

LIBQUAL+™ IN AN ESTABLISHED ASSESSMENT PROGRAM: The University of Washington Libraries Experience

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University of Washington



- **Located in beautiful Seattle metro population 2.5 million**
- **Comprehensive research university**
 - 27,000 undergraduate students
 - 11,000 graduate and professional students
 - 4,000 research and teaching faculty
- **1st among U.S. public univ. in federal research funds (\$800 million plus annually)**
- **Large comprehensive research library system**
 - \$30 million+ annual budget
 - 140 librarians

University of Washington Libraries

Assessment Methods Used

- Large scale user surveys every 3 years (“triennial survey”): 1992, 1995, 1998, 2001, 2004
 - All faculty
 - Sample of undergraduate and graduate students
 - 2004 survey Web-based (with paper option for faculty)
- In-library use surveys every 3 years beginning 1993
- **LibQUAL+™ in 2000, 2001, 2002, 2003**
- Focus groups (annually since 1998)
- Observation (guided and non-obtrusive)
- Usability
- E-metrics
- Information about assessment program available at:
<http://www.lib.washington.edu/assessment/>

UW Triennial Library Use Survey

Number of Respondents and Response Rate 1992-2004

Core Questions deal with needs, importance, use, and satisfaction

Large number of respondents allows for detailed analysis within groups

	2004	2001	1998	1995	1992
Faculty	1560 40%	1345 36%	1503 40%	1359 31%	1108 28%
Grad Student	627 40%	597 40%	457 46%	409 41%	560 56%
Undergrad	502 25%	497 25%	787 39%	463 23%	407 41%

What We've Learned About/From the UW Community

- Libraries remain very important to learning and research
- High satisfaction level among all groups
- Library needs/use patterns vary by and within academic areas and groups (e.g. faculty and undergrads)
- Library as place remains important to undergraduates, less so for graduates, least important for faculty
- Faculty and students use libraries differently than librarians think they do (or prefer them too)
- Library/information environment is perceived as too complex; users find simpler ways (Google) to get info
- Remote access is preferred and has changed the way faculty and students work and use libraries

Why LibQUAL+™ at UW?

- Gain experience with a Web-based survey tool
- Work with a less costly survey method utilizing a standardized survey instrument
- Identify service gaps
- Compare results with peer institutions
- Track user satisfaction and needs during non-triennial survey years
- Complement existing assessment program
- Participate in a national assessment activity

