

2005 LibQUAL+ Survey Results

What is LibQUAL+? Here's what the Association of Research Libraries says:

'LibQUAL+(TM) is a suite of services that libraries use to solicit, track, understand, and act upon users' opinions of service quality. These services are offered to the library community by the Association of Research Libraries (ARL). The program's centerpiece is a rigorously tested Web-based survey bundled with training that helps libraries assess and improve library services, change organizational culture, and market the library.'

LibQUAL+ results were delivered to the UO Library in the form of a 100 page report. This website is intended to help distill this feedback and present an overview of salient points.

CORE ANALYSIS

LibQUAL+ measures minimum, desired, and perceived responses, on a scale of 1-9, for three dimensions of library service quality. Below, perceived scores have been examined and compared to the ARL mean, followed by an examination of the adequacy gap (the difference between perceived mean and the minimum mean) and the superiority gap (the difference between the perceived mean and the desired mean.) The ARL scores represent an average of participants in the LibQUAL+ 2005 survey.

AFFECT OF SERVICE

INFORMATION CONTROL

LIBRARY AS PLACE

Perceived Scores v. ARL

Perceived Scores v. ARL

Perceived Scores v. ARL

[All \(Excluding library staff\)](#)
[Undergraduates](#)
[Graduates](#)
[Faculty](#)

[All \(Excluding library staff\)](#)
[Undergraduates](#)
[Graduates](#)
[Faculty](#)

[All \(Excluding library staff\)](#)
[Undergraduates](#)
[Graduates](#)
[Faculty](#)

GAP ANALYSIS

The perceived scores tell a story, but an incomplete one, as they are, after all, simply numbers without context. Gap analysis brings context, allowing for a level of 'user satisfaction' to be factored in.

[Adequacy Gap](#)
[Superiority Gap](#)

LOCAL QUESTIONS

Five questions were added locally for inclusion in the survey. As these questions were not administered for all participating institutions, this analysis shows internal comparisons only.

[Local Questions - Perceived Scores](#)
[Local Questions - Adequacy Gap](#)
[Local Questions - Superiority Gap](#)

SATISFACTION & INFORMATION LITERACY OUTCOMES

These questions relate to overall satisfaction with the UO Libraries and information literacy. Perceived scores only were collected; the questions do not lend themselves to gap analysis. These scores have been compared with ARL means.

[Satisfaction](#)
[Information Literacy Outcomes](#)

QUALITATIVE RESULTS

This [excel document](#) contains the qualitative comments offered by survey participants. They have been coded to allow for further analysis.

2005 V. 2001

The survey has changed, but some comparisons can still be made.

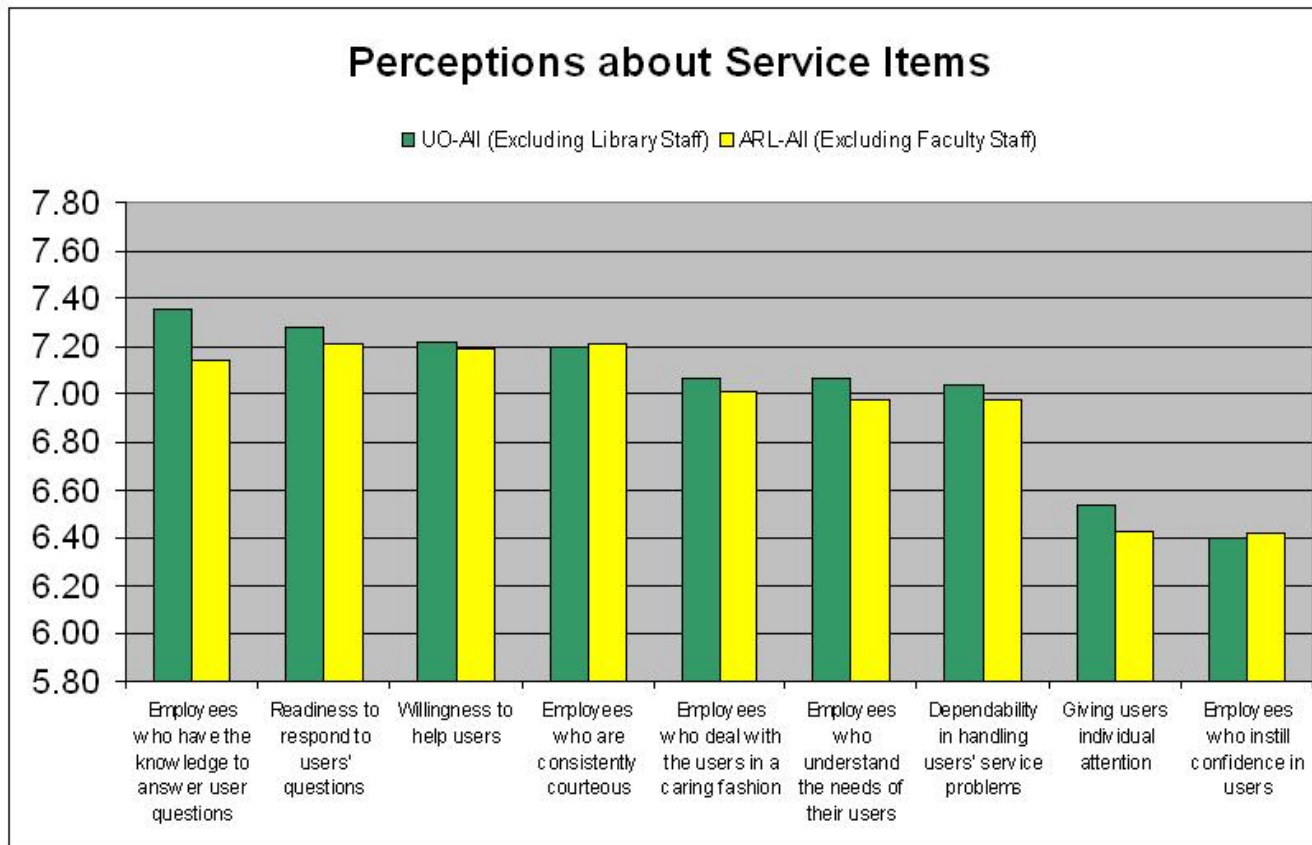
This analysis has been completed by Colin Rea, in conjunction with and for the Assessment Team at the University of Oregon Libraries. While Colin is a generous soul, he has undertaken this enterprise to fulfill two credits for the Information School at the University of Washington.

