions	5 (5.5%)

Note: Five participants did not provide a response to this item (n = 86)

The frequencies of responses for participants owning a pet dog, service animal or emotional support animal as well as the frequencies of whether or not the participant has friends of family that own a service or emotional support animal are reported in Table 3.

Table 3: Animal Ownership and Familiar with Assistance Animals

Survey Item	Yes	No
Do you own a pet dog?	46 (50.5%)	43 (47.3%)
Do you own a service dog?	0 (0.0%)	89 (97.8%)
Do you own an emotional support animal?	2(2.2%)	87 (95.6%)
Does a friend or family member own a service animal?	6 (6.6%)	83 (91.2%)
Does a friend or family member own an emotional support animal?	13 (14.3%)	76 (83.5%)

Note: Two participants did not provide responses to these items (n = 89).

Materials

The survey used in this study is a modified form of the demographics, perceived confidence, and knowledge of legal questions tables in Schoenfeld-Tacher et al.'s (2017) study (see Appendix I).

Demographics. The demographics collected for this study include the participant's gender and age. Participants were asked if they own a pet dog, or if their friends or family own a service dog or emotional support dog. Additions made to the demographics section for this study

that were not included in the previous study include asking for the participant's college of involvement within the university, due to the current study's focus on university faculty. Further, participants were asked if they personally own a service dog or emotional support dog. Schoenfeld-Tacher et al.'s (2017) study focused specifically on participants that did not own an assistance animal. This study did not exclude participants if they own an assistance animal, and these demographic questions were included to document participants who own an assistance animal, and guard against a possible confounding variable.

Perceived Confidence. The perceived confidence section was taken directly from the previous study's measures (Schoenfeld-Tacher et al., 2017). The perceived confidence section asked participants for their confidence in defining service dogs, emotional support dogs, and therapy dogs on a scale of "Very Comfortable" to "Not at All Comfortable". Responses were coded on a numeric scale of 0-3 (0 = not at all comfortable, 1 = not very comfortable, 2 = somewhat comfortable, 3 = very comfortable).

Knowledge of Appropriate Questions. The knowledge of appropriate questions to ask (knowledge) section measured participants' knowledge of legal questions that can be asked when determining if a dog qualifies as an assistance animal. Answer options included "Yes, I can legally ask", "No, I cannot legally ask", and "I don't know". Participants rated the legality of the following questions: "What is your disability?", "Is your dog a service dog that is required because of a disability?", "What task is your dog trained to perform?", "Can I see some proof of your disability?", and "Can I see proof of your dog's status (certification or ID card)?". A follow up question was added for participants who answer "I don't know" to any of the initial questions, asking them to make their best guess as to "Yes, I can legally ask" or "No, I cannot legally ask" each question. This deviation from the previous study measure was included in order to explore

if the inclusion of a "I don't know" answer choice affected the distribution of participants' responses.

Opinion, Past Behavior, Predicted Behavior, and Knowledge Check. The final section of the survey focused on opinion, past behavior, predicted behavior, and knowledge of legal status regarding assistance dogs in the classroom. Each item was formatted as a statement, to which the participant responded to four types of dogs: service dogs, emotional support dogs, therapy dogs, and pet dogs. A yes or no response was chosen for each statement for each type of dog. Differing from the previous study (Schoenfeld-Tacher et al., 2017), an additional answer choice of "pet dogs" was added to allow more freedom in answer choices, due to the prevalence of pet dogs in agriculture classes and therapy dogs being included in pet therapy at Murray State University (Siegel, 2015). The statements included an opinion statement based Schoenfeld-Tacher et al.'s (2017) study: "I think these types of dogs should be allowed in classroom settings" . The following statements were added in order to better address research question one: "I have allowed this type of dog into my classroom during normal instruction" (past behavior), "If asked, I would allow this type of dog into my classroom during normal instruction, even if the law did not mandate it" (predicted behavior), and "I am required by university rules or by law to allow this type of dog into my classroom" (knowledge check). These statements were added to measure faculty's acceptance of animals in their classrooms, regardless of assistance animal status, and their overall perception of how university rules or federal law applies to their classroom.

