**Assessment of Cook Library: The LibQual+® Survey Results**

Albert S. Cook Library used the LibQual+® survey instrument to measure users’ perceptions of the quality of our service and to identify the most important areas needing improvement. The results of our 2008 survey provided us with a rich source of data that needed to be communicated to many different audiences. Our assessment committee hoped to be able to present information in a multitude of formats which were clear and easy to understand.

We chose to use a satisfaction ranking tool to simplify quantitative data from our LibQual+® survey. NVivo, a program designed to understand qualitative data, was used to code the many comments we received as open-ended responses to our survey.
Albert S. Cook Library used the LibQual+® survey instrument developed by ARL libraries to measure users’ perceptions of the quality of our service and to identify the most important areas needing improvement. The results of our 2008 survey provided us with a rich source of data that needed to be communicated to many different audiences. Our assessment committee hoped to able to present information in a multitude of formats which were clear and easy to understand.

We chose to use a satisfaction ranking tool for our LibQUAL+® survey data and NVivo a program designed to understand qualitative data to code the many comments we received as open-ended responses to our survey.

**Desired Mean** (D-M or Satisfaction Ranking)

DM scores (or satisfaction rankings) are single score percentages that take into account three LibQual perceptions/expectation scores. This tool takes the data, establishes the zone of tolerance or the range of expectations, which is divided by the adequacy mean. Scores ranging from +30 through 0 and below are areas we would need/like to address. +30 through +50 would be an area that should be examined but does not have the sense of urgency that the 0-30 scores have. This method allows us to quickly size up our institution, compare with peer groups, and measure progress over time.

**NVivo®** (qualitative data analysis software from QSR International)

NVivo® software helps users organize and analyze unstructured data, including text, audio, video and images. We used NVivo to quantify data from the nearly 800 responses in the survey’s open comment field from our 2008 survey. Comments were coded according to “nodes” (or themes) and attributes (or sub-categories) based on the LibQual+® dimensions of service. We modified the taxonomy developed by Brown University Library to adapt to themes and associated keywords in our survey comments. Separate portions of the textual comments can be coded for different topics and also rated as positive or negative.
Bibliography


QSR International (Americas) Inc. 90 Sherman St., Cambridge, MA 02140.
Telephone: 617 491 1850. Fax: 617 812 7799. [www.qsrinternational.com](http://www.qsrinternational.com)


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LibQUAL+™ Survey

• ARL & TAMU Libraries - Pilot in 2000
• Based on SERVQUAL to assess service quality in the private sector
• Over 1,000 libraries – US, Canada, UK, Europe, Australia, South Africa
• Measures users’ expectations & perceptions of library’s collections, services & facilities

• **Gap analysis** methodology (minimum, desired, perceived levels of service)

• Results used for planning, resource allocation

• Fall 2006 Cook Library survey **extended hours, quiet study areas, more databases**
LibQUAL+™ Survey 2008

$n = 1,952$ Respondents

- Undergraduates: 72.81%
- Graduates: 11.56%
- Faculty: 9.77%
- Staff: 5.75%
% of Respondents by Discipline

- Business and Economics: 43.71%
- Communications: 5.16%
- Computer Science: 2.78%
- Education: 9.38%
- Health Professions: 10.92%
- Humanities: 10.05%
- Performing and Fine Arts: 5.62%
- Science/Math: 7.96%
- Social Science/Psychology: 4.43%
1,952 Respondents & 789 Comments

- Undergraduate: 1304
- Graduate: 207 (Number: 95, Comment: 32)
- Faculty: 175 (Number: 87, Comment: 32)
- Staff: 105 (Number: 32, Comment: 32)
3 Dimensions Measured

• **Affect of Service**
  – Employees who instill confidence in users
  – Willingness to help users

• **Library as Place**
  – A getaway for study, learning or research
  – Community space for group learning & group study

• **Information control**
  – Making information easily accessible for independent use
  – Print &/or e-journal collections I require for my work
Respondents indicate their ...

- **MINIMUM** Level of Service
- **DESIRED** Level of Service
- **PERCEIVED** Level of Service

*for each question*

Scale of 1 – 9

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Low</th>
<th>High</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
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<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### 22 core questions

- 9. Providing health information when and where I need it
- 10. The printed library materials I need for my work
- 11. A comfortable and inviting location
- 12. Employees teaching me how to access or manage information
- 13. Employees who have the knowledge to answer user questions
- 14. An environment that facilitates group study and problem solving
- 15. Employees who deal with users in a caring fashion
- 16. Modern equipment that lets me easily access needed information
- 17. Access to information resources that support patient care
- 18. Employees who understand the needs of their users
- 19. Easy-to-use access tools that allow me to find things on my own
- 20. A gateway for study, learning, or research
- 21. Willingness to help users
- 22. Making information easily accessible for independent use
- 23. Print and/or electronic journal collections I require for my work
- 24. Community space for group learning and group study

### 5 local questions

- 1. Employees who instill confidence in users
- 2. Making electronic resources accessible from my home or office
- 3. Library space that inspires study and learning
- 4. Giving users individual attention
- 5. A library Web site enabling me to locate information on my own

Text box for comments
Gap Analysis

*Importance of service AND satisfaction with service*

**Adequacy Gap:** Difference between perceived & minimum levels of service; Extent to which you are **meeting minimum expectations**

**Superiority Gap:** Difference between desired & perceived levels of service; Extent to which you are **exceeding desired expectations**
Gap Analysis Example

“When it comes to the electronic information resources I need, ....”