LibQUAL+ Association of Research Libraries (ARL) schools that participated in 2005

Auburn University	University of Arizona Library
Brown University Library	University of California, Los Angeles
Cornell University Library	University of Cincinnati Libraries
Duke University Libraries	University of Florida, George A. Smathers Libraries
Emory University	University of Guelph
Iowa State University Library	University of Houston Libraries
McGill University Libraries	University of Maryland Libraries
Ohio State University Libraries	University of Oklahoma Libraries
Ohio University Libraries, Athens Campus	University of Oregon Libraries
Purdue University	University of Pittsburgh
Rutgers, the State University of New Jersey	University of South Carolina – Columbia
Syracuse University	University of Southern California
Texas A&M University, College Station	University of Texas at Austin
Texas A&M University, Galveston	UNM Libraries
Université Laval	Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University
University of Alabama	Wayne State University
University of Alberta Libraries	

[Return to Main](#)





Overall, it is clear that user perceptions of service are in line with those of other ARL institutions. Two aspects in which the UO Libraries excel involve employee knowledge and individual attention. Interestingly, this knowledge may be regarded as 'privileged' information, as evidenced by the lowest score for the area – **Employees who instill confidence in users**. This, along with **Employees who are consistently courteous** represent the two service aspects where the cumulative UO mean trailed the ARL mean. The following comment illuminates how closely tied these two particular aspects of service can be:

'...but there have been several instances where an employee didn't seem willing to help me. This makes me hesitate to ask questions which could help me use the library more effectively.' -Undergraduate Comment

Undergraduates at the UO appear to be very representative of their ilk across the ARL landscape. They report strong numbers for the majority of service aspects, with a significant drop for two measurements. The first, **Giving users individual attention** was noticeably greater than the ARL, while the second, **Employees who instill confidence in others** fell short.

Graduate students, meanwhile, show a similar pattern, with lower numbers for individual attention and confidence. As with undergraduates, only the latter fell below the ARL mean. The remaining service aspects were well above ARL numbers.

Faculty responses to service questions most resembled the ARL response. Save a .16 shortfall for **Employees who are consistently courteous**, the disparity between the two groups was less than .1 across the board. Like those they teach and mentor, faculty felt that attention and confidence were the most challenging aspects for the UO library. Qualitative comments supplied by faculty that relate to service were

overwhelmingly positive, much like this comment:

'The librarians and staff at the Knight Library get the highest marks for helpfulness.' -Faculty Comment

The library staff at the UO exhibit a high level of confidence and security in reporting on service levels. Without exception, satisfaction levels reported here best those reported by ARL participants.

Graphical Comparisons By Group

[Undergraduates](#)

[Graduates](#)

[Faculty](#)

[Library Staff](#)

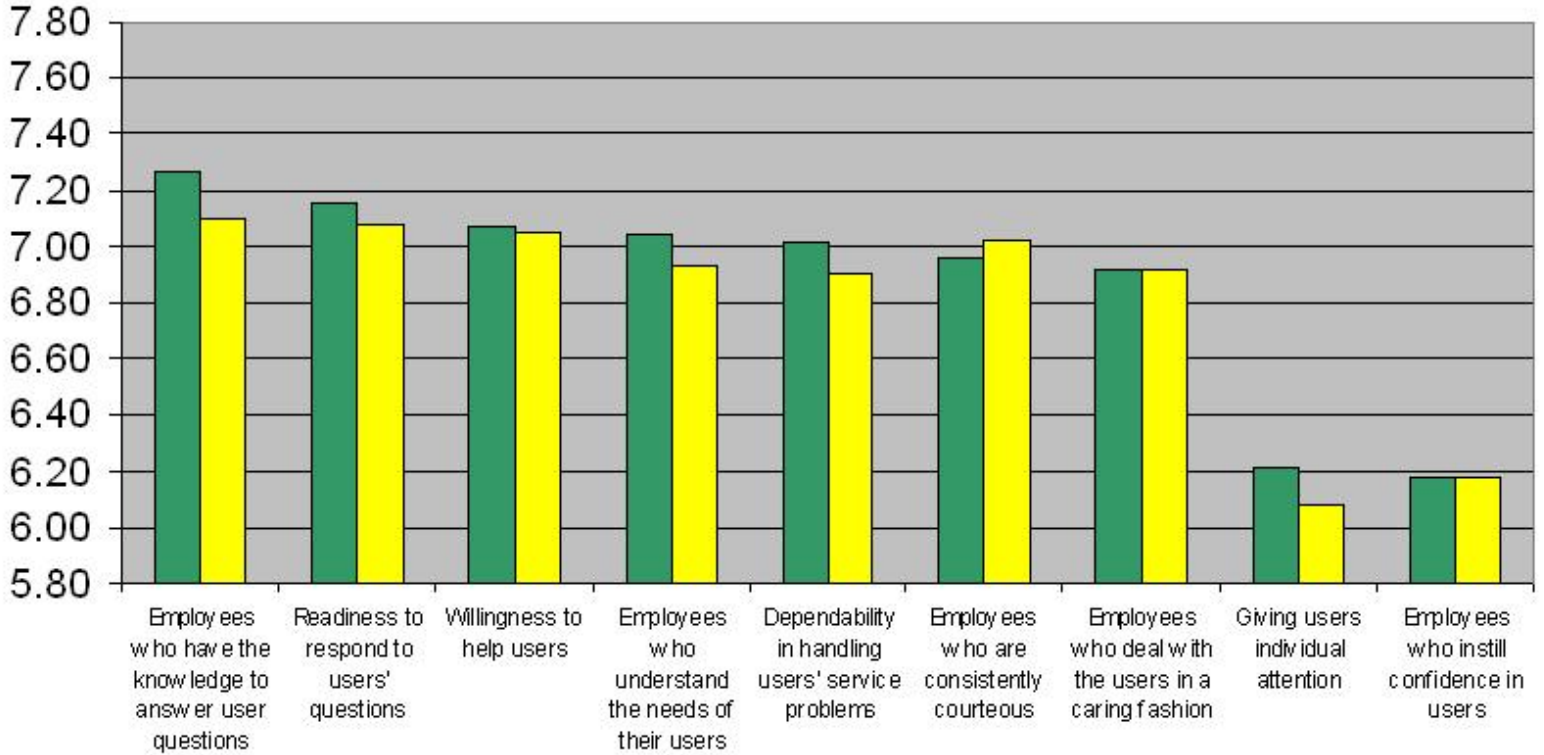
[Staff](#)