Procedure

Permission was obtained by the Murray State University provost for sending a recruitment email including the survey link and IRB approval information to all faculty at

Murray State University. Upon providing informed consent, the participant completed the demographics section of the survey first. After this section was completed, the participants answered questions from the perceived confidence measure, the knowledge measure, and the opinion, past behavior, predicted behavior, and knowledge check questions. Unlike Schoenfeld-Tacher et al.'s (2017) study, legal definitions for the different types of assistance animals were not provided for the remainder of the survey. This was to check the knowledge of the participants without providing them any answers or assistance. After completing the survey, the participants submitted the online survey. Emails were not collected from participants to ensure anonymity. Responses were not able to be edited after submission. No incentives were offered for participation.

Analytic Strategy

SPSS version 24 was used to analyze the data. Frequencies of the following demographics were reported: gender, school of involvement at the university, if the participant owns a pet dog, service animal or emotional support animal, and if the participant has friends or family that own a service or emotional support animal. Descriptive statistics of age (mean and standard deviation) were provided, along with frequencies of various age ranges to allow for comparison with age ranges in Schoenfeld-Tacher et al.'s (2017) study.

Research Question One.

Perceived confidence. Participants' reported perceived confidence in defining different types of assistance animals were reported as frequencies of the Likert responses. The responses on this scale included not at all comfortable, not very comfortable, somewhat comfortable, and very comfortable in defining service animal, emotional support animal, and therapy animal.

Knowledge of appropriate questions to ask. Participants' frequency of "Yes, I can legally ask", "No, I cannot legally ask", and "I don't know" were reported. A supplemental analysis was included where participants who selected "I don't know" were asked to give their best guess of either "Yes, I can legally ask" or "No, I cannot legally ask". A chi square goodness of fit analysis was used to compare the expected values of "yes" and "no" answers when "I don't know" was an allowed answer to the obtained values of "yes" and "no" answers when participants were asked to give a definitive answer. If the chi-square test is statistically significant, it meant that providing a "don't know" option significantly altered the data that was collected. In contrast, if the chi-square value was not statistically significant, it meant that providing a "don't know" option did not significantly alter the data that was collected.

Opinion, past behavior, predicted behavior, and knowledge of legal status related to dogs in the classroom. Participants' responses for their opinion on animals in the classroom, their past behavior, predicted behavior, and the knowledge check were analyzed as frequencies.

Research Question Two.

Perceived confidence. Frequencies of Likert responses on perceived confidence in Schoenfeld-Tacher et al.'s (2017) study were converted to a four-point Likert scale (Not at all comfortable = 0, not very comfortable = 1, somewhat comfortable = 2, very comfortable = 3). A mean of perceived confidence in defining each type of dog was then calculated (service dog M = 2.39, emotional support dog M = 2.20, and therapy dog M = 1.96). A one sample t-test was used to explore the distribution of Likert ratings for each type of dog in the study sample to the test values obtained in Schoenfeld-Tacher et al.'s (2017) study. A power analysis run using G*Power v3.1.9.2 with an alpha of .05, power of .80, and an assumed moderate effect size (d = .5)

indicated that 27 participants were needed to adequately power this analysis. The obtained sample size of 91 indicates that this analysis was appropriately powered.

Knowledge of appropriate questions to ask. A series of chi-square tests of independence (2 [general public vs. faculty] sample x 3 [yes, no, don't know] across the five knowledge questions) were conducted. An online power analysis run using the QFAB Bioinformatics calculator *(Power Calculator*, n.d.*)* with an alpha of .05, power of .80, and an assumed moderate effect size (w = 0.3) indicated that 32 participants were need to adequately power this analysis. The obtained sample size of 91 indicates that this analysis was appropriately powered.

