

2006 LibQUAL+ *Point of Service* Report

for

Math Physics Library



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 to you as the Faculty Director of the Math Physics 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 either "Math ($n=15$)," "Physics ($n=21$)," or "Astrogeophysics ($n=6$)."
Therefore, as close as possible, this data represents users' expectations and perceptions of the Math Physics Library's service. This data was combined because these collections are all housed in the Math Physics Library, but they can be provided separately and are available through our website or by contacting a member of the Committee.

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

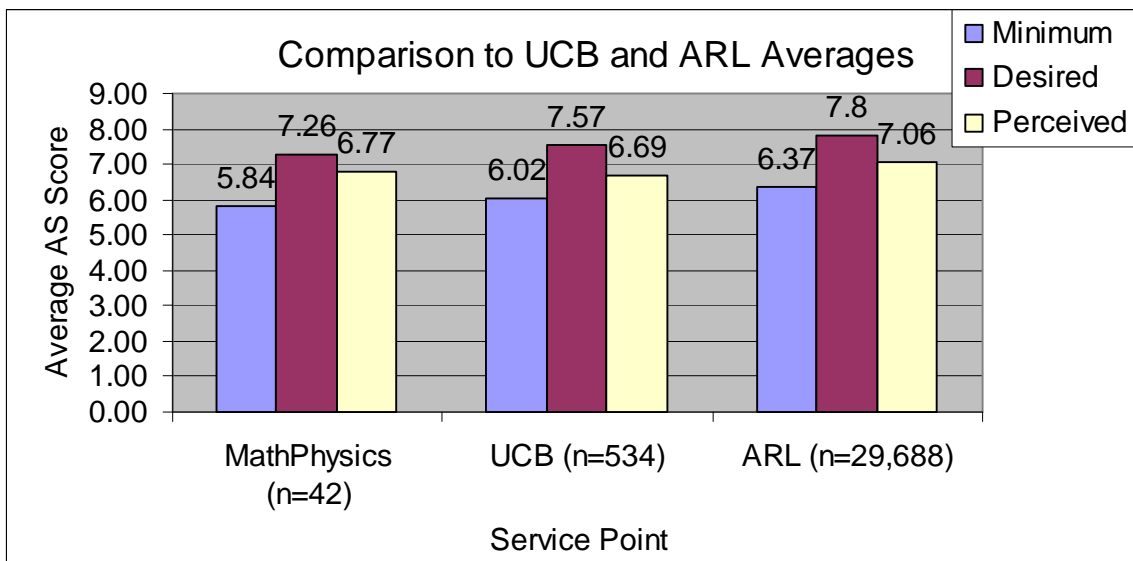
- AS-1* Employees who instill confidence in users
- AS-2* Giving users individual attention
- AS-3* Employees who are consistently courteous
- AS-4* Readiness to respond to users' questions
- AS-5* Employees who have the knowledge to answer user questions
- AS-6* Employees who deal with users in a caring 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.