Scale of 1 – 9

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Undergraduates</th>
<th>Grad Students</th>
<th>Faculty</th>
<th>Staff</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Minimum Service Level</td>
<td>6.75</td>
<td>7.32</td>
<td>7.34</td>
<td>7.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Desired Service Level</td>
<td>8.07</td>
<td>8.29</td>
<td>8.37</td>
<td>7.91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perceived Service Level</td>
<td>7.33</td>
<td>7.24</td>
<td>7.15</td>
<td>7.33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adequacy Mean</td>
<td>.54</td>
<td>-.08</td>
<td>-0.19</td>
<td>.28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Superiority Mean</td>
<td>-0.74</td>
<td>-1.05</td>
<td>-1.22</td>
<td>-0.58</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Radar Chart – Service Quality Across 22 Questions
Undergraduates tell us ...

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Most important</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>#1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

What does this mean?
Improvement is needed in providing:
- Quiet space for individual activities
- A getaway for study, learning & research
Undergraduate Comments

- “Staff is very helpful. I sent an email request for help and had two responses within an hour 😊”

- “PLEASE more computers and TURN DOWN THE HEAT. I am almost always falling asleep in there.”

- “Quiet areas really need to be enforced!”

- “More computers, more group areas.”
Graduate students tell us ...

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Most Important</th>
<th>Satisfaction Ranking</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>#1 Making electronic resources available to my home or office</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#2 Library website enabling me to locate information on my own</td>
<td>-9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#3 Print and/or electronic journal collections I require for my work</td>
<td>-45%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#4 The electronic information resources I need</td>
<td>-8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#5 Easy-to-use access tools that allow me to find things on my own</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

What does this mean?
Improvement is needed in providing:
- Print and/or electronic journal collections
- An easy to navigate library website
- Electronic information resources
Graduate Students Comments

• “Towson has a great library staff!!”
• “...I don't like the website interface. It requires too many clicks to get what I want. “
• “Many of the journals do not allow full access to articles, only abstracts. This needs to be improved.”
• “Print resources (e.g., books, journals) I give a weak grade, but I guess it is to be expected with budget cuts.”
Faculty tell us ...

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Most Important</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>#1 Making electronic resources accessible from my home or office</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#2 Print and/or electronic journal collections I require for my work</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#3 A library Web site enabling me to locate information on my own</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#4 The electronic information resources I need</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#5 Employees who have the knowledge to answer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Satisfaction Ranking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-70%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-49%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>32%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**What does this mean?**

Improvement is needed in providing:
- More print/electronic journal collections
- An easy to navigate library website
- Electronic information resources
Faculty Comments

• “Web page needs to be redesigned to make it easier to find information.”

• “I would really, really like to see the library's print and online collection enhanced, especially books and journals in scholarly fields.”

• “Great support help when working off-site. Wonderful support in the classroom.”
Staff tell us ...

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Most Important</th>
<th>Satisfaction Ranking</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>#1 Employees who are consistently courteous</td>
<td>59%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#2 Easy-to-use access tools that allow me to find things on my own</td>
<td>29%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#3 Willingness to help users</td>
<td>80%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#4 A library Web site enabling me to locate information on my own</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#5 Dependability in handling users' service problems</td>
<td>46%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

What does this mean?

Improvement is needed in providing:
• A website that is easy to navigate
• Easy-to-use access tools
Staff Comments

• “The library was most helpful in tracking information regarding my father who worked here 83 years ago.”

• “Web pages are VERY confusing. Difficult to navigate, too much information on page.”

• “Librarians need to be available and visible on all floors of the library to provide assistance.”
The top five things *we do best are*:

- Giving users individual attention
- Willingness to help users
- Employees who deal with users in a caring fashion
- Readiness to respond to questions
- Employees who instill confidence in users
The top 5 areas for *improvement are*:

- Quiet space for individual activities
- Print or electronic journal collections I need for my work
- The printed library materials I need for my work
- Library space that inspires study and learning
- Community space for group learning and group study
In the works ...

• Enforce cell phone & quiet areas
• Improve signage
• Redesign library website
• Expand multimedia lab
• Move bound journals

Next priorities ...

• Improve HVAC
• Add more electronic journals & books
• Renovate 2nd floor
• Add group study rooms
Further Assessment

- Student Advisory Committee
- Library Advisory Committee
- Focus groups
- Usability studies
- Feedback links
- UIE information literacy assessment
- Continual assessment analysis, planning, priorities, resource allocation
More Details

• **FAQ’s**
  
  [http://cooklibrary.towson.edu/LibQual/libqualFAQ.cfm](http://cooklibrary.towson.edu/LibQual/libqualFAQ.cfm)

• **Executive Summary**
  
  [http://cooklibrary.towson.edu/LibQual/2008/ExecutiveSummary.pdf](http://cooklibrary.towson.edu/LibQual/2008/ExecutiveSummary.pdf)

• **Complete Report**
  
  [http://cooklibrary.towson.edu/LibQual/2008/TowsonUniversity.pdf](http://cooklibrary.towson.edu/LibQual/2008/TowsonUniversity.pdf)
finis
Starbucks Wonderful Staff RESPONSIVE KNOWLEDGEABLE SERVICE 24/7-For Exams Keeps Me Informed Caring Readiness To Respond Super Helpful Librarians Understands Needs Using Information Community Space Evaluate Information FRIENDLY Instill Confidence Teaching Great Staff Late Hours Great Experience INVITING Individual Attention Research Willingness SUPPORT