Results

Research Question One

Perceived confidence. The frequencies of each Likert response for perceived confidence in defining different types of assistance animals is reported in Table 4. Possible responses include not at all comfortable, not very comfortable, somewhat comfortable, and very comfortable. Overall, the majority of faculty were comfortable defining service dogs, but were less comfortable in defining emotional support dogs and therapy dogs.

Table 4. Perceived Confidence of Defining Different Types of Assistance Dogs

	Very Comfortable		Somewhat Comfortable		Not Very Comfortable		Not at All Comfortable	
Type of assistance animal	General Public	Faculty	General Public	Faculty	General Public	Faculty	General Public	Faculty
Service Dog	151 (53.2%)	33 (36.3%)	97 (34.2%)	40 (44.0%)	31 (10.9%)	13 (14.3%)	5 (1.8%)	5 (5.5%)
Emotional Support Dog	124 (43.7%)	16 (17.6%)	102 (35.9%)	44 (48.4%)	50 (17.6%)	20 (22.0%)	8 (2.8%)	11 (12.1%)
Therapy Dog	88 (31.0%)	14 (15.4%)	114 (40.1%)	34 (37.4%)	66 (23.2%)	26 (28.6%)	16 (5.6%)	17 (18.7%)

Table 5. Knowledge of Legal Questions

	Three answer options			Two answer options		
Survey Item	Yes	No	I don't know	Yes	No	$\chi 2$
What is your disability?	1 (1.1%)	**87 (95.6%)**	3 (3.3%)	1 (1.1%)	**89 (97.8%)**	0.485
Is your dog a service dog that is required because of a disability?	**53 (58.2%)**	26 (28.6%)	12 (13.2%)	**56 (61.5%)**	34 (37.4%)	0.929
What task is your dog trained to perform?	**61 (67.0%)**	19 (20.9%)	11 (12.1%)	**65 (71.4%)**	25 (27.5%)	0.806
Can I see some proof of your disability?	2 (2.2%)	**83 (91.2%)**	6 (6.6%)	4 (4.4%)	**86 (94.5%)**	1.72
Can I see some proof of your dog's status (certification or ID card)?	40 (44.0%)	**31 (34.1%)**	20 (22.0%)	52 (57.1%)	**38 (41.8%)**	0.076

Note: Bold values indicate correct responses. One participant did not respond to the prompt to provide a yes no response. $\chi 2$ indicates results from a chi-square goodness of fit analysis. All obtained chi-square values were not statistically significant.

Knowledge of appropriate questions to ask. Frequencies of each response for the knowledge of legal questions are reported in Table 5. Responses include "No, I cannot legally ask", "Yes, I can legally ask," and "I don't know. Overall, the majority of faculty were accurate in knowing what questions were legal or not with the expectation of the question, "Can I see some proof of your dog's status (certification or ID card)?" For this question, the majority of responses were incorrect and there was a high number of "I don't know" responses. In order to determine if the inclusion of an "I don't know" answer option in the measure (as taken from Schoenfeld-Tacher and colleagues' 2017 study) significantly affected responses, a supplemental question requiring a yes or not response was included within this measure. Responses for the supplemental question requiring a yes or no response are also included in Table 5. A series of chi-square goodness of fit analyses comparing expected and observed values when of "yes" and "no" responses when "I don't know" is or is not included as an answer option suggested that providing the "I don't know" option did not significantly affect the responses obtained.

Opinion, past behavior, predicted behavior, and knowledge of legal status related to dogs in the classroom. Frequencies of "yes" responses for the opinion, past behavior, predicted behavior, and knowledge check questions are reported in Table 6. All participants in the sample reported they approved of service dogs in classroom settings and would allow them. This support decreases substantially for both emotional support dogs and therapy dogs. Pet dogs had only a 2.2% acceptance rate for being allowed in classroom settings but had a 13.2% predicted acceptance rate overall. This suggests that some faculty within our sample would allow pet dogs into their classrooms during normal instruction even though they do not believe the pets have a place within the classroom environment.