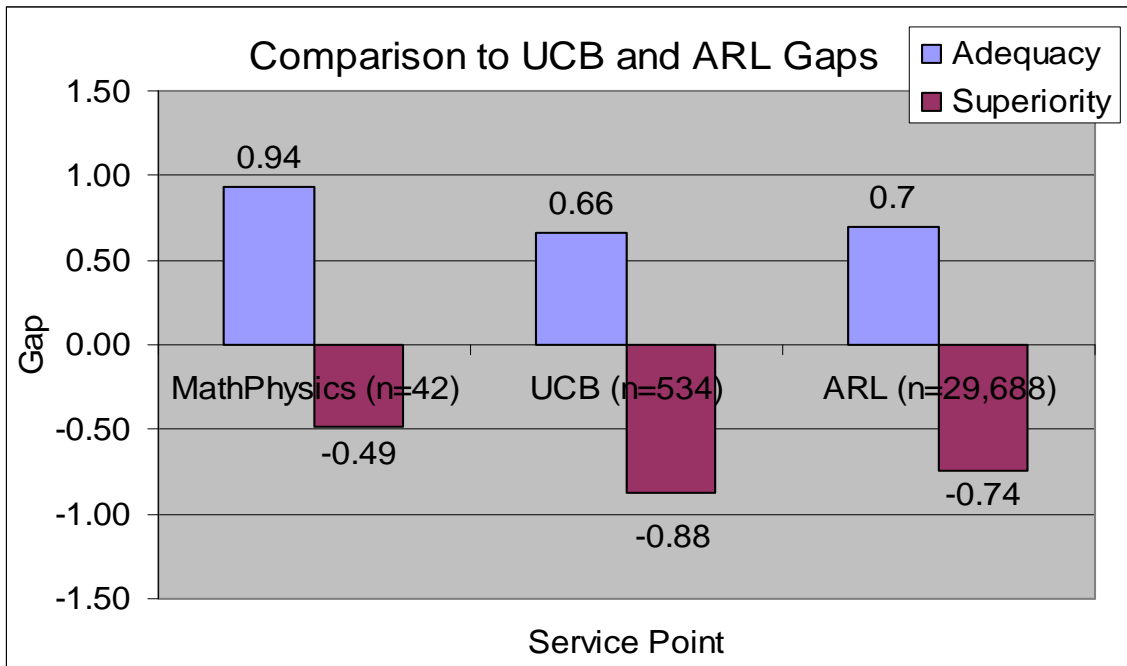
Results

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.”

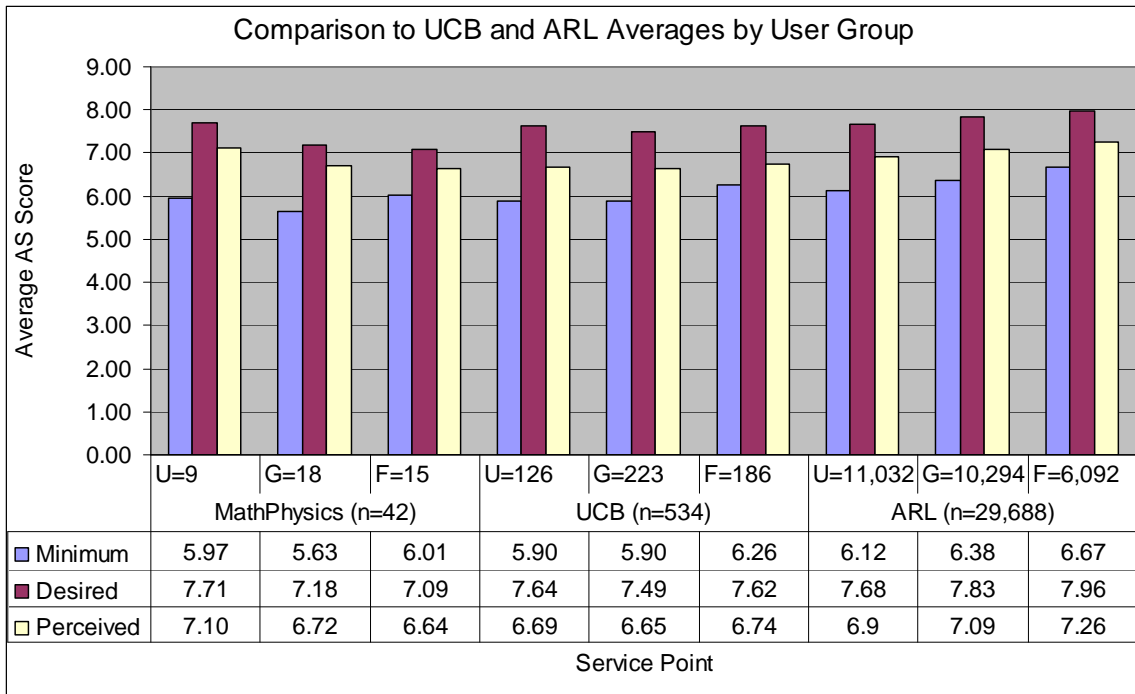


The resulting “gaps” between the ratings allow you to see how far from **adequate** users perceive the service, and also how far from **desirable**. In other words, the difference between minimum and perceived (the “**adequacy gap**”) is how adequate or inadequate the service is rated; and the difference 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.