[Return to Main](#)

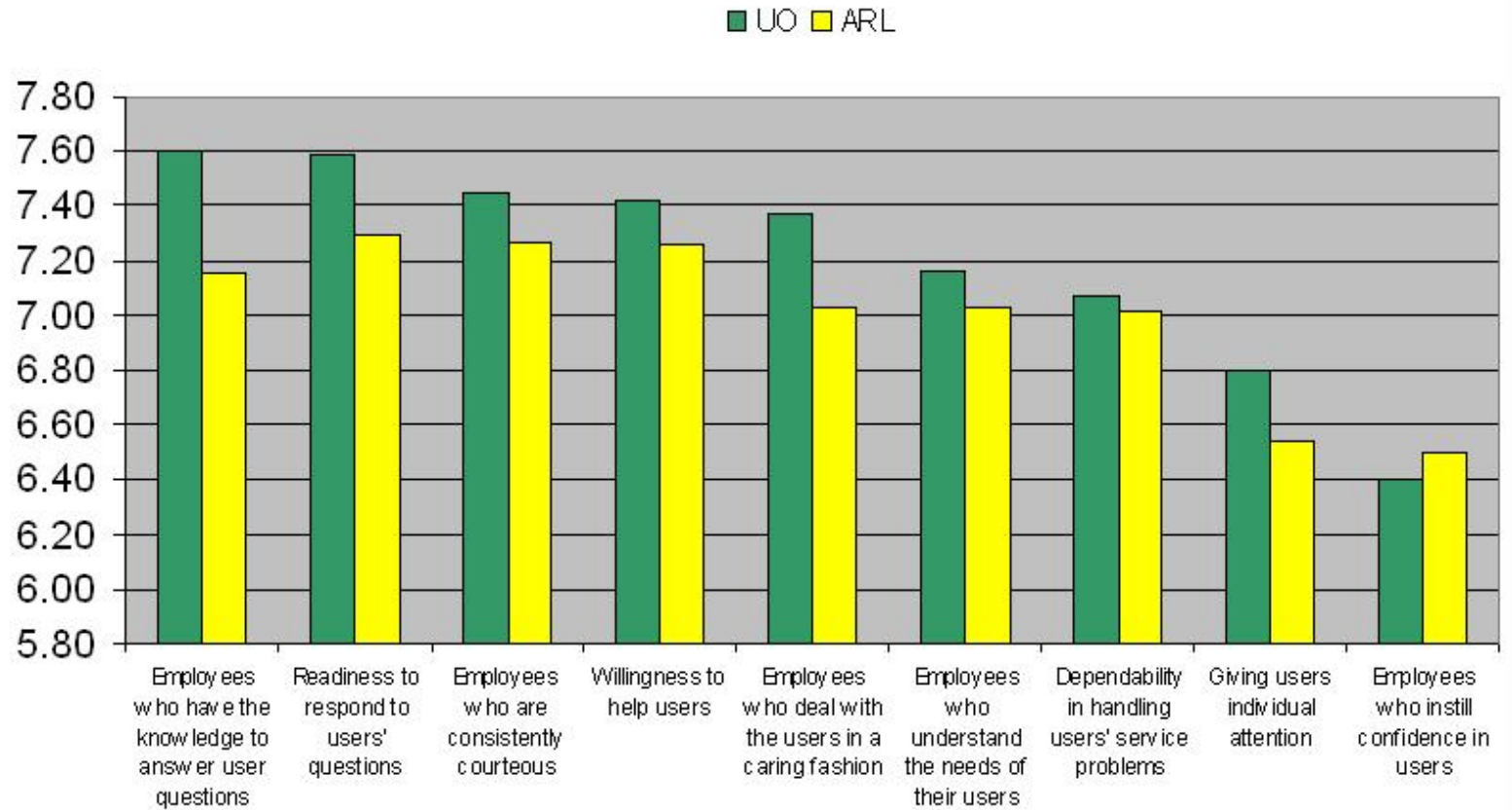


Affect of Service - Undergrads

■ UO ■ ARL

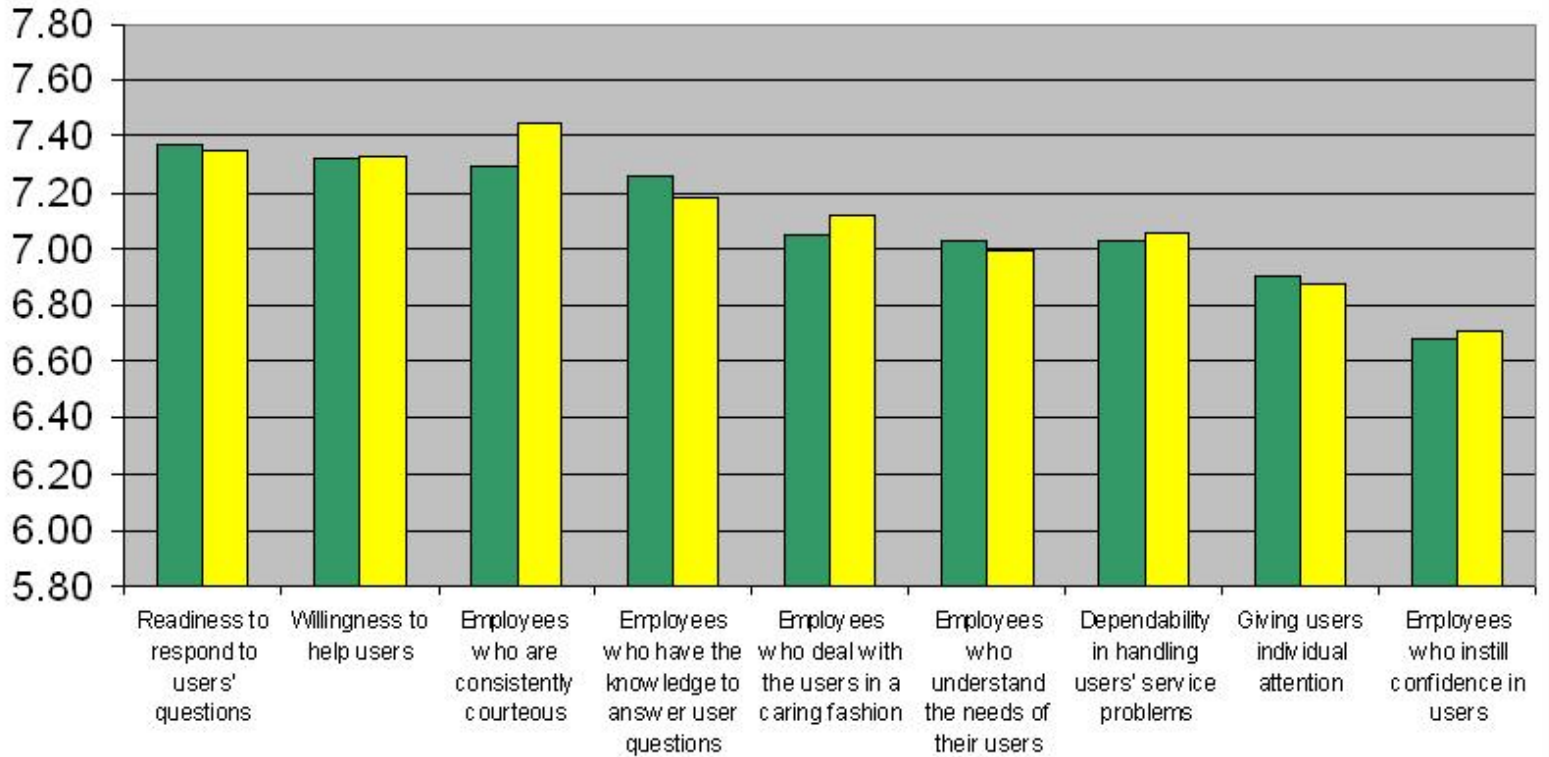


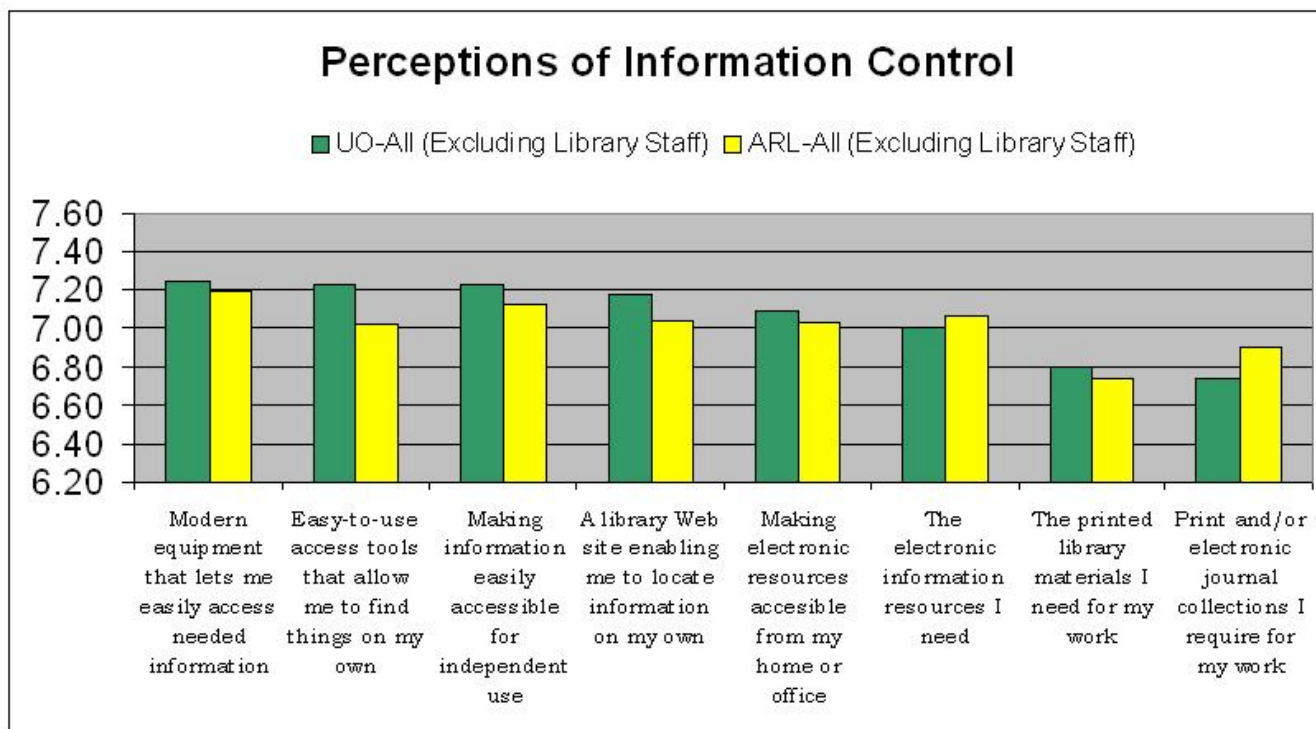
Affect of Service - Graduates



Affect of Service - Faculty

■ UO ■ ARL





It should come as no surprise to anyone who has an open eye to the current state of the academic library that **Print and/or electronic journal collections that I require for my work** received the lowest perceived mean (6.74) for the dimension of Information Control. It was certainly expected by library staff, where a mean of 7.03 trails the ARL at 7.28. Library staff do NOT, however, feel this is the weakest aspect of information control, instead identifying **A library Website enabling me to locate information on my own** (6.98) as such.

'Web site needs work, perhaps more instruction in evaluating resources.' - Library Staff Comment

18 of 21 (86%) qualitative comments collected by the survey that addressed the online collection are negative. All but two negative comments specifically mention journals. A polite faculty member typifies these comments:

'More electronic journals please!' - Faculty Comment

The aspects of Information Control that address accessibility of information are rated consistently, with numbers right around 7.20. This includes **A library Website enabling me to locate information on my own**, despite the lower evaluation by library staff and several negative comments about the difficulty in finding information through the library website. Each of these accessibility aspects scores above the ARL mean.

As mentioned above, there is a significant drop for the last two aspects, **Printed library materials that I need for my work** and **Print and/or electronic journal collections that I require for my work**. The former number still shows an improvement in perception over the ARL, while the later shows a deficit.

When broken down by subject group, the perceived means generally decrease from undergraduates to graduates and finally to faculty. This trend most likely indicates that the more reliant a group is on the library for research, the less likely they are to report favorable perceptions.

Undergraduate perceived means outperform the ARL in each aspect of information control. For both graduates and faculty, there are mixed results. Both show perceived means that are below ARL for **Printed library materials that I need for my work** and **Print and/or electronic journal collections that I require for my work**. A major difference between these two groups is in the perception of the library website. Graduates feel this aspect is the strongest for Information control, with a mean above the ARL. Faculty, however, rate it third from the bottom, with a slightly lower number than the ARL.

Library staff report numbers that outperform the ARL mean for every aspect except for **Print and/or electronic journal collections that I require for my work**.

University staff results are, as they are for affect of service, very low, well below the ARL mean, and most likely unreliable due to the fact that the library does not serve staff in the same capacity that it does for faculty and students.

Graphical Comparisons By Group

[Undergraduates](#)

[Graduates](#)

[Faculty](#)

[Library Staff](#)

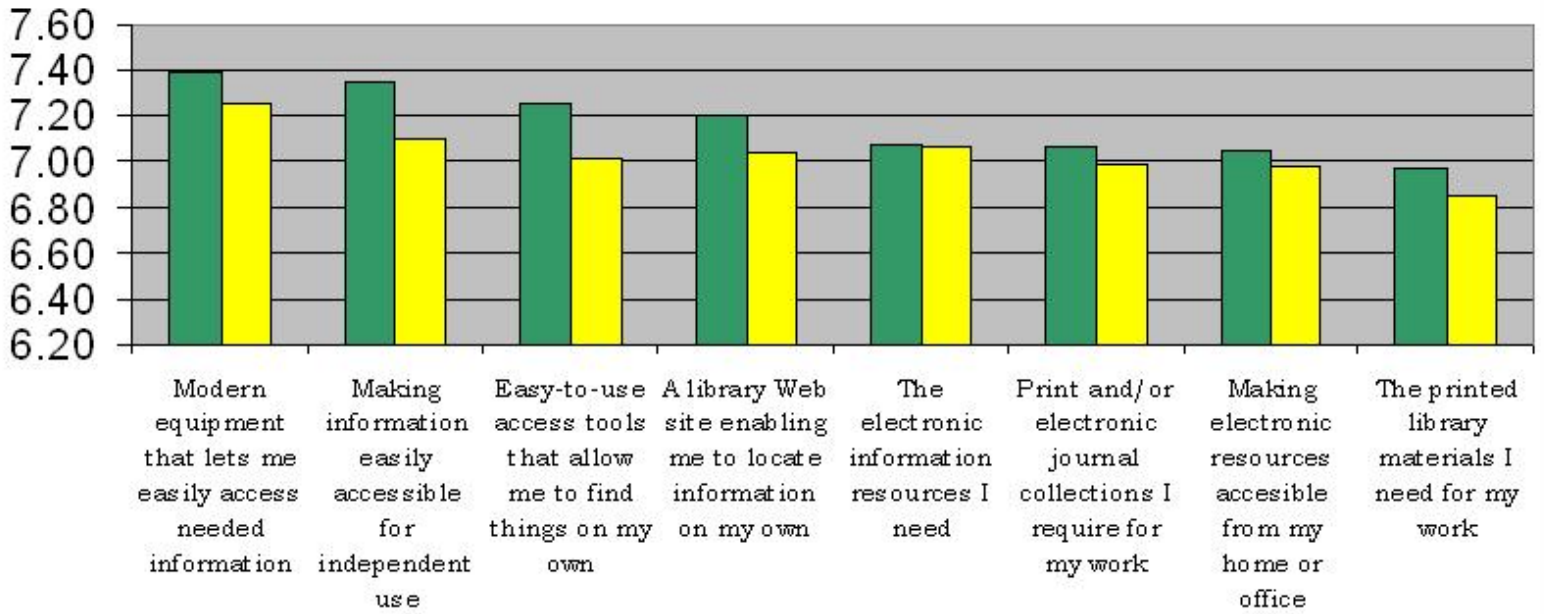
[Staff](#)