Table 6. Opinion, Past Behavior, Predicted Behavior, and Knowledge of Classroom Policies: Yes Responses

Survey Item	Service Dogs	Emotional Support Dogs	Therapy Dogs	Pet Dogs
I think these types of dogs should be allowed in classroom settings.	91 (100%)	30 (33.0%)	39 (42.9%)	2 (2.2%)
I have allowed this type of dog into my classroom during normal instruction.	60 (65.9%)	30 (33.0%)	21 (23.1%)	13 (14.3%)
If asked, I would allow this type of dog into my classroom during normal instruction, even if the law did not mandate it.	91 (100%)	42 (46.2%)	51 (56.0%)	12 (13.2%)
I am required by university rules or by law to allow this type of dog into my classroom.	91 (100%)	25 (27.5%)	24 (26.4%)	0 (0%)

Research Question Two.

Perceived confidence. A series of one sample t-tests was conducted to explore the distribution of Likert ratings for each type of dog in the study sample to the test values obtained in Schoenfeld-Tacher et al.'s (2017) study. The current Murray state faculty sample's confidence in defining service animals was reported on a scale of 0-3.

The faculty's reported perceived confidence in defining service animals was somewhat comfortable (M = 2.11, SD = 0.85). When compared to Schoenfeld and colleagues' (2017) study (M = 2.39), the Murray State sample was less confident in defining service animals, $t(90) = -3.15$, $p = .002$. The faculty's reported perceived confidence in defining ESAs was not very comfortable (M = 1.71, SD = 0.90). When compared to Schoenfeld and colleagues' (2017) study (M = 2.20), the Murray State sample was less confident in defining ESAs, $t(90) = -5.16$, $p < 0.001$. Similarly, the Murray State faculty sample's reported perceived confidence in defining therapy dogs is also not very comfortable. (M = 1.49, SD = 0.97). When compared to Schoenfeld and colleagues' (2017) study (M = 1.96), the Murray State sample was less confident in defining therapy dogs, $t(90) = -4.58$, $p < 0.001$.

Knowledge of appropriate questions to ask. A series of chi-square tests of independence (2 [general public vs. faculty] sample x 3 [yes, no, don't know] across the five knowledge questions) were conducted. Results are reported in Table 7. The Murray State faculty sample was significantly more accurate than the general public in correctly categorizing "What is your disability?," "Is your dog a service dog required because of a disability?," and "Can I see proof of your disability?" as legal or illegal. There was no difference between the Murray State sample and the general public in accuracy for "What task is your dog trained to perform?" and "Can I see some proof of your dog's status (certification or ID card)?"

Table 7. Faculty Knowledge of Legal Questions Compared to the General Public

	Current Sample (Faculty)			General Public (Schoenfeld-Tacher et al., 2017)				
Survey Item	Yes	No	I don't know	Yes	No	I don't know	$\chi 2$	p
What is your disability?	1 (1.1%)	**87 (95.6%)**	3 (3.3%)	75 (26.4%)	**138 (48.6%)**	71 (25.0)	63.62	<. 001
Is your dog a service dog that is required because of a disability?	**53 (58.2%)**	26 (28.6%)	12 (13.2%)	**113 (39.8%)**	102 (35.9%)	69 (24.3%)	10.33	.006
What task is your dog trained to perform?	**61 (67.0%)**	19 (20.9%)	11 (12.1%)	**159 (56.0%)**	68 (23.9%)	57 (20.1%)	4.13	.127
Can I see some proof of your disability?	2 (2.2%)	**83 (91.2%)**	6 (6.6%)	45 (15.8%)	**163 (57.4%)**	76 (26.8%)	35.07	< .001
Can I see some proof of your dog's status (certification or ID card)?	40 (44.0%)	**31 (34.1%)**	20 (22.0%)	127 (44.7%)	**81 (28.5%)**	76 (26.8%)	1.33	.513

Note: Bold values indicate correct responses. $\chi 2$ indicated results from chi-square tests of independence.

