“Librarians are my favorite people to deal with on campus. Their service ethic is so strong that they’ve been able to overcome the university culture that is no longer that way. I love dealing with the librarians.”

Library User Survey Respondent
Fall 2000
UC Berkeley Fall 2000
Library User Survey

UCB Library User Survey Team • LUST
appointed December 1999

Suzanne Calpestri, Dennis Lieu (Co-Chair)
Pat Davitt Maughan (Co-Chair),
Nick Robinson & Charlotte Rubens
Goals – Fall 2000 Library User Survey

- improve library services
- determine satisfaction with basic library services
- identify desired changes to basic library services
- identify new services desired
- identify needed space & equipment improvements
Goals – Fall 2000 Library User Survey

- document usage patterns
- document use of electronic resources
- collect demographic data
- seek input on both central campus and subject specialty libraries
“The traditional orientation of measuring the quality of an academic library in quantifiable terms of its collection and use no longer offers attainable goals; nor does it adequately address the campus community’s demand for information.” (1)

- measure of library quality based solely on collection size has become obsolete model
- ARL sponsoring a host of New Measures Initiatives: E-Metrics, Learning Outcomes Initiative, LIBQUAL
Measuring Institutional Quality

- alternate approaches have emerged in the business sector where organizations are increasingly evaluated in terms of their service quality
- few libraries nationwide exploring methods to assess service quality
  - library studies had focused on “information seeking behavior” or generally proclaimed user satisfaction
  - no widely accepted user-based criteria for measuring library service quality
Satisfaction v. Service Quality

- **Satisfaction**: “the emotional reaction to a specific transaction or service encounter.” (2)
  - often a short term measure
  - not always clear what it’s measuring

- **Service Quality**: what customers expect v. how well they perceive an organization performs in providing a given service
  - evolves over time
  - focus – reducing gap between customer expectation and perception of services delivered
Measuring Satisfaction

- drawback to using satisfaction alone as a measure of library performance
- little insight into what contributes to dissatisfaction or the problems that require fixing
SERVQUAL is among the most popular assessment tools for measuring service quality.

Pioneering work by the marketing research team of Berry, Parasuraman & Zeithaml:
- A conceptual framework – the “gaps model of service quality”
- A measurement instrument – SERVQUAL
introduced in 1988, SERVQUAL studies have been replicated in a range of service industries – credit card, health care, retail banking, securities brokerage, advertising, product repair and maintenance, etc.

– also with professional services – medical, legal and dental practices
SERVQUAL instrument

- Usually consists of paired statements
  - first set measures customer expectations by asking how important each item is for an excellent service
  - second measures respondent’s perceptions of level of service provided
  - the differences between the ratings are averaged to calculate the SERVQUAL gap
**FALL 2000 LIBRARY USER SURVEY**

*University of California, Berkeley*

Do you currently use the UC Berkeley libraries either on or off campus (including using e-journals and online databases)?  

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

If you answered “No,” please stop now and return this questionnaire in the enclosed envelope.

**Section A • Directions**

Based on your experience, think about the kind of library that would deliver excellent quality service, one which you would be pleased to use. Using the first column, indicate the extent to which you think such a library would possess the feature described in each of the following statements. If you feel a feature is “not at all essential” to an excellent library, circle number “1” in the first column. If you feel a feature is “absolutely essential” to excellent libraries, circle “7” in the first column. If your feelings are less strong, circle one of the numbers in the middle. Using the second column, indicate to what degree you think the library you most often use at UC Berkeley provides such a service.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Feature</th>
<th>An Excellent Library...</th>
<th>UC Berkeley Library...</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Not at all Essential</td>
<td>Absolutely Essential</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. The library’s online library catalog is a clear source of information about all material in its collections.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. The library provides easy access to its online library catalog and other electronic resources from outside the library.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Materials in the library are usually in their proper places on the shelves or can be accounted for.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. The library’s Web page contains correct and useful information about library services and materials.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
SERVQUAL measures not only how well a library performs on a given item, but how important that item is to the respondent.

Through numerous SERVQUAL studies, five dimensions have been consistently ranked by customers as most important to service quality.
5 Dimensions of Service Quality

■ Reliability
  – ability to perform the promised service dependably and accurately
  – examples – accuracy in billing, maintaining records correctly, delivering service at the promised time and with the promised frequency

■ Responsiveness
  – willingness to help customers and provide prompt service
  – examples – mailing transaction slips immediately, returning customer calls quickly
5 Dimensions of Service Quality

- **Assurance**
  - knowledge and courtesy of staff and their ability to inspire trust and confidence

- **Empathy**
  - understanding the customer’s needs
  - learning the customer’s specific requirements
  - providing individualized attention

- **Tangibles**
  - physical facilities, equipment used to provide the service, web sites, leaflets
Section B • Directions
Listed below are five factors pertaining to library services only (not collections). We would like to know how important each of these is to you when you evaluate a library’s service quality. Please allocate a total of 100 percent among the five factors according to how important each one is to you—the more important it is, the greater the percent you should allocate to it.

F-1. The appearance of the library’s facilities, equipment and communication materials (leaflets, signs, etc.)  _____

F-2. The library’s ability to perform the promised service dependably and accurately.  _____

F-3. The library staff’s willingness and promptness when delivering services.  _____

F-4. The knowledge and courtesy of the library’s staff and their ability to earn your trust and confidence.  _____

F-5. The caring, individualized attention that library staff provide to its users.  _____

TOTAL  100 %

F-6. Which one factor among the above five is most important to you? (e.g., F-1, F-3)  _____

F-7. Which one factor is least important to you?  _____

F-8. If there is anything else not included among these five factors which you find important in evaluating the quality of research library services please describe here.

