

2006 LibQUAL+ *Bibliographers* Report

for

Earth Science

and

Agriculture / Environmental Studies



University of Colorado at Boulder



**Assessment Committee**

<http://ucblibraries.colorado.edu/internal/assessment/index.htm>

## Introduction

The University Libraries Assessment Committee is providing these LibQUAL+ data tables to you as a bibliographer responsible for the earth science/agriculture/environmental studies collections. We hope that this information will be valuable to you in understanding users' expectations and perceptions of the collection. To put the data in context, we are providing it relative to the entire Libraries collection and the average for the Association of Research Libraries (ARL). 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.

## What this report analyzes

The data represented in this report are the mean desired, perceived and minimum ratings for information control questions, as well as their gaps. Information Control (IC) questions most closely correspond to a users' expectations and perceptions of a library's collection, and all the respondents including in the following data indicated their discipline was either "agriculture/environmental studies" (n=2) or "earth science" (n=18). Therefore, as close as possible, this data represents users' expectations and perceptions of these collections. These were combined because the collections are housed in the same library, are developed by the same bibliographer, and would enable the response value to meet the necessary 20 for the Committee to complete the report. Data of each individually is available on our website or by contacting a member of the Committee. If you would like more information on some other notes on analysis please read "Guidelines to Analysis."

The data in the tables that follows are an aggregate of the following questions:

- 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

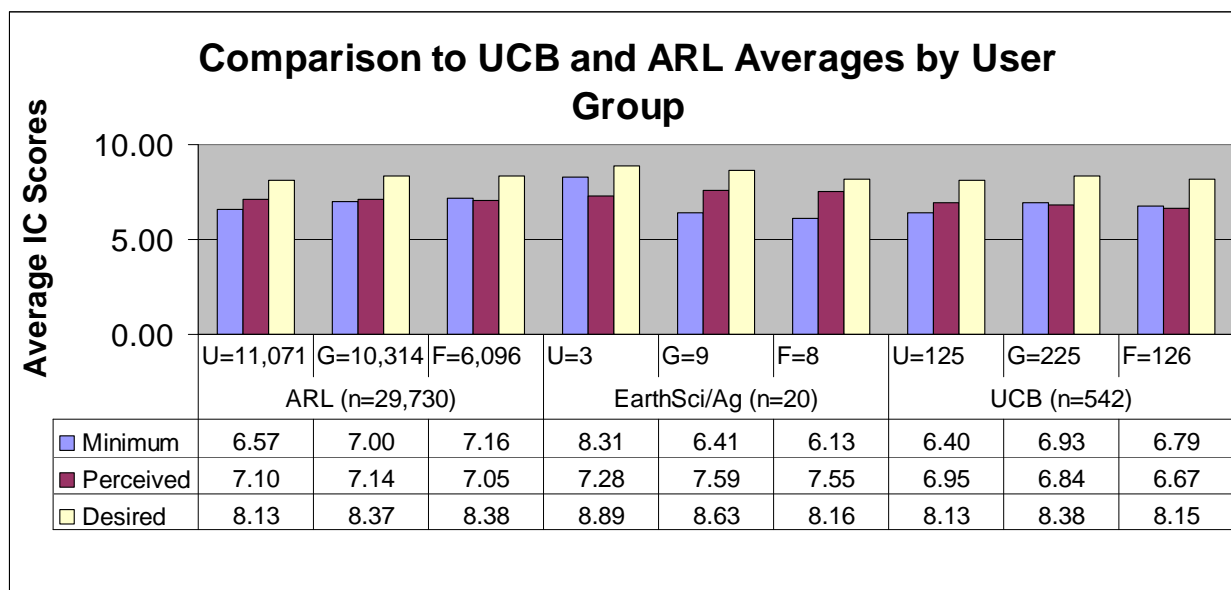
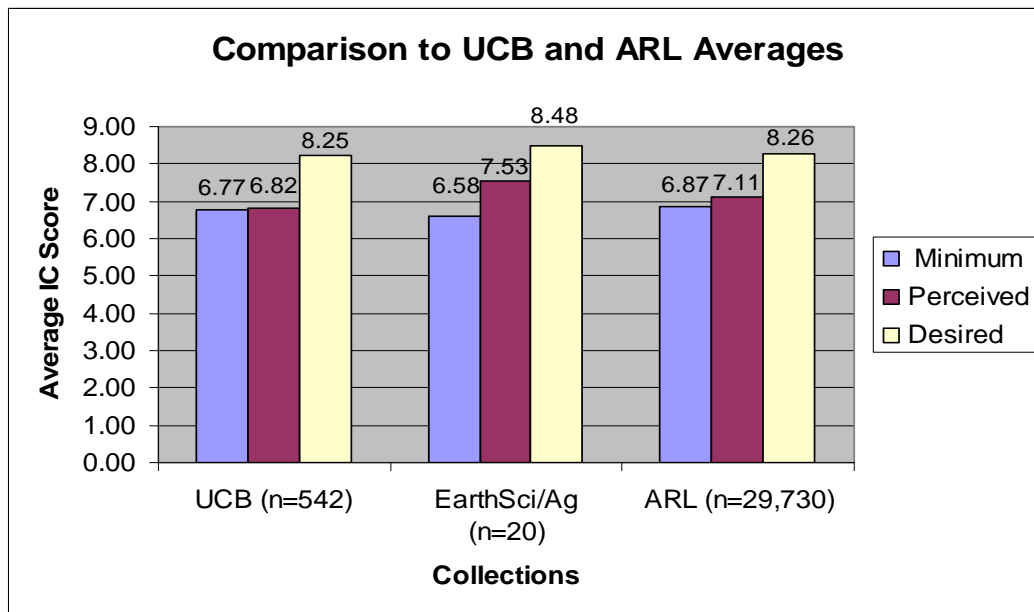
Obviously, not all of these services are directly under a bibliographer's control. Some of these services have more to do with reference or instruction, and it is not possible to determine what the respondent is rating in many of these statements (e.g. what website is being considered in response to IC-2?). But the Committee feels an overall picture of how users' perceive the Libraries' ability to collect, organize, and provide access to a specific collection is a valuable place for a bibliographer to begin analyzing LibQUAL+'s data.

