IS THERE LIFE AFTER LibQUAL+™?
LibQUAL+™ In An Established Assessment Program at the University of Washington

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University of Washington Libraries
“Is There Life After LibQUAL+™” Panel
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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

  – 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
• Focus groups (annually since 1998)
• Observation (guided and non-obtrusive)
• Usability
• 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

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<thead>
<tr>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Faculty</td>
<td>1560</td>
<td>1345</td>
<td>1503</td>
<td>1359</td>
<td>1108</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>36%</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>28%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grad Student</td>
<td>627</td>
<td>597</td>
<td>457</td>
<td>409</td>
<td>560</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>46%</td>
<td>41%</td>
<td>56%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Undergrad</td>
<td>502</td>
<td>497</td>
<td>787</td>
<td>463</td>
<td>407</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>39%</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>41%</td>
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</table>
What We’ve Learned About/From the UW Community

• Libraries are essential to learning and research
• High satisfaction level among all groups
• Library needs/use patterns vary by academic area/group
• Library as place remains important to undergraduates
• 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+™

• **Take Care in Making Comparisons**
LibQUAL+™ 2003: UW Mean Scores by Dimension & Group

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Place</th>
<th>Affect</th>
<th>Access</th>
<th>Control</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Faculty</td>
<td>Grad Student</td>
<td>Undergrad</td>
<td>Faculty</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Undergrad</td>
<td>Faculty</td>
<td>Grad Student</td>
<td>Undergrad</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Undergrad</td>
<td>Grad Student</td>
<td>Faculty</td>
<td>Undergrad</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Minimum
Desired
Perceived

Mean Scores

- Place: Faculty 5.8, Undergrad 6.2, Grad Student 6.4
- Affect: Faculty 7.4, Undergrad 7.8, Grad Student 8.0
- Access: Faculty 8.0, Undergrad 8.4, Grad Student 8.6
- Control: Faculty 8.8, Undergrad 9.2, Grad Student 9.4
LibQUAL+™ 2003 Peer Comparison (ARL Top 40):
Overall Faculty and Grad Student Satisfaction

FACULTY

GRAD STUDENTS

8-20 Rank UW 21-40 Rank ARL Mean
## LibQUAL+™ 2003 Service Affect: UW/ARL Positive Adequacy Gaps
(Percent equals distance Perceived is between Minimum and Desired)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Affect of Service: Most Important</th>
<th>Faculty</th>
<th>Grad</th>
<th>Undergrad</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dependability in handling user’s service problems</td>
<td>UW 1.01 ARL 0.27</td>
<td>69% 22%</td>
<td>0.75 56% 0.36 27%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employees who have the knowledge to answer user questions</td>
<td>UW 1.11 ARL 0.44</td>
<td>76% 33%</td>
<td>0.78 54% 0.45 34%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employees who understand the needs of their users</td>
<td>UW 1.08 ARL 0.46</td>
<td>72% 35%</td>
<td>0.88 62% 0.57 41%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
LibQUAL+™ 2003: UW and ARL
Dependability in Handling User's Service Problems
Goal: Perceived to be at least 50% between Minimum and Desired

Undergrads
Grad Students
Faculty

UW
ARL
Faculty

Minimum
50%
Perceived
Desired
# LibQUAL+™ 2003: Information Control

**Largest Service Superiority Negative Gaps by Group**

(Percent equals distance Perceived is between Minimum and Desired)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>INFORMATION CONTROL</th>
<th>Faculty</th>
<th>Grad</th>
<th>Undergrad</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Easy to use access tools</td>
<td>-1.38</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>-1.19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Electronic resources accessible remotely</td>
<td>-1.29</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>-1.27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Make information easily accessible</td>
<td>-0.93</td>
<td>37%</td>
<td>-0.87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Library web site let’s me find info I need</td>
<td>-1.14</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>-1.07</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Electronic information resources I need</td>
<td>-1.28</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>-1.08</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
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 ratings for service affect
  – Comments
Assessment Use in External Marketing: Librarian Recruitment

• Positive assessment results used as recruitment tool. The following appears in UW librarian job ads:
  – **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 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
• Use by development for fund-raising (maintain excellence)
LibQUAL+™
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