Comfort Animal Guidelines
Comfort animals can be a wide variety of animals (as opposed to “service animals” which are only dogs and miniature horses). Service animals provide a service such as leading a person who is blind, pulling a wheelchair, retrieving items, etc. Comfort animals, also known as assistance animals, therapy animals, emotional support animals, and other names, are any one of a number of animals which do not do anything, but by their presence and association with a person help that person with issues such as anxiety, depression, and etc.

Since it is not always obvious whether an animal is a service dog or a comfort animal, the handler of the animal can be asked “if the animal is needed for a disability.” If the answer is no, then the animal is a pet by definition and cannot be in or on BYU-Idaho grounds, classrooms, or buildings. If the answer is “yes, it is needed for a disability” but the function of the animal is not obvious a person can then ask “what does it do?” (Note that you may not ask about the specific disability). If the answer seems to be an indication of a “comfort/therapy” animal, it is admissible to ask for a doctor’s or psychologist’s written recommendation regarding the need for the animal.

The BYU-Idaho Disability Services Office usually does not accept prescription pads, rather recognizes letter on letterhead, signed by the doctoral level professional and dated. You can contact the Disability Services Office, 496-9210, if you have questions.