## LibQUAL+ Results

LibQUAL+ data 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**, **perceived**, and **desired** levels of service on a scale of 1-9.

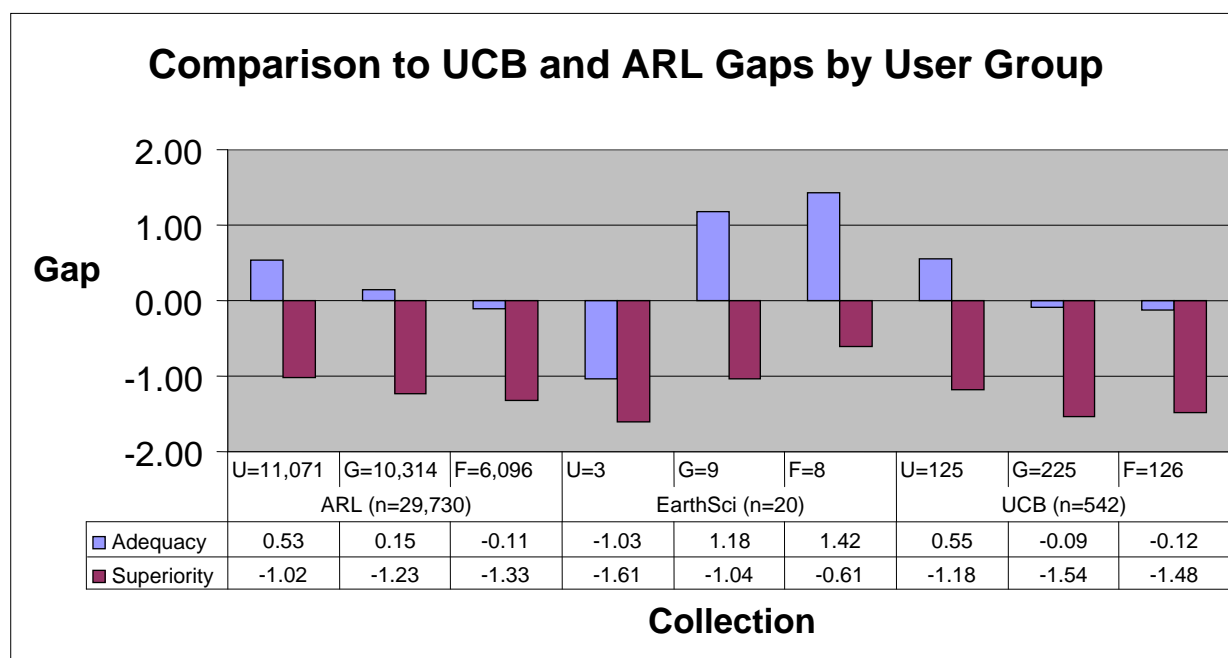
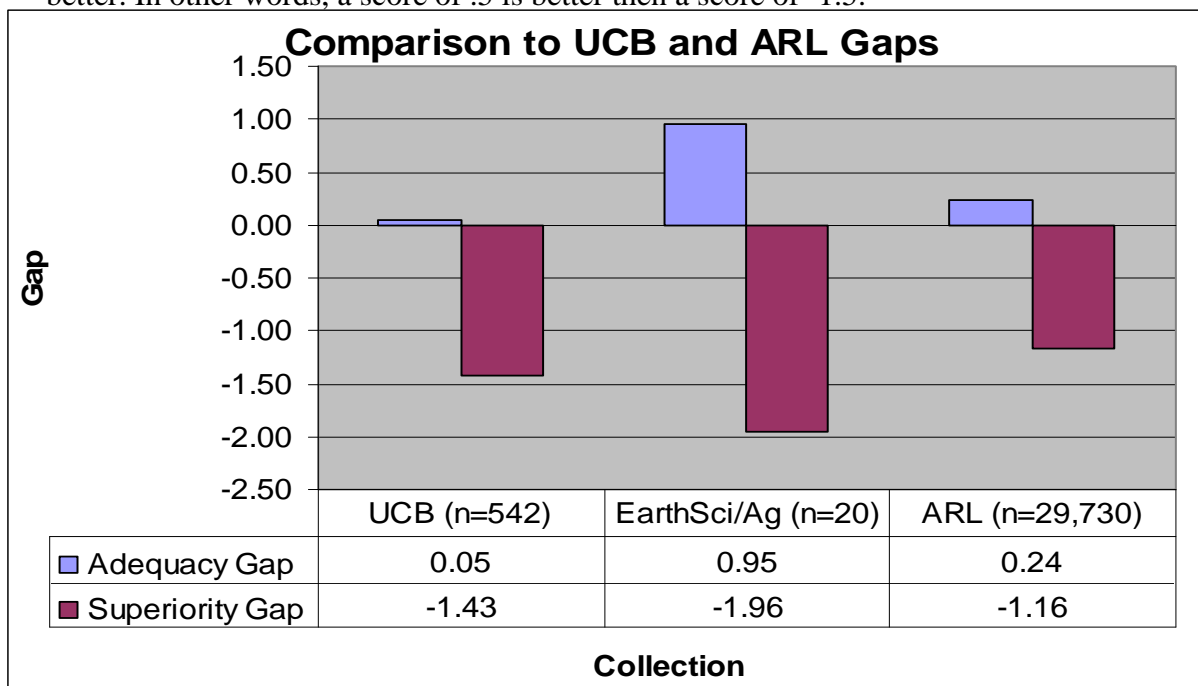
**Minimum** is defined on the survey as “the number that represents the minimum level of service you would find acceptable.” **Perceived** is defined as “the number that represents the level of service that you believe the library currently provides.” **Desired** is defined as “the number of the service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



**Note:** U is the number of Undergraduates, G is Graduate Students, and F is Faculty. Scale is 1-9.

The “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 from optimal levels of service users expect. The larger (on the positive side) the gap number, the better. In other words, a score of .5 is better than a score of -1.5.

