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# Southeast Welcomes Pet Friendly Community Beginning Fall 2018

APRIL 09TH 2018 BY DEE LOFLIN

## Southeast Welcomes Pet Friendly Community Beginning Fall 2018

Cape Girardeau, Missouri - As lifestyle needs and student expectations of today's college population are changing, Southeast Missouri State University has announced a new pet friendly community coming online in fall 2018 on select floors of Myers Hall.

Southeast is rolling out the welcome mat for family pets — dogs, cats and small caged animals — and, of course, their student owners, as part of a pilot program.

“In many cases, students grew up with pets and they have told us they are looking for a college that will permit their animal to come with them,” said Dr. Debbie Below, vice president for enrollment management and student success.

She said the University has been considering a pet friendly community for some time in response to requests the Office of Admissions regularly receives from prospective students and to enhance the on-campus living experience for some students.

“We are very excited to offer this new amenity for our on-campus student population, and we look forward to students taking advantage of this opportunity for the upcoming academic year,” she said. “We know that pets teach us a lot about responsibility while providing comfort and companionship, so we see this as both a wonderful learning opportunity as well as an added benefit for students wishing to live on campus with the support of their family pet.”

Southeast has added eight additional buildings and more than 800 new beds to the residence hall system since 2008. This added component is allowing the University to diversity its housing options to complement student interests.

A meeting is scheduled for 7:30 p.m. Tuesday, April 10, in the Myers third floor lounge to share information with interested students about the pet friendly floor and to answer questions they may have.

The new pet friendly community will be separate from policies allowing emotional support and service animals, which the University has accommodated for years in residence halls across the campus.

“A pet is not considered an emotional support animal or service animal,” she said.

Permitted pets in the pet-friendly community will be:

- Indoor domestic cats and dogs under a certain weight
- Small caged animals that live in a small aquarium

The Southeast Office of Residence Life must approve pets brought into the community. Each request will be evaluated according to procedures, taking into consideration the individual request and the expectations of the University community, Below said.

Students wishing to participate in the community must complete an Animal Registration Request form and submit it to the Office of Residence Life. Requests must be submitted annually or for each new housing contract period. A \$200 non-refundable registration/cleaning fee is required with each request. No pets will be allowed during the summer. Students may begin applying to live in the community, which will accommodate 92 students, beginning April 6. The Animal Registration Request form as well as the pet friendly community policy can be found at [\*\*http://semo.edu/residencelife/livelearn/pet-friendly.html\*\*](http://semo.edu/residencelife/livelearn/pet-friendly.html).

Below said requests must be submitted at least two weeks prior to bringing a pet to campus. Pets may only arrive on campus during the first two weeks of each semester. After the first two weeks, they will not be allowed to move to campus until the following semester.

Students requesting a pet in the pet friendly community must provide several forms of documentation along with their request to the Office of Residence life, showing proof that:

A dog is at least one year old and has lived with the student's family for 10 months.

A cat is at least six months old and has lived with the student's family for three months.

Pets have not been acquired by purchasing, fostering or adopting a stray.

Below said pets must be able to be left alone in rooms without causing disruptions to the living community.

After a student submits the requested documents, students will be approved or denied via an email from the Office of Residence Life. Students requesting to live in the community may not bring their pet to campus until they receive approval.

Below said dogs must be house broken, and cats must be litter box trained. Smaller animals must be caged and may not be left loose in the student's room or in the residence hall.

In addition, roommates of those with pets will be required to complete a roommate agreement form, she said.

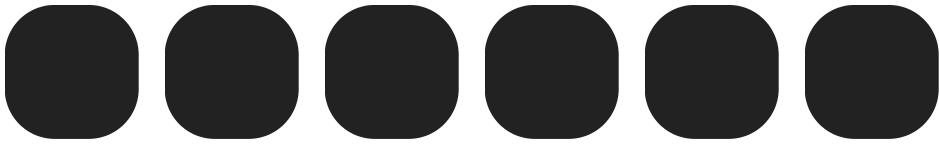
The University will evaluate the pet friendly community at the end of the 2018-2019 academic year to determine if it will continue in future years.

“The input and support of students will be critical as we consider the future of this new on-campus community,” she said.

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