LibQUAL+™

Considerations in Analyzing and Using Results

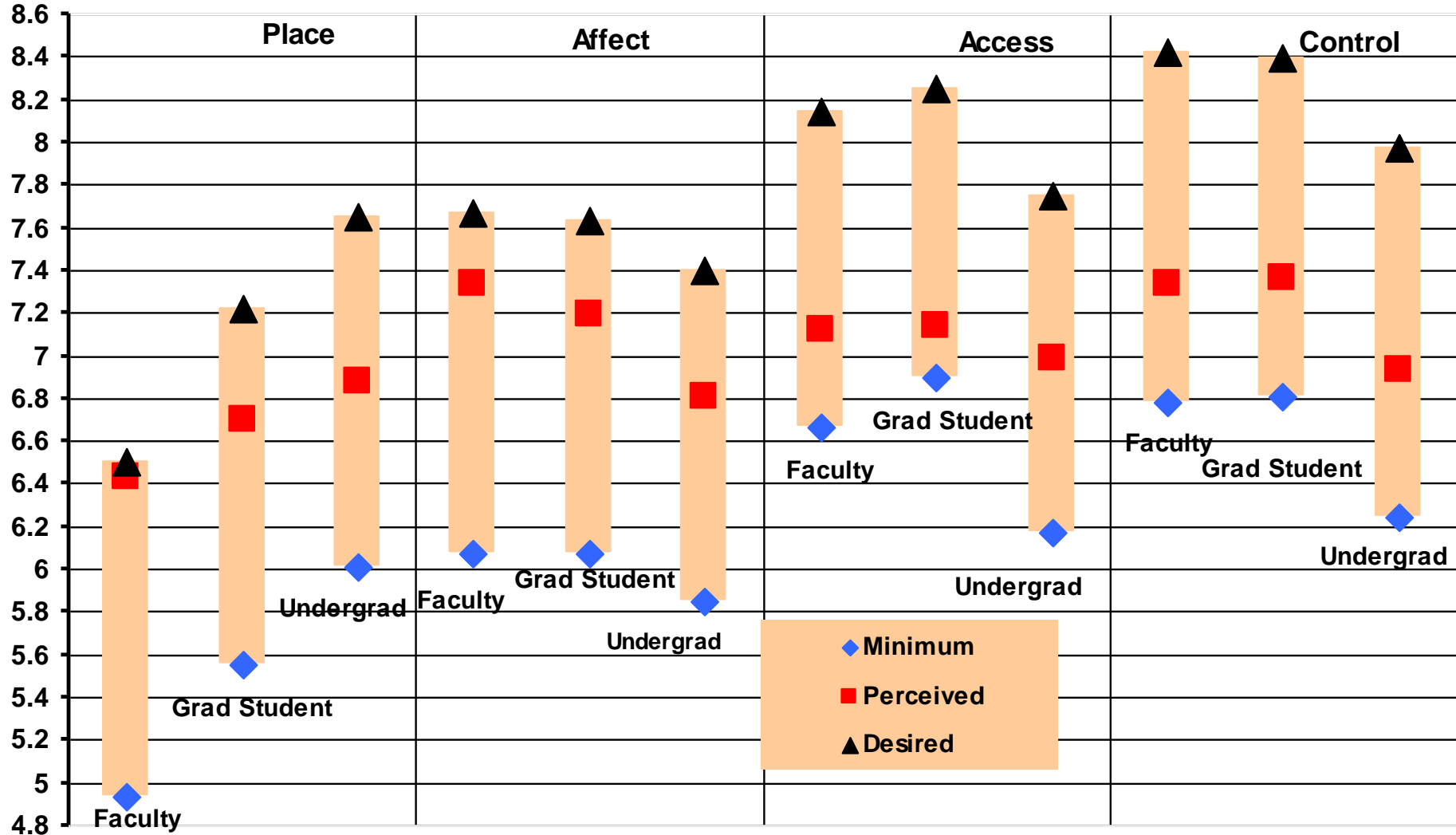
- Responses based on user expectations and experiences
 - May vary within/between institutions and groups
- Composition of respondent group varies and differs from total population
 - Cannot use an overall “institutional” score
- Number of responses for each group are critical
 - Large response allows analyses at the subgroup level
- Standard result sets may be difficult to analyze and use
 - Using the complete data set (with a statistical analysis package) greatly enhances analysis and understanding.
- Comments are what they are; add context and meaning