[Return to Main](#)

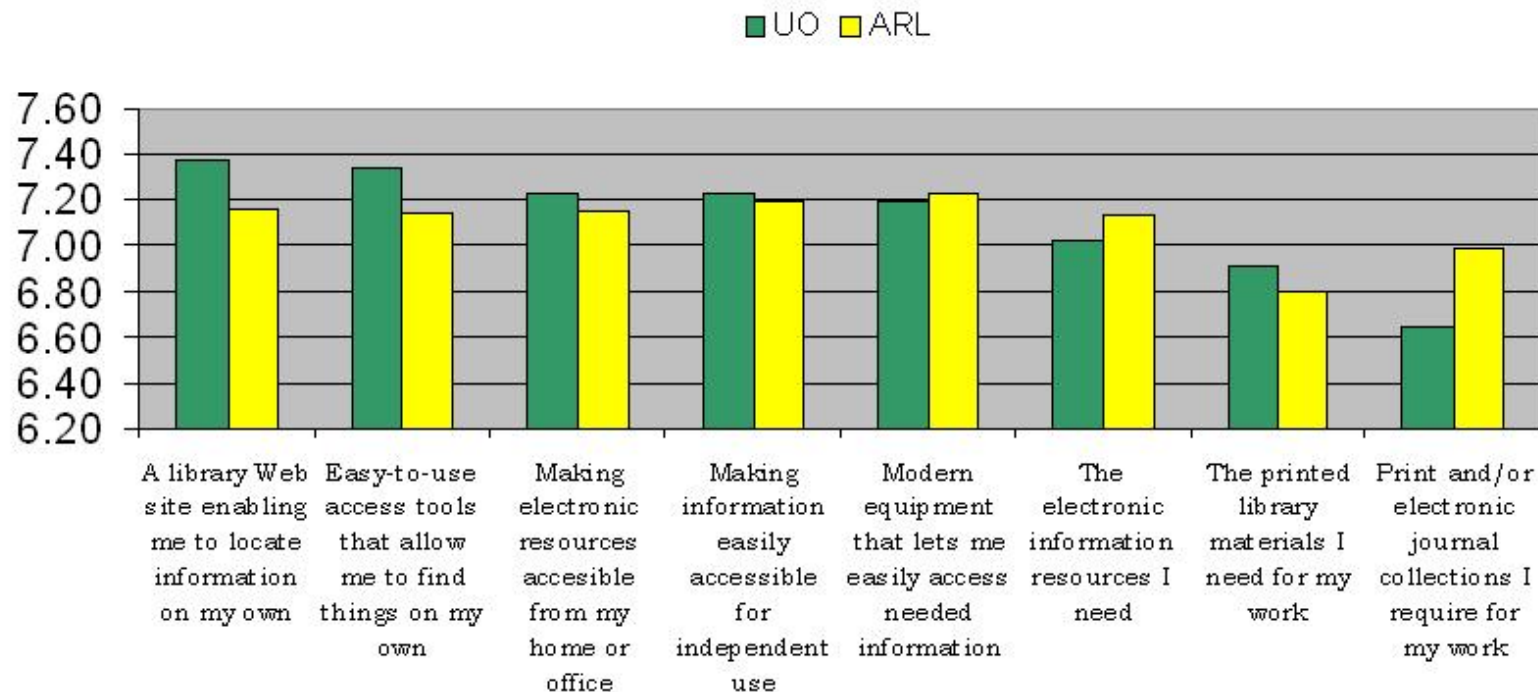


Information Control - Undergrads

■ UO ■ ARL

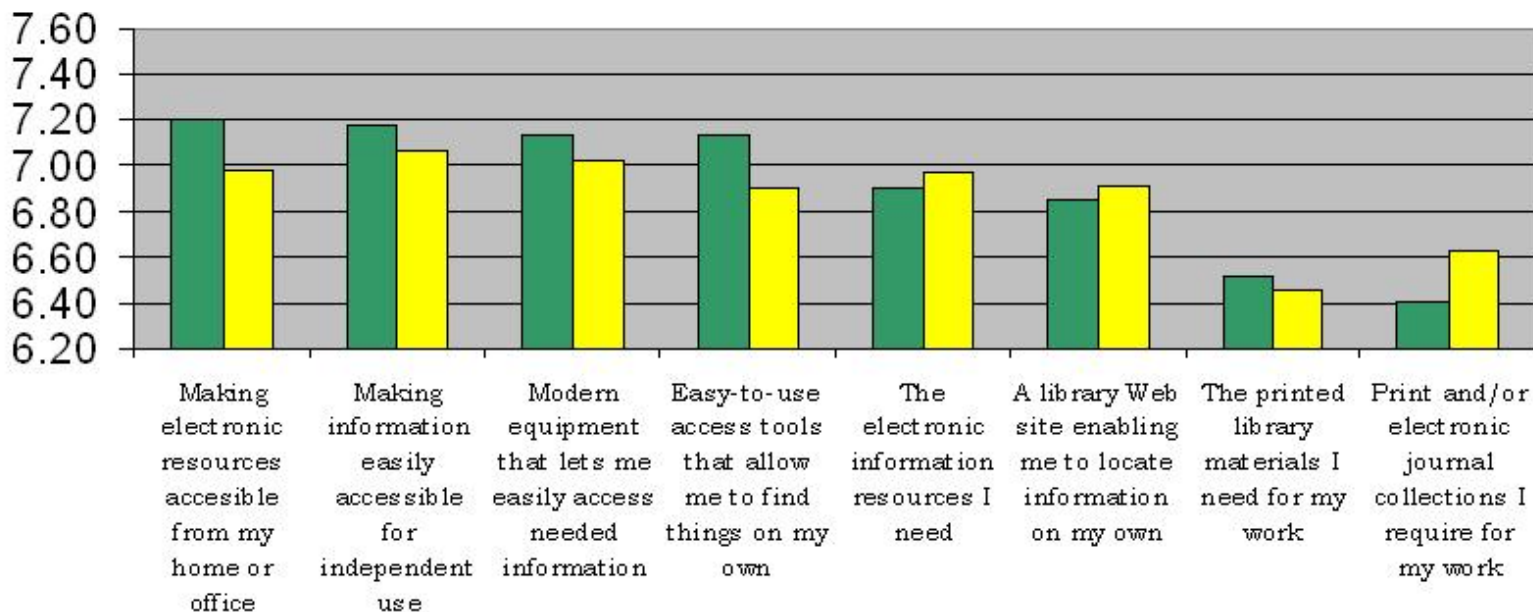


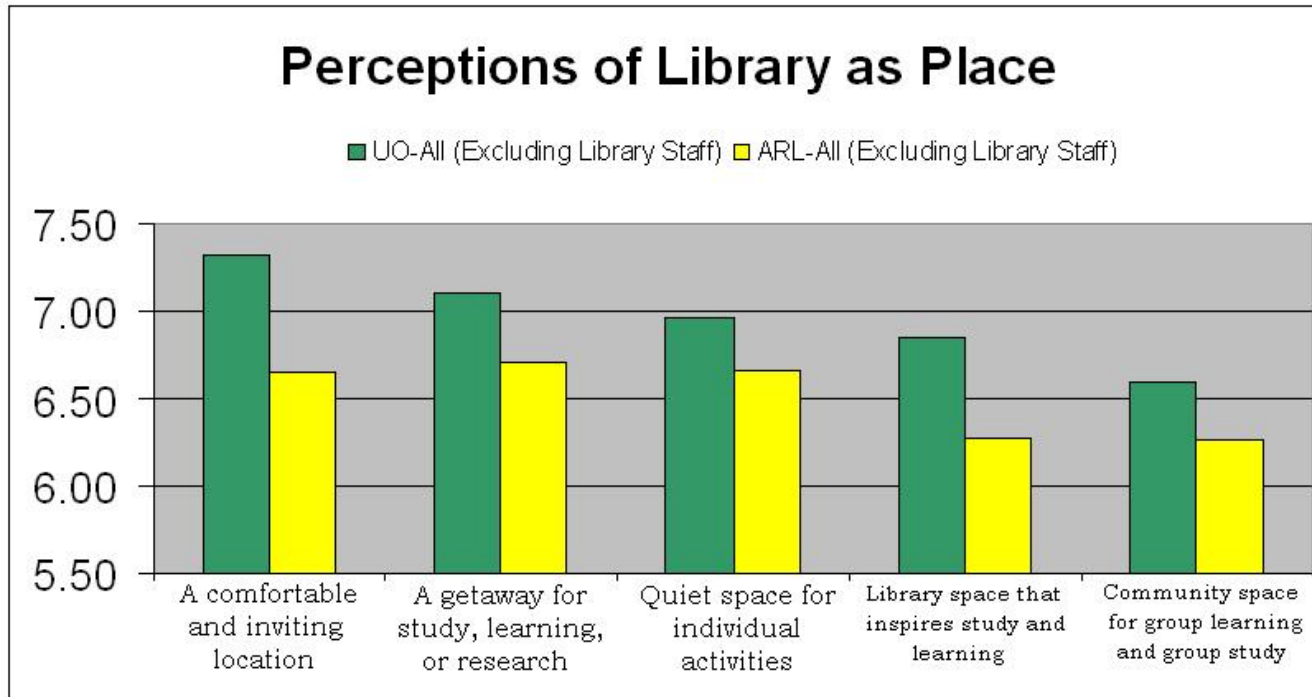
Information Control - Graduates



Information Control - Faculty

■ UO ■ ARL





The UO Libraries scored consistently higher than the ARL mean as a quiet, comfortable space for both groups and individuals to study, learn, or do research. Oddly, a large number of qualitative comments were COMPLAINTS about these very aspects. Of 14 comments collected about building comfort, only four were positive. Similarly, of 12 comments collected regarding study spaces, only two were positive. A typical comment centered on the availability of group meeting space:

'Wish there were more private rooms for smaller group studying/activities. As it stands there's only a handful, and its (sic) always conducted by reservation, and they're always booked.' -Undergraduate Comment

Why then did respondents choose to voice dissatisfaction toward the aspects that scored high quantitatively? Perhaps they felt most comfortable speaking about that which they understood completely. It may be difficult to criticize circulation, etc. when the processes and policies are known only to library staff. Those surveyed may have also been tempted to include a critical comment here to balance the positive skew of their quantitative answers.

An eye to the superiority gap for these points bolsters the quantitative assertion that everyone who participated in the survey enjoys the physical space of the libraries. When all 22 LibQUAL+ core aspects are ranked in terms of this gap, four of the five that comprise Library as Place are in the top five, closest to meeting the desired mean.

Within the structured groupings of the respondents, undergraduates, graduates, and faculty all reported perceived means noticeably higher than ARL means, the lone exception being **Quiet space for individual activities** as rated by the faculty. While still above the ARL mean, the difference is negligible.

Library staff at the UO reported very high numbers in this area -- two of the five aspects of Library as Place were more than a full point greater than ARL averages. This could reflect a justifiable organizational pride or perhaps an unreasonable air of superiority.

While staff perceptions in the other two areas of the LibQUAL+ survey showed a drop from ARL means on several points, this is not the case for Library as Place. Only one measurement fell below the ARL mean, that of **Community space for group learning and group study**.

University staff, however, are least likely to use the library for such activities, so the validity of this number must be questioned. Not one staff member, for example, included a qualitative comment about building comfort or study space.

