

LibQUAL+ 2013 Survey, UC Santa Barbara Library

Executive Summary

Introduction & Methodology

In 2013, the UC Santa Barbara Library administered **LibQUAL+**, a national web-based survey developed by the Association of Research Libraries that measures service quality. The purpose of the survey is to learn how well the Library meets the needs of the UCSB community and what improvements can be made to serve the population better.

Twenty-two core survey questions are grouped around three areas or dimensions: **Affect of Service**, **Information Control**, and **Library as Place**.

- *Affect of Service* questions seek to assess the knowledge and efficiency of Library personnel, as well as their willingness to help.
- *Information Control* questions assess the Library's collections and resources, and the extent to which the Library makes it easy for users to obtain information on their own.
- *Library as Place* questions ask users to assess Library facilities with respect to space and resources.

The LibQUAL+ instrument measures user expectations and perceptions. Each question asks users to mark three scores: one for their minimum standards, one for their desired level of service, and one for perceived service performance. The gap between the minimum score and the desired score is known as the “zone of tolerance.” The size of this area informs us of user perceptions. For example, if the overall gap of all scores is wide (meaning that the minimum score is very low and the desired score is very high), this implies that users are more tolerant about variations in the Library's ability to deliver on a particular service. On the other hand, if the gap is small, this implies that there are high expectations for the Library to hit the mark.

There are two fundamental gap scores in LibQUAL+ data. The first is *service superiority*, which is calculated by subtracting the ideal score from the perceived score. Service superiority measures the extent to which the Library is exceeding the expectations of our users. The second is *service adequacy*, which is calculated by subtracting the minimum score from the perceived score. Service adequacy measures the extent to which we are meeting the minimum expectations of our users.

“Perceived” scores are all scaled 1 to 9, with 9 being the most favorable. Both the gap scores (“Adequacy” = “Perceived” – “Minimum”; “Superiority” = “Perceived” – “Desired”) are scaled such that higher scores are more favorable. Thus, an *adequacy* gap score of +1.2 is better than an adequacy gap score of +1.0. A *superiority* gap score of -0.5 is better than a superiority gap score of -1.0. (For more information on how to read the radar chart results, please see page 10 of the report.)

LibQUAL+ Lite is a shorter version of the survey that uses item sampling methods to gather data on all twenty-two LibQUAL+ core questions and additional ‘local’ questions, while only requiring that each user respond to a subset of questions. A shorter survey encourages more participation and may provide more accurate results. UCSB Library added five local questions to measure concerns specific to our campus environment.

The survey was distributed via email lists provided by the Office of Institutional Research, Planning & Assessment to all faculty members and to a random sample of undergraduate students, graduate students, and staff. From the 5,569 actual surveys distributed, the Library received 605 usable responses

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from our four main user groups: 172 graduate students, 92 undergraduate students, 203 faculty members, and 138 staff. The overall survey response rate was 10.4%. (See page 24 of the report for a complete demographic breakdown.) It should be noted that the response rate among undergraduate students was too low for the results to be taken as representative.

By analyzing the gaps between levels of service, the Library has identified areas of high value to our respondents where we are not meeting minimum expectations and areas that present our greatest need for improvement. Such gap analysis data will inform the Library's planning and decision-making, and can be used as metrics to determine progress going forward.

During fall 2013, the Library will be inviting campus stakeholders to participate in focus groups and to help develop a roadmap for the Library's future. Results from several environmental scans will provide data to inform this process, including the Library Collection Space Planning Initiative and the LibQUAL+ survey.

Our intention is to repeat LibQUAL+ every two years in order to track user perceptions and Library progress.

Quantitative Analysis

In the tables below, the adequacy gap score is calculated by subtracting the rating for minimum expectations from the rating perceived on any given question, for each user. The superiority gap score is calculated by subtracting the rating for desired expectations from the rating perceived on any given question, for each user.

Top five areas (including local questions) where quality of service was perceived as best by approaching desired service-quality levels based on superiority gap scores per summary of all respondents:

Question Text	Service Dimension
• Giving users individual attention (AS-2)	Affect of Service
• Employees who are consistently courteous (AS-3)	Affect of Service
• Willingness to help users (AS-8)	Affect of Service
• Employees who deal with users in a caring fashion (AS-6)	Affect of Service
• Community space for group learning and group study (LP-5)	Library as Place

Although the general overall scores indicate that users are satisfied with most Library services, there are two service dimensions in which service-quality does not meet minimum expectations of specific user groups; these are Library as Place for undergraduate students and Information Control for faculty.