Placing LibQUAL+™ Data in Context

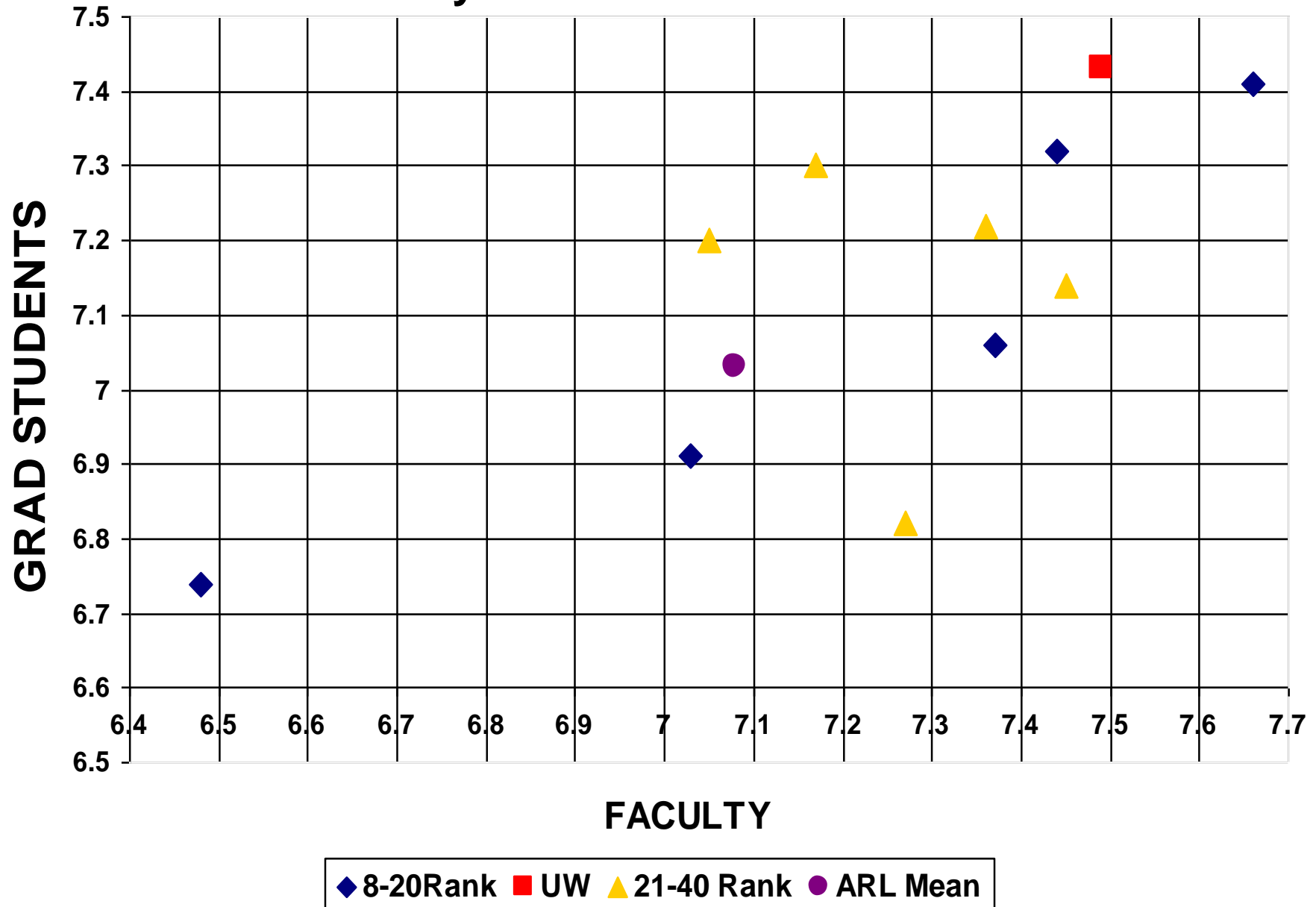
Visualizing Comparisons

- **Internal by group and dimension or question**
 - How do desired, perceived, and minimum vary by group
 - What do we do well (largest positive adequacy gaps)
 - Where do we need to improve (largest negative superiority gaps)
- **External by group and dimension or question**
 - Compare desired, perceived and minimum between UW & ARL faculty
 - Compare importance and service most positive adequacy gaps with peers
