

LibQUAL+ in 2008

Background

- § One measure used in a larger, varied assessment program
- § Second time used here; first time in 2004
- § This is a standardized survey instrument that is used by over 1,000 libraries around the world, and the only instrument that allows us to compare ourselves to other libraries
- § 22 core questions that cannot be altered, plus ability to comment on each question and a free-text commenting opportunity
- § Measures users' perceptions of quality, both what they believe we should be producing and how they compare that to what we actually do
- § Three areas of measurement: services, collections, physical environment

Description of 2008 measurement

- § Very low response rate: of 5,319 invitations sent, 303 completed survey
- § Only completed surveys are tallied; our completion count was about 40% (roughly 750)
- § Only 44 of 1152 undergraduates invited completed the survey; by contrast, just under 600 completed an in-house survey in 2007 used for our self-study
- § In 2004, over 1,000 surveys were completed
- § 2008 results too low to be statistically significant; however, results clustered in expected patterns and some useful information may be elicited

What did we learn?

- § Perceptions of the quality of library services rose across the board from 2004 and in predictable patterns
- § Expectations rose as well: respondents want more from us... a good thing (they look to us for valuable services and resources)
- § Affect of service—the level of service expected from staff and how well we deliver—was very high: people feel that they get very good service from the Library
- § Students, especially undergraduates, feel that our online information tools are overly complex
- § Faculty want improvements in the collections
- § Space issues are exactly what one expects: undergraduates want more 24-hour study space, graduate students want more comfortable and quiet surroundings, faculty think that things are fine

What don't we know?

- § We don't know **why** people answered as they did; for example, we heard that at some people are not able to access online resources at home... does that mean that the VPN does not work for them, or that they are not aware of it, or that they live in an area not served by an Internet carrier?
- § We aren't sure why the response rate was so low, although the start/completion ratio suggests that people don't like this complex instrument. Frequent surveying and timing of our measurement are also possible reasons for the low response rate

What will we do with the results?

- § Even though our results are not statistically significant, they underline many of the perceptions we here from our users, and will be added to our working data
- § The next generation library systems report is helping us think and work through the complexity of the online tools we offer, as noted in the survey
- § We will be looking at ways to be more selective at a very granular level with the resources that we add to the collections, spending our dollars more carefully and using new tools for collection analysis to help us identify weak spots in the collections as well as the resources needed to repair them
- § We will be doing much more collaborative collection development with our BorrowDirect partners, with whom we already have an excellent resource-sharing system that users tell us they love
- § Creating more space for studying is something that the Library is working on, but the multiple steps needed to produce the space will take some time to accomplish