Summary Results from the LibQUAL+^{TM} Survey DRAFT
Boise State University, 2012

WHAT IS LIBQUAL+^{TM}?

LibQUAL+^{TM} is a standardized survey of user experiences with library services. Developed and administered under the auspices of the Association of Research Libraries (ARL), it has been used at over 1000 libraries and provides detailed data on users' perceptions and desires about their libraries. This survey has been administered to library users at Boise State University biennially since 2006.

LibQUAL+^{TM} asks respondents to rate 27 factors in three categories:

- Public service
- Access to information (collections and tools)
- Library space.

Respondents are asked to rate each of 27 questions on a scale of 1-9 (9 being the highest) in three areas:

1. Their *minimum* level of acceptable service;
2. Their *perceived* level of service, as currently provided;
3. Their *desired* level of service.

The results provide information about how the library measures up against users' priorities, how the library is performing compared to expectations, and where improvements are desired. Comparing survey results over time provides insights into changing perceptions.

RESPONSES

Respondents to the 2012 survey at Boise State University included:

- 53 undergraduate students
- 38 graduate students
- 125 faculty

Our sample included 2000 randomly selected students (both undergraduate and graduate students were included in the pool from which students were selected) and all faculty and staff. The 2010 survey response was higher for undergraduate students (104), lower for graduate students (22), and lower for faculty (111). In coming years, the library will try to mitigate for growing survey fatigue by conducting the survey earlier in the semester and possibly using a shorter version of the survey.

The following summary of responses refers to the full report, which is available here: http://library.boisestate.edu/about/facts/libqual/. The 2010, 2008 and 2006 reports and their summaries can be accessed at the same location.

UNDERGRADUATE STUDENT RESPONSES

What matters to undergraduate students?

2012 undergraduate respondents ranked the importance of the three categories of library service in this order, with 1 being the most important:

1. Access to information (collections and tools)
2. Library space
3. Public service

The following services were indicated as most vital for their needs:

1. Independent access to information
2. A useful library website
3. Quiet space for individual activities

What do undergraduate students perceive about the Library?

Undergraduate responses indicated that Albertsons Library is most successful in the following three areas:

- Employees who provide individual attention
- Printed materials needed to complete work
- Employees who have the knowledge to answer user questions

While the Library is meeting minimum expectations, responses in the following areas suggest a need for improvement:

- Providing a quiet environment
- Offering easy-to-access tools
- Making information easily accessible for independent use.

GRADUATE STUDENT RESPONSES

What matters to graduate students?

2012 graduate respondents ranked the importance of the three categories of library service in this order:

1. Access to information (collections and tools)
2. Public service
3. Library space

The following services were indicated as most vital for their needs:

- Access to electronic resources from home or office
- Journal collections
- Electronic information resources

What do graduate students perceive about the Library?

Graduate respondents indicated that Albertsons Library is most successful in the following three areas:

1. Employees who are ready to respond to questions
2. Employees who understand the needs of their users
3. Employees who are courteous

Responses in the following areas suggest a need for improvement:

1. Journal collections
2. Quiet space
3. A getaway for research and study

FACULTY RESPONSES

What matters to faculty?

2012 faculty respondents ranked the importance of the three categories of library service in this order:

1. Access to information (collections and tools)
2. Public service
3. Library space

The following services were indicated as most vital for their needs:

- Journal collections
- A useful library website
- Electronic information resources.

What does the faculty perceive about the Library?

Faculty respondents indicated that Albertsons Library is most successful in the following three areas:

- Providing group study spaces
- Providing a gateway for study and research
- Employees who are courteous

Responses in the following areas suggest a need for improvement:

- Journal collections
- A useful library website
- Electronic information resources

CHANGES FROM LIBQUAL+™ 2010

The importance rankings for the three categories of Library service remained the same for all three groups of respondents. All three groups value information access at the top. Undergraduates ranked the library space as second for both surveys, while graduate students and faculty find public service to be more important.

Undergraduate student quality ratings have risen with each survey, with perceptions of Library public service increasing the most in this two year period. Undergraduate respondents' minimum expectations of the library increased from 2010 to 2012, while their desired levels of service remained fairly static.

Graduate student quality rankings for public service and information control rose between 2010 and 2012, while the score for library space went down somewhat. Graduate student expectations have gone up, with minimum and desired levels of service increasing in the two year period, most notably in the area of information access.

Faculty quality rankings for 2012 have increased slightly since 2010 in the areas of information control and library space. The public service score remained exactly the same. Expectations increased for information access and public service, while those for the library space decreased by a small amount.

DISCUSSION

Review of the 2012 survey results reveals three key pieces of information:

- The Library excels in the area of public service
- There is a tension between the need for group study space versus quiet study areas
- Easy, remotely accessible, and comprehensive information access remain the primary desires of our library patrons

The Library's excellence in public service is the result of a conscious effort put forth by administrators as well as library faculty and staff. Employees are empowered to make policy exceptions when necessary, and high quality service is both expected and rewarded. Changes are made rapidly in response to user need, for example implementing extended and overnight hours before and during final exams.

In the past year, the Library has been working to make the building more inviting, and has succeeded to the point where it's a bustling center of campus intellectual (and sometimes social) activity. This, in addition to housing one of the largest computer labs on campus and the limits of building space, make it difficult to juggle the competing priorities for group study and quiet study space. While the third and fourth floors are designated for quiet study, both survey results and comments make it clear that more should be done to ensure quiet areas for students and faculty. Increased patrols, signage indicating that complaints can be text-messaged to librarians, and other measures are being considered.

Information access is an unremitting issue for University libraries, since very few have the budget to purchase all journals, and we rely on multiple vendors for the interfaces to access these materials, which creates a complex system in which to discover and use information. The Library is making a concerted effort to meet patron needs. We've increased access to full-text article databases exponentially in the past several years; a system has been put in place to link users to the full text of articles wherever in our collection they might be; and Interlibrary Loan speeds and ease of use have both been improved greatly. Most recently, a Digital Access Librarian was hired, and with this expertise the Library will work further to increase the usability of our online resources.