 - Compare importance and least positive (or negative) service adequacy gap with peers
- **Satisfaction**
 - LibQUAL+™ comparisons with ARL and selected peers
 - Compare UW Triennial Survey and LibQUAL+™

LibQUAL+™ 2003: UW Mean Scores by Dimension & Group



LibQUAL+™ 2003 Peer Comparison (ARL Top 40): Overall Faculty and Grad *Student* Satisfaction



LibQUAL+™ 2003 Service Affect:

UW/ARL *Positive Adequacy Gaps*

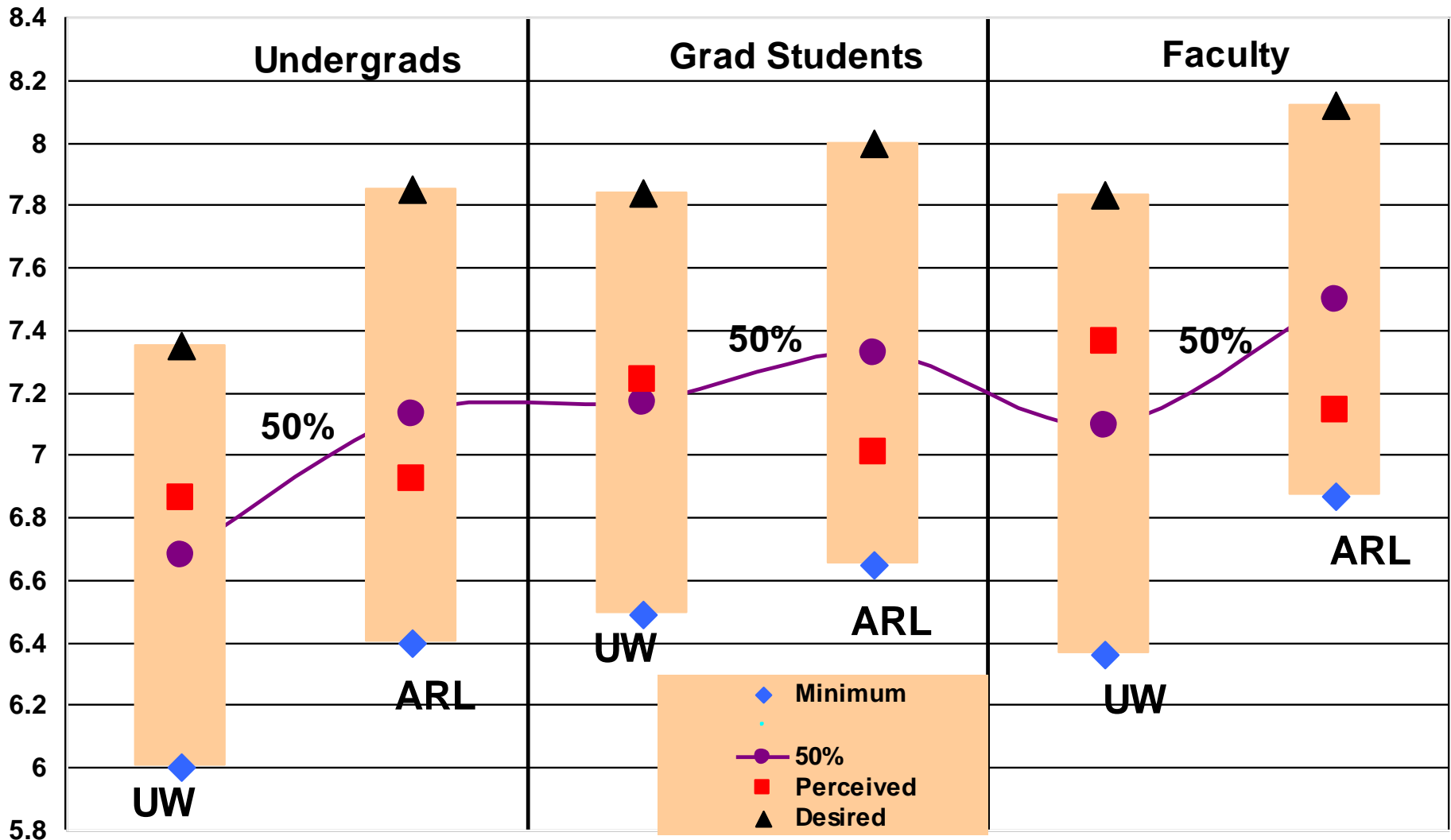
(Percent equals distance Perceived is between Minimum and Desired)