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Specific adequacy gap scores indicate room for improvement in the following areas:

Top areas (including local questions) requiring improvement based on adequacy gap scores by user group:

Undergraduate Students

Areas Requiring Improvement

- Ready access to computers / Internet / software
- The printed library materials I need for my work (IC-3)
- Community space for group learning and group study (LP-5)
- Ease and timeliness in getting materials from other libraries
- Library space that inspires study and learning (LP-1)

Service Dimension

Local question
Information Control
Library as Place
Local question
Library as Place

Graduate Students

Areas Requiring Improvement

- A library Web site enabling me to locate information (IC-2)
- Making electronic resources accessible from my home or office (IC-1)
- An online catalog that is user-friendly for finding materials
- Print and/or electronic journal collections I require for my work (IC-8)
- Quiet space for individual activities (LP-2)

Service Dimension

Information Control
Information Control

Local question
Information Control

Library as Place

Faculty

Areas Requiring Improvement

- An online catalog that is user-friendly for finding materials
- Easy-to-use access tools that allow me to find things (IC-6)
- Print and/or electronic journal collections I require for my work (IC-8)
- A library Web site enabling me to locate information (IC-2)
- The electronic information resources I need (IC-4)

Service Dimension

Local question
Information Control
Information Control

Information Control
Information Control

Staff

Areas Requiring Improvement

- Ready access to computers / Internet / software
- A secure and safe place
- An online catalog that is user-friendly for finding materials
- Modern equipment that lets me easily access needed information (IC-5)
- Dependability in handling users' service problems (AS-9)

Service Dimension

Local question
Local question
Local question
Information Control

Affect of Service

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Most valued services (including local questions) by user group based on desired service level ratings:

Undergraduate Students Areas Rated Most Desired

	Service Dimension
• Print and/or electronic journal collections I require for my work (IC-8)	Information Control
• Ready access to computers / Internet / software	Local question
• Library space that inspires study and learning (LP-1)	Library as Place
• Modern equipment that lets me easily access needed information (IC-5)	Information Control
• A comfortable and inviting location (LP-3)	Library as Place

Graduate Students Areas Rated Most Desired

	Service Dimension
• Making electronic resources accessible from my home or office (IC-1)	Information Control
• Print and/or electronic journal collections I require for my work (IC-8)	Information Control
• Ease and timeliness in getting materials from other libraries	Local question
• A secure and safe place	Local question
• Making information easily accessible for independent use (IC-7)	Information Control

Faculty Areas Rated Most Desired

	Service Dimension
• An online catalog that is user-friendly for finding	Local question
• A library Web site enabling me to locate information (IC-2)	Information Control
• Making electronic resources accessible from my home or office (IC-1)	Information Control
• Easy-to-use access tools that allow me to find things (IC-6)	Information Control
• The electronic information resources I need (IC-4)	Information Control

Staff Areas Rated Most Desired

	Service Dimension
• An online catalog that is user-friendly for finding materials	Local question
• A secure and safe place	Local question
• Easy-to-use access tools that allow me to find things (IC-6)	Information Control
• Readiness to respond to users' questions (AS-4)	Affect of Service
• Willingness to help users (AS-8)	Affect of Service

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Superiority gap scores:

Specific superiority gap scores indicate service-quality levels that exceed expectations in the following areas:

Graduate Students

Areas Where Perceived Ratings Exceed Desired

Service Dimension

- Community space for group learning and group study (LP-5)

Library as Place

Faculty

Areas Where Perceived Ratings Exceed Desired

Service Dimension

- Giving users individual attention (AS-2)
- Employees who are consistently courteous (AS-3)

Affect of Service

Affect of Service

Qualitative Analysis

LibQUAL+ provides participants the opportunity to comment at the conclusion of the survey, and the UCSB Library received 264 comments. These comments provide important insight into respondents' attitudes towards the Library and its resources; as such, they were analyzed for further understanding.

Two individuals from the Library staff coded the comments independently, and a third coder reviewed those codes to check for inter-coder reliability. Following this, the two sets of codes were reconciled and compiled into one master coded file.

The coded comments were then analyzed by LibQUAL+ dimension and by feeling state (whether the comment was positive, negative, or neutral) using frequency to determine which areas were of greatest importance to the respondents. The findings from this qualitative analysis can be found in the addendum.