Discussion

The results from the current study suggest that while university faculty are less confident overall in defining different types of assistance animals than the general public, they are also more accurate in their overall knowledge than the general public. This suggests that university training is likely beneficial and effective at educating faculty about assistance animals in legal terms.

The Murray State University faculty sample's perceived confidence in defining different types of assistance animals varied depending on the type of assistance animal. The faculty sample was most confident in defining service animals overall. This could be due to the fact that service animal laws are very specific and laid out very clearly in the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA Revised Requirements: Service Animals, 2011). The requirements and access rights of emotional support animals and therapy animals are not as clearly defined. ESAs are protected in very specific circumstances under the FHA and ACAA, while therapy animals are not protected under any federal law (U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, 2013;U.S. Department of Transportation, 2017).

This decline in perceived confidence in defining service animals, ESAs, and therapy animals respectively can be seen in both the general population and faculty. Faculty, however, were less confident overall in defining any type of assistance animal as compared to the general population. A possible explanation for this could be stronger meta-knowledge among faculty. Meta-knowledge can be described as "knowing what you know or don't know" (Falender et al., 2004). Due to their university-required training, and advanced training in their respective disciplines, faculty are likely to be more aware of gaps in their knowledge regarding assistance animals and will therefore may be less confident than the general population.

Murray State faculty were overall mostly accurate in their knowledge of legal questions. The majority correctly classified four of the five surveyed question as either legal or illegal to ask, either when presented with an "I don't know" option or not. This shows that the faculty sample's training regarding service animal law has been largely effective. Faculty knowledge was statistically more accurate than that of the general public for three of the five questions. Faculty were more accurate in identifying both legal questions, however they were only significantly better at identifying "Is your dog a service dog required because of a disability?" as a legal question. Response comparisons were not significant for "What task is your dog trained to perform?" This could be due to the high number of correct responses from the general public, and due to the fact this question may not seem as invasive as the others, and therefore could be viewed as more acceptable, regardless of its legality. Although the faculty sample had a higher number of correct responses than the general public for this question, the general public also had a high number of correct answers for this question.

In contrast, the majority of faculty did not correctly categorize "Can I see some proof of your dog's status (certification or ID)?" as an illegal question to ask, either when given an "I don't know" option or not. This question also got the highest number of "I don't know" responses and was not significantly different from the responses of the general public. This inaccuracy and uncertainty could be due to the large misconception about IDs and vests automatically signifying status as a service animal. These identifiers are in fact not required for an animal to be considered a service animal (ADA Revised Requirements: Service Animals, 2011), and are readily available from "registries" online that are not monitored or affiliated with the government (Kelley, 2016). In essence, while an ID or vest is not required for a service animal, and IDs that often tout legitimacy have no formal or legal standing, it is also not

permissible to ask for this type of identification under the ADA (ADA Revised Requirements: Service Animals, 2011). Further training for Murray State faculty regarding this issue in order to increase accurate knowledge about service animal identification would be beneficial, given the responses of the survey.

The final measure on opinion, past and predicted behavior, and a knowledge check found that faculty are overall accepting of service animals within the classroom. This support diminishes significantly for therapy dogs and drops even more for emotional support dogs. Pet dogs had the lowest amount of support for access to the classroom. Emotional support animal access to classrooms was supported by only 33% of our sample; however, 42% responded that they would allow the emotional support animal into their classroom if asked, even if the law did not mandate it. This disconnect between the perceived right of access versus the predicted allowance of access, regardless of law or policy, could be due to a social desirability bias. A contemporary definition of the social desirability bias is a participant giving responses to make themselves look good (Leary & Hoyle, 2009). In this case, participants may have been more likely to respond positively to allowing assistance animals, or animals in general, into the classroom to appear more likeable. Responses also indicated that 27.5% of respondents falsely believed that ESAs were required to have classroom access by either federal law or university policy. While a faculty member may not believe an ESA should be allowed in their classroom, they may believe that federal law or university policy requires them to give access regardless of their own opinions. Further training regarding the access rights of emotional support animals could be beneficial in providing faculty with more knowledge of their rights in what assistance animals they do and do not have to allow into their classrooms.