Affect of Service		Faculty		Grad		Undergrad	
Employees who instill confidence in users	UW ARL	1.55 0.79	81% 44%	1.34 0.81	65% 43%	1.19 0.85	61% 42%
Readiness to respond to users questions	UW ARL	1.22 0.62	79% 43%	1.10 0.64	73% 45%	0.97 0.64	60% 42%
Willingness to help users	UW ARL	1.24 0.65	82% 50%	1.18 0.65	82% 46%	0.82 0.67	55% 44%
Dependability in handling user's service problems	UW ARL	1.01 0.27	69% 22%	0.75 0.36	56% 27%	0.86 0.51	64% 35%
Employees who have the knowledge to answer user questions	UW ARL	1.11 0.44	76% 33%	0.78 .45	54% 34%	0.84 0.54	54% 38%
Employees who understand the needs of their users	UW ARL	1.08 0.46	72% 35%	0.88 0.57	62% 41%	1.03 0.66	66% 44%

LibQUAL+™ 2003: UW and ARL

Dependability in Handling User's Service Problems

Goal: Perceived to be at least 50% between minimum and desired



LibQUAL+™ 2003: UW Largest Service Superiority

Negative Gaps for Each Group Along With Desired Means

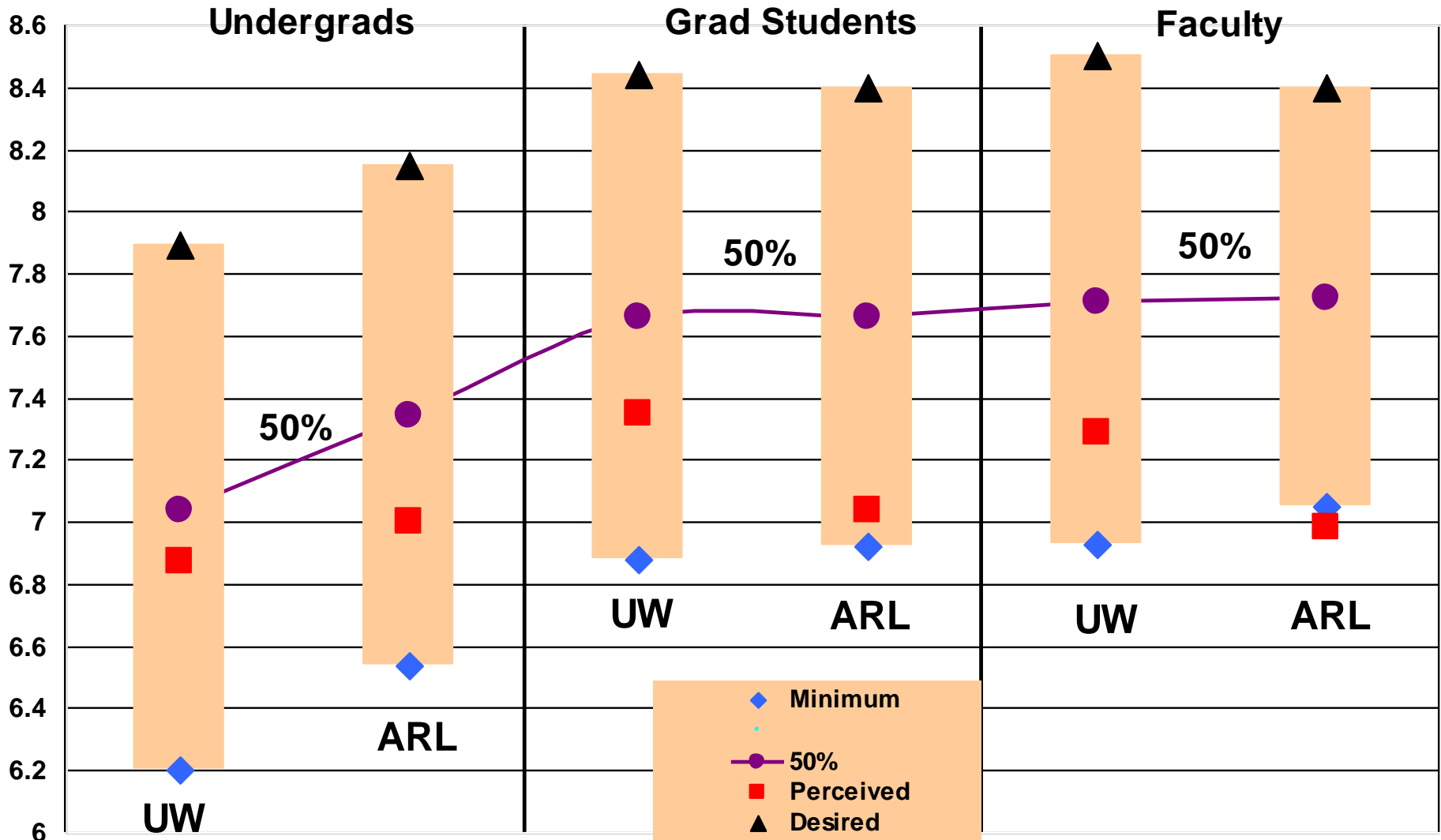
(No negative service adequacy gaps)

INFORMATION CONTROL	Faculty	Grad	Undergrad
Easy to use access tools	-1.38 25% 8.37	-1.19 36% 8.38	-1.27 32% 7.89
Electronic resources accessible remotely	-1.29 7% 8.68	-1.27 19% 8.58	-1.31 19% 8.02
Make information easily accessible	-0.93 37% 8.34	-0.87 42% 8.27	-1.01 43% 7.90
Library web site let's me find info I need	-1.14 30% 8.53	-1.07 30% 8.55	-0.91 48% 7.85
Electronic information resources I need	-1.28 12% 8.57	-1.08 21% 8.42	-0.61 58% 7.79

LibQUAL+™ 2003: UW and ARL

5 Information Control Questions

Goal: Perceived to be at least 50% between minimum and desired



LibQUAL+™ Follow-Up: Internal Library Marketing

- **Improve services**
 - Web site usability
 - Accelerate shift to online resources
 - Enhance resource discovery tools for undergrads
 - Improve remote access via proxy server
- **Recognize staff**
 - Positive service affect ratings
 - Comments

Assessment Use in External Marketing: Librarian Recruitment

- Positive assessment results used as recruitment tool.
The following appears in UW librarian job ads:
 - An integrated planning and **assessment process** that makes the user-centered library not just a goal, but a reality
 - Students and faculty rank the Libraries as the **most important source of information** for their work.
 - The Libraries receives the **highest satisfaction rating** of any academic service on graduating senior surveys
 - The Libraries commended in the University's 2003 accreditation review for commitment to planning and **assessment of service**

Assessment Use in External Marketing: Working With the Campus Community

- Thank respondents publicly
- Highlight changes made as a result of input
- Follow-up with other assessment methods such as focus groups, surveys
- “In Their Own Words” – Use their language (from comments and qualitative follow-ups), not ours, to speak with community (Also U. of Wisconsin)
- Use by development for fund-raising (maintain excellence)

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Another Tool in the Assessment Box

- Cost-effective, easy to apply, complements other assessment efforts, consistent with other survey results
- Ability to identify service “gaps” adds important context
- Helpful to know what you’re doing right and where improvement needed
- Opportunity to compare results with peer institutions is valuable and provides broader measure
- Can be an essential part of community assessment which is foundation for marketing