



LibQUAL+ 2003

Survey and Results Summary

During the Spring 2003 semester, the University Library at Sonoma State joined 309 other academic libraries nationwide in implementing a web-based user survey, known as LibQUAL+, in order to assess faculty and student perceptions of the Library.

What is LibQUAL+?

LibQUAL+ is a survey instrument designed to help libraries understand user perceptions of service quality. It also provides libraries with comparable assessment information from peer institutions. LibQUAL+, now in its fourth year, was developed by the Association of Research Libraries and the Texas A&M Library System. The U.S. Department of Education funded the project.

What does LibQUAL+ measure?

The survey measures patron perceptions of library facilities, collections, services, and service delivery. The dimensions evaluated include

- Library as Place (space for learning, study, and research)

- Affect of Service (responsiveness, empathy, reliability)
- Access to Information (adequacy of journal collections, print materials, access to materials, etc.)
- Personal Control (effective website, learning tools, instruction leading to independent use)

How was LibQUAL+ implemented at SSU?

The survey was conducted via the Library website from March 17 through April 5, 2003. Participants were self-selected after learning about the survey from promotional activities targeted to all constituents at regular intervals prior to implementation. Promotional activities included letters and flyers, newsletter articles, personal outreach, promotion on the Library website, and email solicitation. Multiple emails were sent to approximately 750 faculty and 6,311 students.

Response Rate

The Library collected 484 surveys. The total surveys completed are representative of the SSU demographic profile of students and faculty.

User Group	Total Responses	% of the SSU population
Undergraduates	239	5%
Graduate Students	107	19%
Faculty	102	14%

Additional written comments were received from 273 of 484 respondents.

What were the overall findings?

Library as Place

Undergraduates, graduate students, and faculty indicate that the building exceeds their expectations as a place for study, learning, and research.

Affect of Service

SSU undergraduates, graduate students, and faculty feel that we are meeting their expectations in the area of service delivery. It is perceived that Library employees are consistently courteous, deliver service in a caring fashion, and are knowledgeable about the information needs of users.

Access to Information

It is perceived by SSU graduate students and faculty that the Library does not meet their expectations for print and electronic journal collections or printed library material. Undergraduate perceptions of the collection are more favorable.

Personal Control

Undergraduates, graduate students, and faculty feel that the Library provides easy-to-use tools for convenient, independent research. The perception was held by all respondents that the Library provides an adequate number of computers. There is an indication that some users are unaware that electronic resources are accessible from their home/office.

SSU LibQUAL+ Participant Comments

“The Library at SSU was one of the features of the campus which swayed my decision to study here...The classes that the Library offers are also very helpful for students learning about good research techniques...I’m glad I chose SSU.” - Undergraduate, Social Science, 18-22, Female

“Thank you so much for all the computers. I do not have a pc and I was concerned that it would be a problem. It was such a relief to find such a beautiful and well-equipped Library. I am happy.” - Undergraduate, Science/Math, 46-65, Female

“I absolutely love the Library except for one thing: Students are always in need of the Library around the clock. Longer library hours should be a priority.” - Undergraduate, Business, 18-22, Male

“...A wonderful staff and state-of-the-art facilities—although greatly valued—cannot make up for a paucity of materials.” - Graduate student, Humanities, 46-65, Female

“I enjoy the Library very much. I credit the presence of a great learning facility as an aid to my student success.” - Undergraduate, Other, 23-30, Male

“We have wonderful facilities, but the staff is what makes the Library so exceptional. We need more support to purchase books and new technology/ materials so that we can remain current in our disciplines.” - Faculty, Performing & Fine Arts, 46-65, Female

LibQUAL+ Participant Perceptions: SSU Compared to All Other Participating Colleges & Universities