Therapy dogs also had lower support for classroom access rights than service animals, but higher than for emotional support animals (42%). Similar to ESAs, a higher number than supported access reported they would allow a therapy animal into their classrooms if asked, regardless of law or policy (46.2%). This could once again be due to a social desirability bias of wanting to seem accepting of assistance animals. Further, similar to ESAs, 26.4% falsely believed they are required to allow therapy animals into their classrooms. Once again, training on the access rights of various types of assistance animals could assist faculty with knowing their rights of what types of dogs they can or cannot deny access for if they so wish.

Pet dogs had the lowest support among the types of dogs for classroom access (2.2%). However, similar to ESAs and therapy animals, a small but meaningful number of faculty would allow these animals into their classrooms if asked (13.2%). Unlike ESAs and therapy animals, all participants in this survey correctly responded they were not required by university policy to allow pet dogs into their classrooms. Therefore, this disconnect is not due to a misunderstanding of law or policy, but rather could possibly be due to a faculty member not wanting to deny access to a student who wishes to have their pet, regardless of policy towards the animal in their classrooms. Further, faculty may allow the animals into the classroom environment, even if they do not overall approve of pets in the classroom, due to their affinity for pets in general, or for individual, well-behaved animals.

A limitation to the current study is, due to an omission in survey design, participants were not asked their length of employment or how many trainings they have had regarding assistance animals. Faculty who had a longer length of employment and/or more trainings may have done significantly better on the knowledge portions of the survey than those who have not had as long of an employment or as many trainings. Future research could include this measure to address

this. Although the study was adequately powered, the response rate was very low compared to the total number of faculty at Murray State overall. Thus, sampling bias could also have been a factor. Faculty who knew more about assistance animals may have been more likely to agree to take the survey compared to faculty who did not know much about assistance animals or had a negative attitude towards them. Further, this study asked about perceptions of participants' own behavior. A 2017 study found that people do not tend to adequately balance their current intentions when predicting a future behavior (Poon, Koehler, & Buehler, 2014). Research could consider objectively measuring this behavior, such as by bringing an animal into a classroom and observing faculty reactions. Finally, all items on this survey were asked as individual items. Future research could design a more psychometrically sound instrument to accurately measure faculty knowledge. Results from this study will also be offered to the Student Disability Services Office at Murray State University in order to inform their future assistance animal trainings for faculty.

Overall, Murray State faculty are less confident than the general public, but they are also significantly more accurate in their knowledge overall. Further, faculty support service dog access in classrooms, but this support diminishes substantially for therapy animals, ESAs and pets. There are also misconceptions regarding assistance animal knowledge that should be addressed in future faculty training on assistance animals.

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Appendix

Demographics

- Gender
    - Male
    - Female
    - Non-binary
    - Other (please specify)
- Age
- Primary Academic Appointment
    - Jesse D. Jones College of Science, Engineering and Technology
    - Hutson School of Agriculture
    - Center for Adult and Regional Education
    - Arthur J. Bauernfeind College of Business
    - College of Education & Human Services
    - College of Humanities and Fine Arts
- Please respond how each of the following applies to you.
    - Do you own a pet dog?
        - Yes
        - No
    - Do you own a service dog?
        - Yes
        - No
    - Do you own an emotional support animal?