________________________________________

________________________________________
Survey instrument

- modified SERVQUAL instruments have been used in academic, public, and special libraries in the U.S., Australia, Canada & the U.K.
  - U.S. examples – Yale, Carnegie-Mellon, U of Texas, U of Maryland

- data drawn • rich with practical implications for library service managers
  - a set of “actionable” items
Sampling & Data Collection

- random sample of faculty and graduate students
  - created by Survey Research Center
  - see Final Report for details

- 609 faculty • 792 graduate students

- Initial mailing and two follow ups

- Paper and Web-based surveys

- 43% faculty response • 33% grad students
  - exceeded ARL LIBQUAL return rates significantly
Reading a Report

2 modes:
Reading a Report - Basic
Reading a Report - In Detail
## All Faculty

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The Gap...</th>
<th>UC Berkeley Library...</th>
<th>An Excellent Library...</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. The library’s online library catalog is a clear source of information about all material in its collections.</td>
<td>233</td>
<td>236</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. The library provides easy access to its online library catalog and other electronic resources from outside the library.</td>
<td>233</td>
<td>237</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Materials in the library are usually in their proper places on the shelves or can be accounted for.</td>
<td>224</td>
<td>228</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. The library’s Web page contains correct and useful information about the library services and materials.</td>
<td>207</td>
<td>212</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. When users suggest the library purchase a new title, the library provides feedback regarding the action taken.</td>
<td>186</td>
<td>195</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6a. In the library, materials arrive within the time-frame quoted from Interlibrary Services.</td>
<td>198</td>
<td>205</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6b. In the library, materials arrive within the time-frame quoted from off-campus storage facility.</td>
<td>187</td>
<td>195</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. In the library, materials arrive within the time-frame quoted from Interlibrary Services.</td>
<td>212</td>
<td>220</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8a. Knowledgable staff are available to assist whenever the library is open.</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8b. Library staff give accurate answers to user questions.</td>
<td>214</td>
<td>224</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8c. Library staff encounter users to come back to ask for more help if needed.</td>
<td>198</td>
<td>204</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8d. Library staff encourage users to come back to ask for more help if needed.</td>
<td>198</td>
<td>204</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Library staff are approachable and friendly.</td>
<td>217</td>
<td>225</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. The library staff offer teaching programs that enable users to make more effective use of library materials and services.</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>207</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. When I enter the library, 1 can readily see where to go for what I need.</td>
<td>220</td>
<td>227</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12a. In the library, I find the temperature is comfortable.</td>
<td>226</td>
<td>233</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12b. In the library, I find the ventilation is comfortable.</td>
<td>224</td>
<td>233</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12c. In the library, I find the lighting is adequate.</td>
<td>227</td>
<td>235</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12d. In the library, I find the noise level in the study areas</td>
<td>224</td>
<td>231</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Available LUST Reports

- Faculty as a whole
- Faculty by broad subject discipline
  - arts & humanities, biosciences, engineering,
    physical sciences, social sciences
- Graduate students as a whole
- Graduate students by broad subject discipline
- Library unit reports
Faculty and graduate students more often use the library remotely than they do in person

- 73% of faculty log on to the library weekly; 41% report weekly in-person visits
- Percentages vary by discipline
- Percentages somewhat less for graduate students
Broad Based Findings

- Faculty as a whole and graduate students as a whole registered gaps of >1 for two service items (aka “under-performance”)
  - Item 1 “The Library’s online catalog is a clear source of information about all materials in the collections.”
  - Item 3 “The materials in the library are usually in their proper places on the shelves or can be accounted for.”
Graduate students as a whole registered gaps of >1 for two additional service items
- Item 14 “When I enter the library, I can readily see where to go for what I need.”
- Item 19 “The library provides popular items in sufficient copies.”

Responses vary by broad academic discipline and by library most often used
Free Text Responses

Recurrent themes
- longer hours, comprehensive collections, increased access to electronic content
- reminiscent of the 1997 Survey of Faculty & Graduate Student Library Use & Satisfaction

New theme
- need for constant, dependable & knowledgeable “librarian” staffing at reference desks
Free Text Responses

- Is our service message getting through?
  - respondents suggested delivering articles & books for a fee, providing access to electronic journals & drop-in instructional sessions on library online sources
  - Do they know about web-based GLADIS?

- New library services suggested
  - personalized notification of new books & journals
  - placing online holds
  - standardized, electronic notification of new library services & online sources
  - “universal return” of borrowed items
Assessment of the Project

- Not enough “spear carriers” • conflicting schedules
- Fall semester timing
- Campus record keeping
  - faculty organized by department
  - graduate students listed by major
  - assignment of broad discipline codes
- Dual input streams
  - paper and web
SERVQUAL

- cannot & should not be used as a measure of comparison among libraries
- no normative data – data is particular to a group of customers and to a particular institution
- measure success by comparing the size of the gap over time
SERVQUAL

- targets service elements for improvement
- weighs evaluation of service elements relative to the importance users place on them
- suggests training opportunities
More Information Available

- Library User Survey website
  
  [library.berkeley.edu/Staff/UserSurvey/](library.berkeley.edu/Staff/UserSurvey/)

- contains survey instrument, project timelines, final report, free-text responses & full set of graphical reports (by library & by user category)
(1) Association of Research Libraries web site