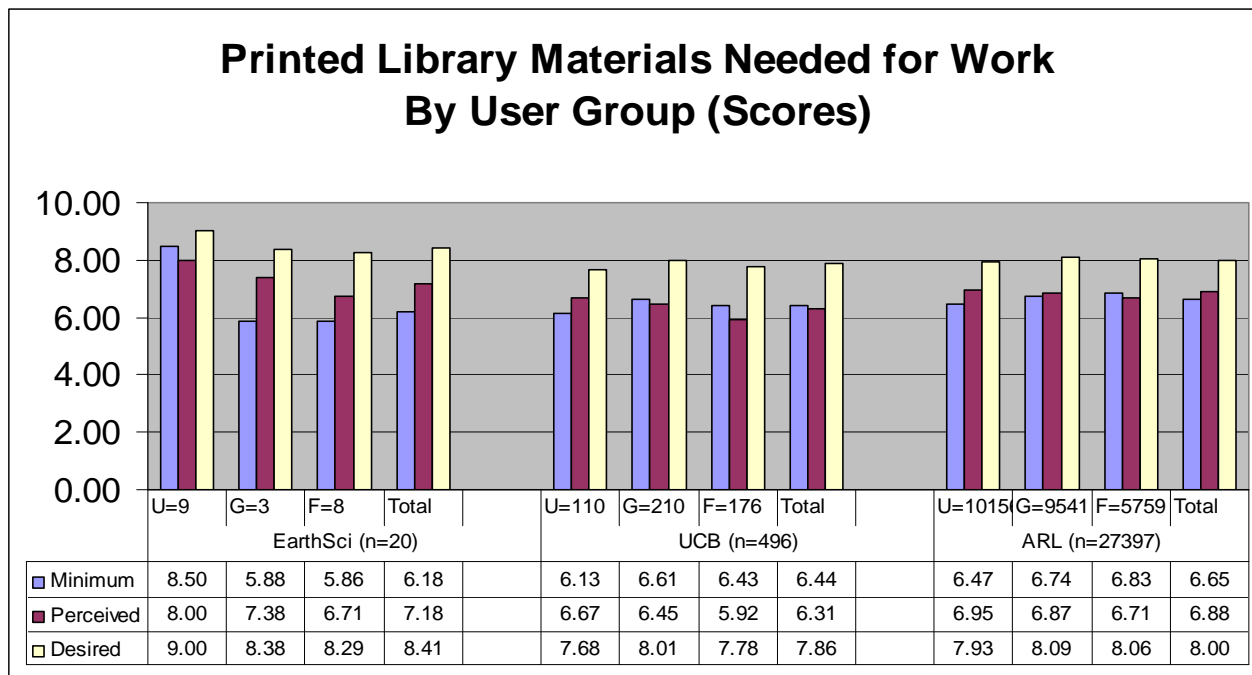


**Note:** U is the number of Undergraduates, G is Graduate Students, and F is Faculty.

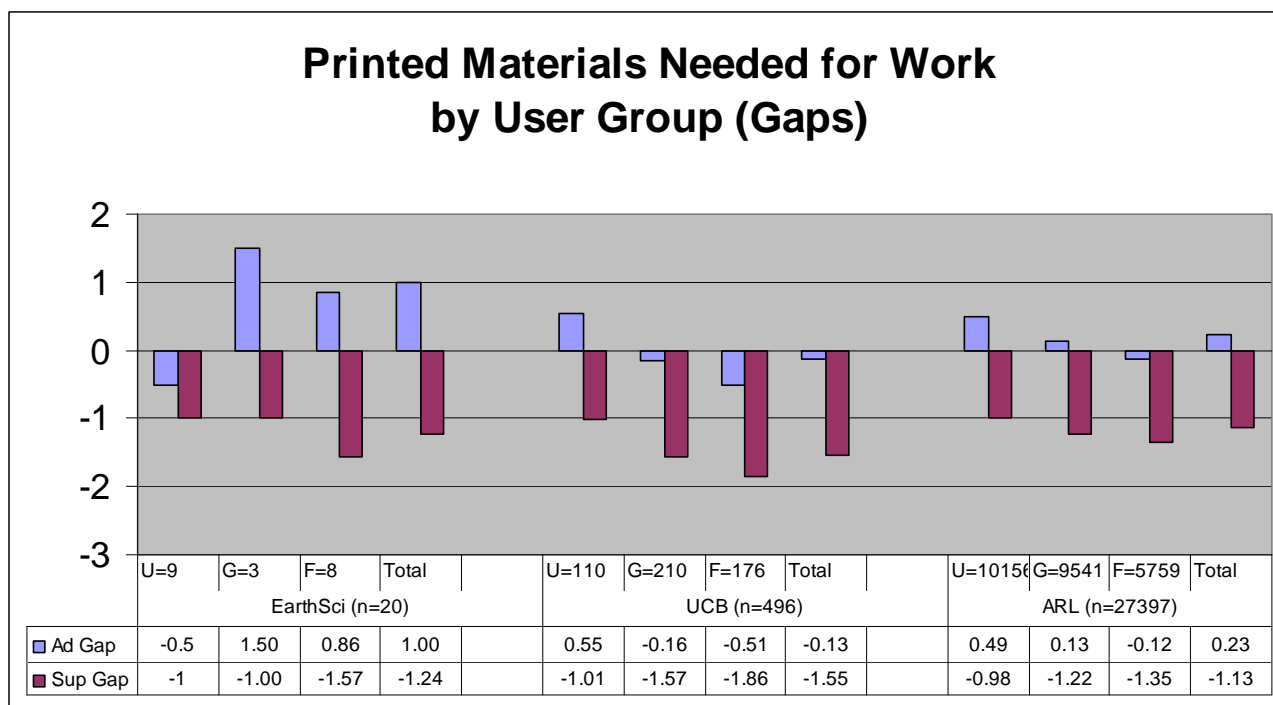
Here is a non-library example to help you understand these numbers: Imagine you go to a restaurant and order a taco. You expect at the very least to receive a taco (this is your **minimum** score). Now you would really like to have a good taco, one with all your