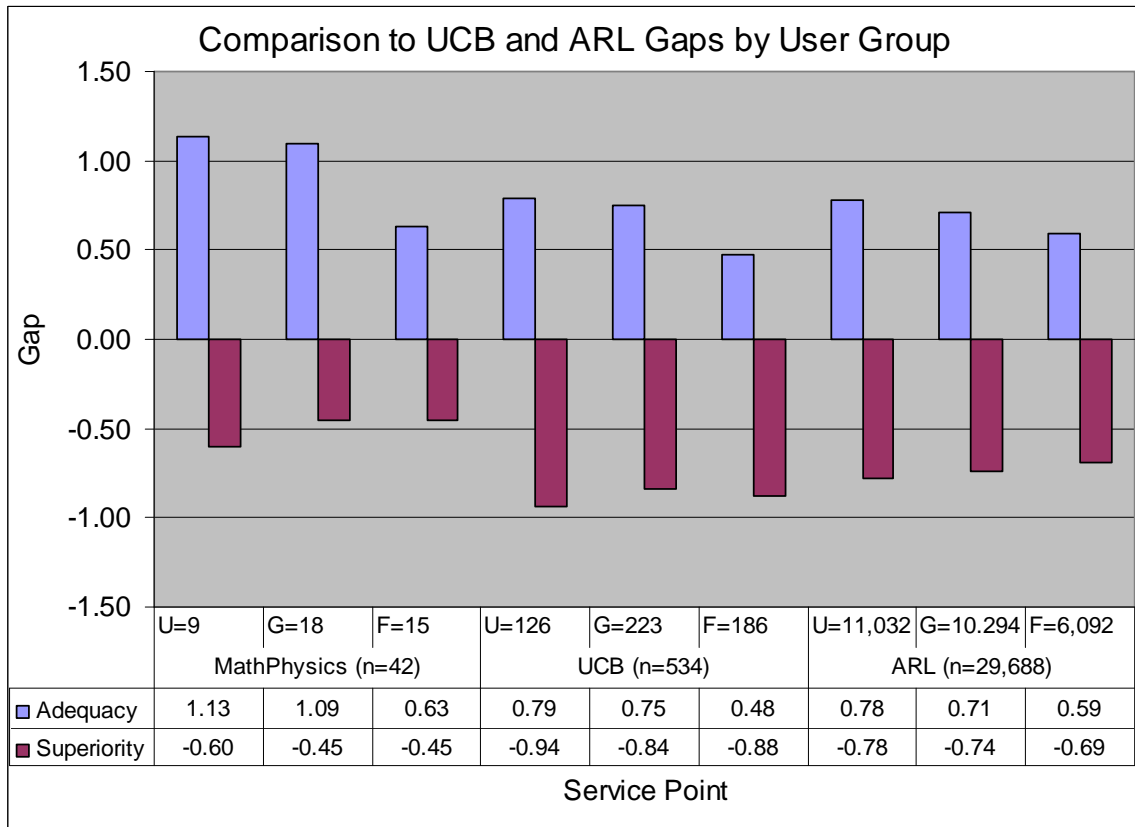


Here is a non-library example to help you understand these numbers: Imagine you go to a restaurant and order a taco. You expect at the least to receive a taco (this is your **minimum** score). Now you would really like to have a good taco, one with all your favorite toppings (this is your **desired**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



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



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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.

Of particular note to the Math Physics Report is that its interdisciplinary nature lends itself to particular scrutiny with respect to the above.

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 Math Physics library or by patrons that identified their discipline as either "Math," "Physics" or "Astrogeophysics." However, not all comments may be referring to your library specifically. Portions of comments not relevant to your library have been omitted, and all errors have not been corrected:

Faculty:

- Excellent service from Suzanne Larson
- I believe the physical library space is largely wasted in this electronic era. At an under-funded state university I believe we cannot afford the luxury. My priority would be to convert the space to teaching/learning space and to transfer the funding to direct teaching resources. All my research materials are online these days and I do not see my students using the library for studying - neither the space nor the books.

