2006 LibQUAL+ *Point of Service* Report

for

Earth Sciences Library
Introduction

The University Libraries Assessment Committee is providing these LibQUAL+ data to you as the Faculty Director of the Earth Sciences Library. We hope that this information will be valuable to you in understanding users’ expectations and perceptions of the service provided by the Library. To put the data in context, we are providing it relative to the entire Libraries data, to average Association of Research Libraries (ARL) scores, and to both data sets by user group (undergraduate, graduate, and faculty). This information is for informational purposes only. We do not intend to analyze the data, and will provide only cautionary notes to your own analysis of it. LibQUAL+ data alone is not actionable intelligence; if it is to inform you decisions, it should merely be considered one piece in a larger assessment picture.

Included LibQUAL+ Data

The data represented in this report is drawn from Affect of Service (AS) questions. AS questions most closely correspond to a users’ expectations and perceptions of a library’s service in a “customer service” sense, and all the respondents including in the following data indicated their discipline was “Agriculture/Environmental Studies (n=2)” or “Earth Sciences (n=18).” Therefore, as close as possible, this data is represents users’ expectations and perceptions of the Earth Science Library’s service. The data was provided together because these collections are housed in the Earth Sciences Library, but data on individual responses for them is available on our website or by contacting a member of the Committee.

The data is an aggregate of responses to the following statements:

AS-1 Employees who instill confidence in users
AS-2 Giving users individual attention
AS-3 Employees who are consistently courteous
AS-4 Readiness to respond to users' questions
AS-5 Employees who have the knowledge to answer user questions
AS-6 Employees who deal with users in a caring fashion
AS-7 Employees who understand the needs of their users
AS-8 Willingness to help users
AS-9 Dependability in handling users' service problems

Obviously, not all of these statements measure your unit's service. There are any factors that contribute to a respondent’s perception of these statements. Some of them may be of more interest to you than others. If you would like response data for a single or several of these questions, please do not hesitate to contact any member of the Assessment Committee.
Results

LibQUAL+ data is unique in that allows you to analyze users’ perceptions of service relative to their expectations of it. In three broad areas of library service—information control, library as place, and affect of service—respondents are asked to rate the minimum, desired, and perceived levels of service on a scale of 1-9.

**Minimum** is defined on the survey as “the number that represents the minimum level of service you would find acceptable.” **Perceived** is defined as “the number that represents the level of service that you believe the library currently provides.” **Desired** is defined as “the number of the service that you personally want.”

![](chart.png)

The resulting “gaps” between the ratings allow you to see how far from adequate users perceive the service, and also how far from desirable. In other words, the difference between minimum and perceived (the “adequacy gap”) is how adequate or inadequate the service is rated; and the difference between perceived and desired (the “superiority gap”) is how far the service is from the optimal levels of service users desire. The larger (on the positive side) the gap number, the better. Generally, positive adequacy gaps are indicative of adequate service, negative adequacy gaps are indications of perceived inadequacy, and negative superiority gaps are common and can only be sought to be minimized.
Here is a non-library example to help you understand these numbers: Imagine you go to a restaurant and order a taco. You expect at the least to receive a taco (this is your minimum score). Now you would really like to have a good taco, one with all your favorite toppings (this is your desired score). The taco that comes to the table has sour cream. Your opinion of the taco before you is the perceived score. Now I like my tacos without sour cream, so I will perceive that my taco is less adequate, whereas you may be fond of sour cream and so view such a taco as superior. This example highlights one of the important features to keep in mind when examining this data: this is an examination of user’s expectations and those can differ greatly from person to person.

The following graphs are the same scored disaggregated by “user group” (undergraduate, graduate, and faculty respondents).
Comparison to UCB and ARL Averages by User Group

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Service Point</th>
<th>Average AS Score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Minimum</td>
<td>7.57 5.37 5.42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Desired</td>
<td>8.10 8.04 7.45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perceived</td>
<td>8.37 7.37 7.59</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

EarthSci (n=20) UCB (n=534) ARL (n=29,688)

Note: U is the number of undergraduates, G is graduate students, and F is faculty.

Comparison to UCB and ARL Gaps by User Group

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Service Point</th>
<th>Gap</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Adequacy</td>
<td>0.80 1.99 2.17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Superiority</td>
<td>0.27 -0.68 0.13</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

EarthSci (n=20) UCB (n=534) ARL (n=29,688)

Note: U is the number of undergraduates, G is graduate students, and F is faculty.
Cautionary Notes to Analysis

Please note that there is no definitive way of ascertaining what library, or what service within a library, a respondent is evaluating in this data. Students and faculty routinely use several libraries on campus. The Committee feels this is a very important note to LibQUAL+ analysis, especially in regards to AS.

What can be done with this data?

LibQUAL+ data is best considered as an assessment of what further assessment might be done. If you feel any aspects of the report are problematic, you might consider conducting more specific surveys, conversing with constituents, or reviewing internal procedures. If you feel aspects are indicative of positive service, you might consider using the data as promotional material. Either way, communicating these results back to the users could facilitate a valuable dialogue. The data may confirm your anecdotal beliefs, or it may lead you to new realizations of your unit’s service.

On the other hand, you might do nothing with it. LibQUAL+ data will increase in value over time, and future reports may bring more actionable data to light.

If you have any questions regarding LibQUAL+ whatsoever, please do not hesitate to contact the Assessment Committee.