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. See the "Guidelines to Analysis" section for more issues to consider when examining LibQUAL+ data.

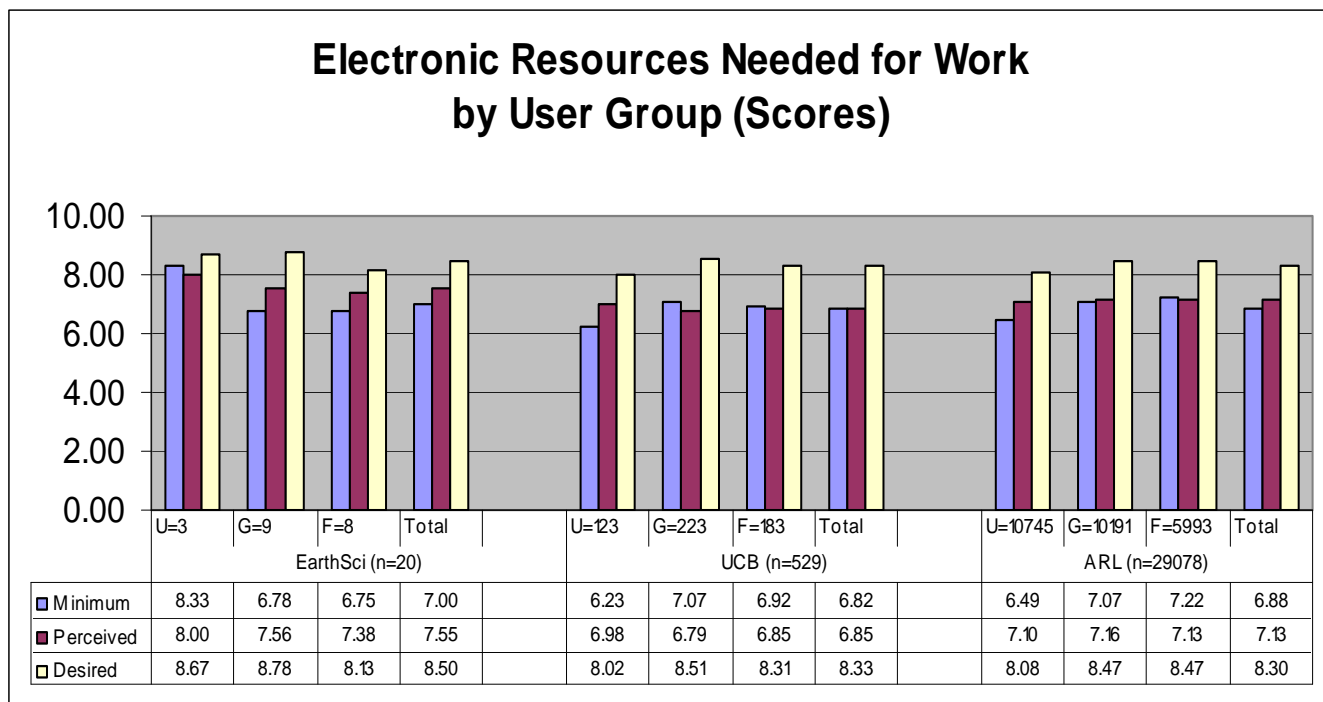
The following two charts look simply at question IC-3 "The printed library materials I need for my work." The variables retain the same definitions used above.