- I find I use web of science web site (<http://portal.isiknowledge.com/>) most when searching for electronic journal articles. Not sure if this capability is tied to the library but it is a nice resource to consider if not.
- When I arrived in 2003, the library was much more useful to me than it is now, and for that reason I used to visit much more than once a week. Since then, many key journals for my subject (such as the Journal of Algebra) seem to have been cancelled, at least in print form, and in some cases I do not remember being informed of this in advance.
- The service is fine, the problem is the space. Math uses old monographs in a way that other sciences don't. Not having them in the library hurts our quality of research. It would also be better to have the math books in the Engineering library.
- Non-availability of older books and journals is a serious problem in mathematics; the distant storage, unavailable to users to browse, greatly hinders work.
- The people are great. It is the reduction in hard copies of journals on the shelves that make me dissatisfied.
- 1. Occasionally the library does not have electronic subscriptions to the journal I need. 2. It is a shame that so much material is at Pascal rather than local. But Pascal is working for me OK.
- I mostly satisfied with our Math-Phys Library
- I would like to see the library better integrated with ITS. Computers that are now located in specialty rooms should be moved into the library in order to have more students working in the library.
- We have had visitors in JILA, such as Prof. Paul Dagdigian from Johns Hopkins University's Chemistry Dept., who said that CU's system for providing access to the "older" science journals is tremendously outdated compared to what he has accessible at Johns Hopkins. He found CU's system to be substandard and he strongly recommended improving it. One thing in particular he recommended was having a system whereby one could request a journal article in one of the old journals located off-campus, and then have a pdf file of the scanned article sent to you via email - typically within a half day. He says this is a free service that Johns Hopkins provides as part of its library privileges. I strongly recommend considering something like this. This would make a tremendous difference to my own group's research productivity. He also felt the old journals available only on microfiche like J. Chem. Ed. are really of poor quality after printed out in the library.
- Too many sources have been moved off-campus (PASCAL) or made available only electronically. I can no longer count on walking through the stacks in a particular "area" to find inspiration and unexpected related titles.

Graduate Students:

- I use the library's subscriptions to journal quite often. However, I'm disappointed about the level of subscription services that you have. I

come from an undergraduate institution where basically any article from any journal in the last 30 years I could think of I could access, but here, I'm finding some severe limitations, like your Icarus subscription only goes back 8 years. Or I tried to access an online version of a Science article from 1993 but got an error saying that the subscription at CU does not cover that.

- Overall, I'm pretty satisfied. The people at the mathphysics library are always particularly courteous and helpful :) I have two big suggestions though. 1. Try to make your library catalog searchable by type of media (e.g. dvd, video cassette, cd, audiocassette). If this is possible to do now from the main library website, it doesn't seem entirely clear. 2. More availability of electronic versions of journals (particularly dating back further than currently) would be great!!!!
- 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.
- It would be nice if the libraries could provide access to on-line journal for every available back issues.
- we should have access to more online journals
- While I know this is impossible, a library open 24 hours a day would be optimal. I think the online articles search could also be improved; it seems with each new discipline, I need to learn an entirely new way to search for articles.
- I'm very happy with the level of service and the availability of materials at the CU libraries.
- quick hands-on classes for locating materials outside of CU on Chinook would be very useful
- Journals stored at Pascal off site are not very accessible. I find that the volume I want is there, while searching online in Chinook, and then have to call the library and talk to a librarian to get it transferred here. Why can't I request it online? I can place holds on books online, how about a "hold" to request a book from Pascal?
- It would be really nice if there were some terminals (to access the catalog) sprinkled through the stacks, especially in Norlin.
- The library are very helpful in hunting down obscure journals and almost always the CU library has the journal that I am looking for
- The Math/Physics library often closes too early especially on Fridays. Many graduate students work past 5 and on holidays and it would be nice to access those journals which are not available online. Also, Nature is unavailable online before 1997, which can be frustrating.
- More access 24 hrs a day would be good. The staff do an excellent job and should be paid more.

Undergraduates:

- I really use the online journals because I can print them from home and don't have to make expensive copies. It would be invaluable to subscribe to more of those.
- I think it is ridiculous that students can not bring food or drink into the libraries.
- Late fees for books on reserve are a little ridiculous. I think a warning for the first infraction would be more civil.
- Thanks. Keep the physics library alive!

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:

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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.

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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?