

Proposed Course: Introduction to Animal Assisted Interventions: History, Methods, Research & Results with optional Practicum

Four week – 90 minute sessions

- Week One
 - Introduction and History.
 - What is Animal Assisted Intervention (AAI)
 - Differences between
 - Animal Assisted Therapy
 - Animal Assisted Education
 - Animal Assisted Activity
 - Animal Support
 - Where are these different methods used?
 - What are the human requirements to participate?
 - What are the animal requirements?
 - Where and When did it start
- Week Two
 - Discuss differences between type of activity and training requirements as well as legal rights of each
 - Service
 - Therapy
 - Emotional Support
 - Working Dogs
 - Medical Research.
 - Discussion and in depth review of various physical and psychological medical studies using AAI with adults and children.
 - Some examples of how AAI works with:
 - College Students
 - Psychiatric Patients
 - Medical Patients
 - Children with developmental disabilities
 - Vulnerable populations, including Veterans, the elderly, the disabled, those under stress to testify in court and more
 - Highlighting the following changes in therapy
 - Physical
 - Cognitive
 - Emotional
 - Physiological
 - Behavioral

- Week Three
 - Many hospitals and universities have welcomed animals, primarily dogs, into their recreational or complementary and alternative medical programs. We will explore what is currently being offered around the country in the realm of AAI.
 - This field of medicine/therapy is in its infancy – we will talk about the future of the field including, professions, volunteer opportunities, effect of society (including prison programs with pets, Reader programs at libraries, schools).
 - Create a better understanding of the nature and power of the human-animal bond.
 - How to incorporate AAI in current practices – for medical staff, educators, anyone working with vulnerable populations
 - How to start an AAI program at your school, hospital, university, etc.
 - Groups that already provide services – for optional practicum
 - Legal implications
 - Insurance needs
 - Starting a program (charity) yourself (very brief, purpose is not to teach people how to start a business, but just to make them aware that it is a possibility).
 - Discuss ‘shadow’ day with an existing AAI team through an existing charity in the area – optional participation

- Week Four
 - Discuss ‘shadow’ day for those who participated
 - Learn how to assess if a you and your dog are suitable for AAI
 - How to keep an AAI dog healthy – while on duty as well as off.
 - Learn the risk factors of the dog
 - Learn how to read stress signals in the dog
 - Focus on the mental and physical health of the dog
 - What to do if you see an AAI dog being abused – not just hitting, but being under stress and the handler is not respecting the dog’s health.
 - Discuss paid careers with AAI (for example)
 - Program managers
 - Charities
 - Hospitals
 - Schools
 - Recreational – Occupational Therapists
 - Psychologists – Psychiatrists
 - Learn next steps with AAI – additional trainings available
 - Review and discuss the results of AAI from a global viewpoint