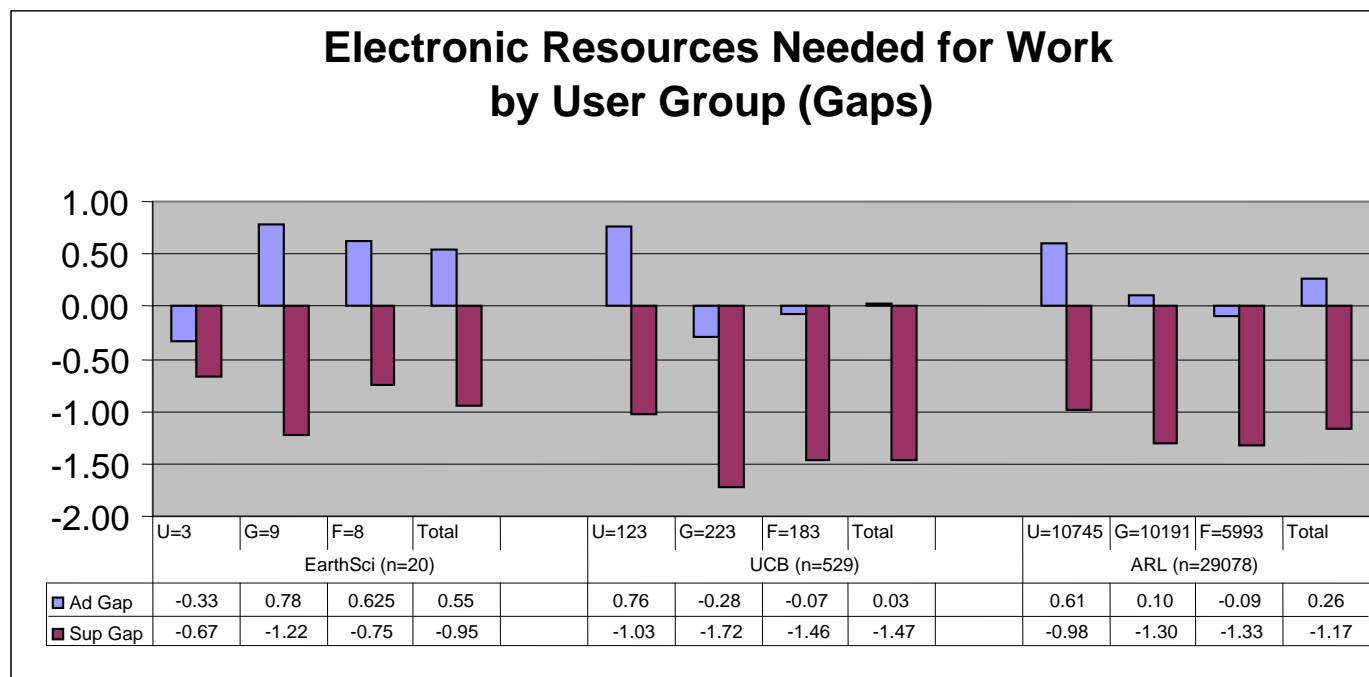
Note: U is the number of Undergraduates, G is Graduate Students, and F is Faculty. Scale is 1-9.