        - Yes
        - No
    - Does a friend or family member own a service animal?
        - Yes
        - No
    - Does a friend or family member own an emotional support animal?
        - Yes
        - No

Perceived Confidence

- How comfortable are you defining in legal terms…
    - A service animal?
        - Not at all comfortable
        - Not very comfortable
        - Somewhat comfortable
        - Very comfortable
    - An emotional support animal?
        - Not at all comfortable
        - Not very comfortable
        - Somewhat comfortable
        - Very comfortable
    - A therapy animal?
        - Not at all comfortable
        - Not very comfortable

        - Somewhat comfortable
        - Very comfortable

Knowledge of Appropriate Questions to Ask

- Which of the following questions are you legally permitted to ask when determining if an animal qualifies as an assistance dog?
    - What is your disability?
        - Yes, I can legally ask
        - No, I cannot legally ask
        - Don't know
    - Is your dog a service dog that is required because of a disability?
        - Yes, I can legally ask
        - No, I cannot legally ask
        - Don't know
    - What task is your dog trained to perform?
        - Yes, I can legally ask
        - No, I cannot legally ask
        - Don't know
    - Can I see some proof of your disability?
        - Yes, I can legally ask
        - No, I cannot legally ask
        - Don't know
    - Can I see proof of your dog's status (certification or ID card)?
        - Yes, I can legally ask

        - No, I cannot legally ask
        - Don’t know

Opinion, Past Behavior, Predicted Behavior, and Knowledge of Classroom Policies

- Please indicate the type(s) of assistance animal, if any, that apply to each statement.
    - I think these types of dogs should be allowed in classroom settings.
        - Service dogs
            - Yes
            - No
        - Emotional support dogs
            - Yes
            - No
        - Therapy dogs
            - Yes
            - No
        - Pet dogs
            - Yes
            - No
    - I have allowed this type of dog into my classroom during normal instruction.
        - Service dogs
            - Yes
            - No
        - Emotional support dogs
            - Yes

        - No
    - Therapy dogs
        - Yes
        - No
    - Pet dogs
        - Yes
        - No
- If asked, I would allow this type of dog into my classroom during normal instruction, even if the law did not mandate it.
    - Service dogs
        - Yes
        - No
    - Emotional support dogs
        - Yes
        - No
    - Therapy dogs
        - Yes
        - No
    - Pet dogs
        - Yes
        - No
- I am required by university rules or by law to allow this type of dog into my classroom.

- Service dogs
    - Yes
    - No
- Emotional support dogs
    - Yes
    - No
- Therapy dogs
    - Yes
    - No
- Pet dogs
    - Yes
    - No

MURRAY STATE UNIVERSITY

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TO: Michael Bordieri, Psychology

FROM: Jonathan Baskin, IRB Coordinator JB

DATE: 10/30/2019

RE: Human Subjects Protocol I.D. – IRB # 20-076

The IRB has completed its review of your student's Level 1 protocol entitled *Faculty Knowledge and Attitudes Regarding Assistance Animals*. After review and consideration, the IRB has determined that the research, as described in the protocol form, will be conducted in compliance with Murray State University guidelines for the protection of human participants.

The forms and materials that have been approved for use in this research study are attached to the email containing this letter. These are the forms and materials that must be presented to the subjects. Use of any process or forms other than those approved by the IRB will be considered misconduct in research as stated in the MSU IRB Procedures and Guidelines section 20.3.

Your stated data collection period is from 10/30/2019 to 10/29/2020.

If data collection extends beyond this period, please submit an Amendment to an Approved Protocol form detailing the new data collection period and the reason for the change.

This Level 1 approval is valid until 10/29/2020.

If data collection and analysis extends beyond this date, the research project must be reviewed as a continuation project by the IRB prior to the end of the approval period, 10/29/2020. You must reapply for IRB approval by submitting a Project Update and Closure form (available at murraystate.edu/irb). You must allow ample time for IRB processing and decision prior to your expiration date, or your research must stop until such time that IRB approval is received. If the research project is completed by the end of the approval period, then a Project Update and Closure form must be submitted for IRB review so that your protocol may be closed. It is your responsibility to submit the appropriate paperwork in a timely manner.

The protocol is approved. You may begin data collection now.