User Comments

This is a selection of user comments related to your library branch. The comments were made by patrons who were referring specifically to the Earth Sciences library or by patrons who identified their discipline as either “Earth Sciences” or “Agriculture/Environmental Studies.” However, not all comments may be referring specifically to your library. Portions of comments not relevant to your library have been omitted, and all errors have not been corrected:

Faculty:
- Overall, I'm very happy with the library staff -- they are dedicated and helpful -- but the budget is way too low (as is true for CU in general -- the state of Colorado doesn't seem to appreciate what a gem it has in CU, or that money invested in the University brings major indirect returns)
- Overall, the libraries do the best they can. The trained library staff and librarians provide a very high level of service that is quite indispensable. The work study students are not as uniformly competent, but I wouldn't expect otherwise. It is generally always possible to find somebody who knows how to help you with what you are looking for.
- The services and space in Norlin Library and the branches varies considerably.
- I think the library does a consistently good job.
• Suzanne Larsen is the best resource in the library!! And Katie Lage runs a close second. They are both amazingly knowledgeable and helpful. Both go out of their way to work with students.
• We are very lucky in having one of the top cataloguers in the country. It shapes a large part of my perception of the library.
• I am extremely happy with the space and services provided by the Earth Sciences library. Norlin is not as well organized and is not as nice of an environment. The staff at Norlin are pretty good. Interlibrary loan has been excellent. Pascal offsite is frustrating - time for checking out materials is far too short. I often wish there was better coverage on the online journals - both in terms of the number of journals included and the date range included. There are many things that I cannot access directly and end up having to request on ILL.

Graduate Students:
• I think the online journal database could be a bit more extensive and user friendly.
• Thanks for providing a great, easy to use resource!
• I rely heavily on online access to citations, as well as full text. I would encourage the promotion of personal bibliographic databasing software and overviews of what differentiates online databases via seminars or online "cheat sheets." I am very interested in tools to help visualize the literature in a field (like RefVis or Grokker). This type of tool is really good for understanding the structure of a field. I do not usually visit the libraries physically, unless I need to check out a book. I do this about once a month at most. I have had decent support, but have exhausted the expertise of the librarians on occasion. Susan Larson spoke to my class in the Geography Dept. I thought that was good.
• The libraries are under staffed and over worked. The biggest problem is lack of quick reshelving of books and journals removed for photocopying. Often there are large piles of books near the photocopy machines needing to be reshelved. Otherwise the University Library System is an outstanding intra-institutional institution.
• I am very pleased with the library service-keep up the great work!

Undergraduates:
• I was confused. I'm sure you were describing the library system as a whole. I was evaluating the resources available for Norlin Library only. If I were to answer questions regarding the Earth Science library, I'd give a "9" to study areas.
• Let us access electronic databases from home without CU VPN.
• HOURS NEED TO IMPROVE!!! Especially during exam periods. The library should be a place that anyone can study at any time of day that assists in academic pursuits.
• The Librarians are very helpful and always eager to help.

Resources

Assessment Committee:
Website: http://ucblibraries.colorado.edu/internal/assessment/index.htm

Members: Brice Austin, John Culshaw (Ex-officio), Deborah Fink (Co-Chair, Ex-officio), Jennifer Gerke, Matthew Hamilton, Lindsay Steussy, Jack Maness (Co-Chair), Scott Seaman, Heather Wicht.

Selected Bibliography:


Edgar, W. B. Questioning LibQUAL+: Expanding its Assessment of Academic Library Effectiveness. Portal v. 6 no. 4 (October 2006) p. 445-65

Feather, J. [Libraries act on their LibQUAL+ findings]. Education for Information v. 23 no. 4 (December 2005) p. 264-6


Overview of LibQUAL+ Survey

Demographic Questions:
- User Group (also subgroups by year or status)
  Undergraduate, Graduate, Faculty
- Age (by range)
- Sex
- Discipline
- Locally customized discipline

Core Questions:

Affect of Service
- [AS-1] Employees who instill confidence in users
- [AS-2] Giving users individual attention
- [AS-3] Employees who are consistently courteous
- [AS-4] Readiness to respond to users’ questions
- [AS-5] Employees who have the knowledge to answer user questions
- [AS-6] Employees who deal with users in a caring fashion
- [AS-7] Employees who understand the needs of their users
- [AS-8] Willingness to help users
- [AS-9] Dependability in handling users’ service problems

Information Control
- [IC-1] Making electronic resources accessible from my home or office
- [IC-2] A library Web site enabling me to locate information on my own
- [IC-3] The printed library materials I need for my work
- [IC-4] The electronic information resources I need
- [IC-5] Modern equipment that lets me easily access needed information
- [IC-6] Easy-to-use access tools that allow me to find things on my own
- [IC-7] Making information easily accessible for independent use
- [IC-8] Print and/or electronic journal collections I require for my work

Library as Place
- [LP-1] Library space that inspires study and learning
- [LP-2] Quiet space for individual activities
- [LP-3] A comfortable and inviting location
- [LP-4] A getaway for study, learning or research
- [LP-5] Community space for group learning and group study

Local Questions:
- Teaching me how to access, evaluate, and use information
- Librarians teaching me how to effectively use the electronically available databases, journals, and books
• A library environment that is hospitable and conducive to finding and using information
• Enabling me to find information myself 24 hours a day
• Facilitating self-directed research

**General Satisfaction Questions:**
• In general, I am satisfied with the way in which I am treated at the library.
• In general, I am satisfied with library support for my learning, research, and/or teaching needs.
• How would you rate the overall quality of the service provided by the library?

**Information Literacy Questions:**
• The library helps me stay abreast of developments in my field(s) of interest.
• The library aids my advancement in my academic discipline.
• The library enables me to be more efficient in my academic pursuits.
• The library helps me distinguish between trustworthy and untrustworthy information.
• The library provides me with the information skills I need in my work or study.

**Library Use Questions:**
• How often do you use resources on library premises?
• How often do you access library resources through a library Web page?
• How often do you use Yahoo(TM), Google(TM), or non-library gateways for information?