These are the charts looking simply at question IC-4 “The electronic information resources I need.” As mentioned before, if there are additional questions you would like for analysis, please do not hesitate to contact a member of the assessment committee.



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Note: U is the number of Undergraduates, G is Graduate Students, and F is Faculty

## Guidelines to Analysis

**Please remember that this data is *not an evaluation of the earth science/agriculture/environmental studies collections and by no means is it an evaluation of your performance as a bibliographer.* It is at best a summary of respondents' expectations and perceptions of that collection.** The Committee feels this is a very important note to LibQUAL+ analysis, especially in regards to IC. In most cases, a comparison of UCB collection to peer collections is very favorable to UCB. This data allows you to see your users' expectations of the collection, and how well the collection meets those expectations.

It is also important to note that there are three issues that could influence how respondents' perceive collections: awareness, discovery, and the resources themselves. Whether or not a user is aware of a resource, and whether or not they can discover the resource through access systems, impacts their perception of the resource. A bibliographer, then, must keep in mind promotion, access tools, in addition to collection-building itself when considering the analysis of LibQUAL+ data.

**A particular note to the Earth Science report is that** although all respondents did indicate their discipline was "earth science" or "agriculture/environmental studies," it is very likely that they are evaluating many other collections, rather than just that which you manage. While this is true of all bibliographer reports, the Committee feels this is especially true with respect to this one.

## Comments

LibQUAL+ 2006 also provided respondents an opportunity to provide comments. The following are comments from users who indicated the branch they are commenting on to be "Earth Sciences/Maps." Disciplines for these respondents varied, and can be provided upon request. Some comments were directed at Norlin, and they have not been included.

### **Graduates:**

I think the online journal database could be a bit more extensive and user friendly.

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.

## **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.

Thanks for providing a great, easy to use resource!

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.

## **What can be done with this data?**

LibQUAL+ data is best considered as an indicator of what further assessment might be done. If you feel any aspects of the report are problematic, you might consider conducting specific surveys, conversing with constituents, or reviewing some practices that pertain to those aspects. If you feel aspects are particularly positive, you might consider using the data as promotional material. Either way, communicating these results back to the users could create a valuable dialogue. The data may confirm your anecdotal beliefs, or it may lead you to new realizations of your users.

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 a member of the Assessment Committee.

## **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:

- Cook, C. (Guest Ed.). (2002b). Library decision-makers speak to their uses of their LibQUAL+™ data: Some LibQUAL+™ case studies. *Performance Measurement and Metrics*, 3.
- Cook, C., Heath, F. & Thompson, B. (2002). Score norms for improving library service quality: A LibQUAL+™ study. *portal: Libraries and the Academy*, 2, 13-26.
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- Edgar, W. B. Questioning LibQUAL+: Expanding its Assessment of Academic Library Effectiveness. *Portal/v.* 6 no. 4 (October 2006) p. 445-65
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- Heath, F., Kyrillidou, M. & Askew, C.A. (Guest Eds.). (2004). Libraries report on their LibQUAL+™ findings: From Data to Action. *Journal of Library Administration* (40) 3/4 (2004).
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- Jankowska, M. A., et. al., Improving Library Service Quality to Graduate Students: LibQUAL+ Survey Results in a Practical Setting. *Portal/v.* 6 no. 1 (January 2006) p. 59-77.
- Thompson, B., et. al., Using Localized Survey Items to Augment Standardized Benchmarking Measures: A LibQUAL+ Study. *Portal/v.* 6 no. 2 (April 2006) p. 219-30.

Thompson, B., Cook, C., & Heath, F. (2000). The LibQUAL+™ gap measurement model: The bad, the ugly, and the good of gap measurement. *Performance Measurement and Metrics*, 1, 165-178.

Thompson, B., Cook, C., & Thompson, R.L. (2002). Reliability and structure of LibQUAL+™ scores: Measuring perceived library service quality. *portal: Libraries and the Academy*, 2, 3-12.

Thompson, B., Cook, C., & Kyrillidou, M. (2005). Concurrent validity of LibQUAL+™ scores: What do LibQUAL+™ scores measure? *Journal of Academic Librarianship*, 31, 517-522.

## 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?