Graphical Comparisons By Group

[Undergraduates](#)

[Graduates](#)

[Faculty](#)

[Library Staff](#)

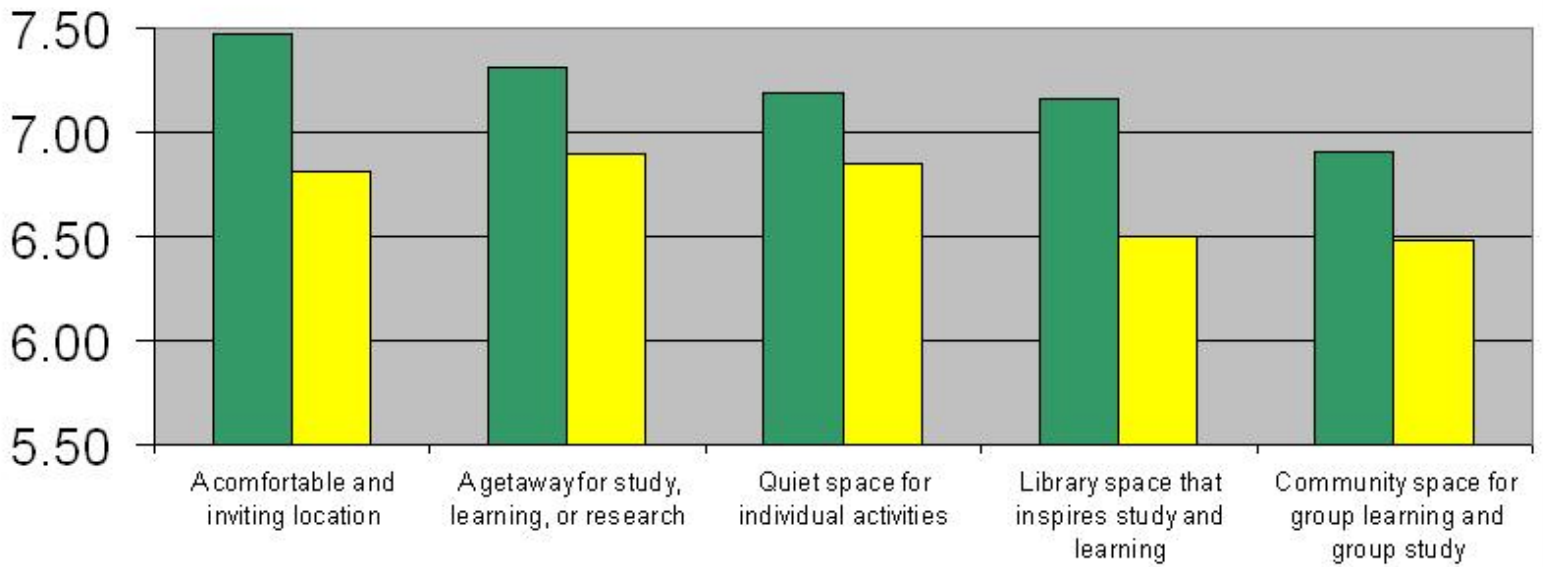
[Staff](#)

[Return to Main](#)



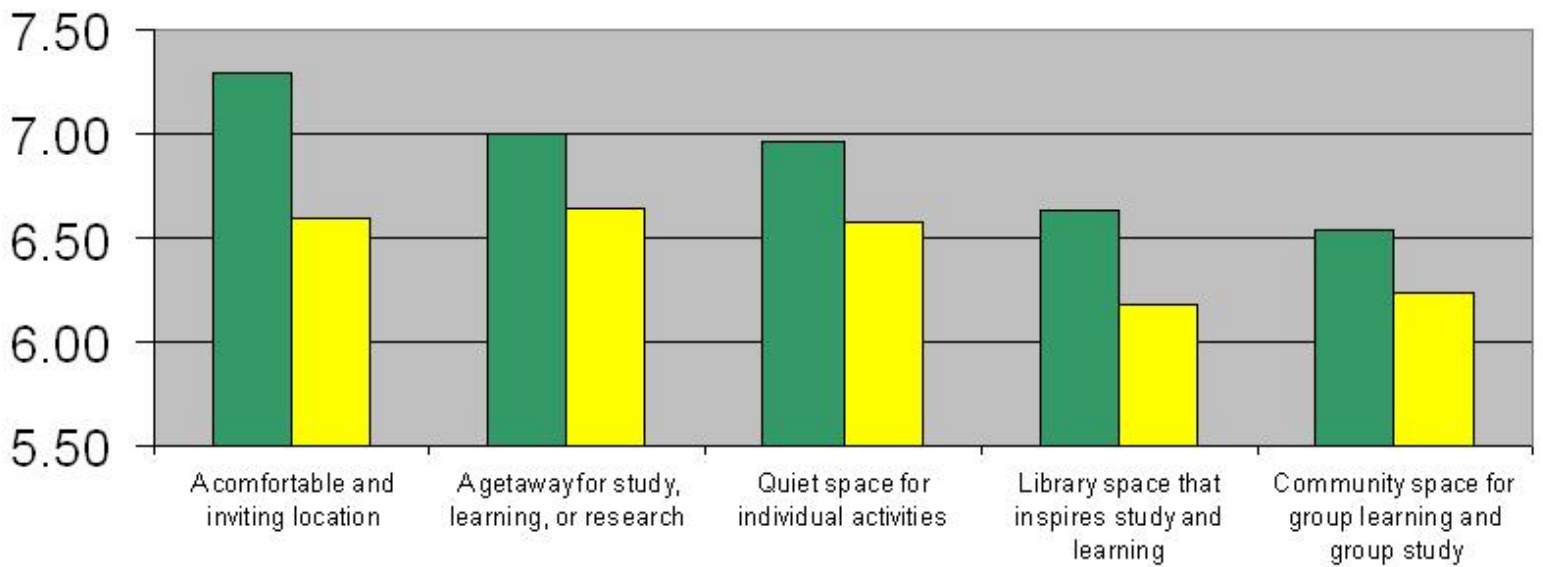
Library as Place - Undergraduates

■ UO ■ ARL



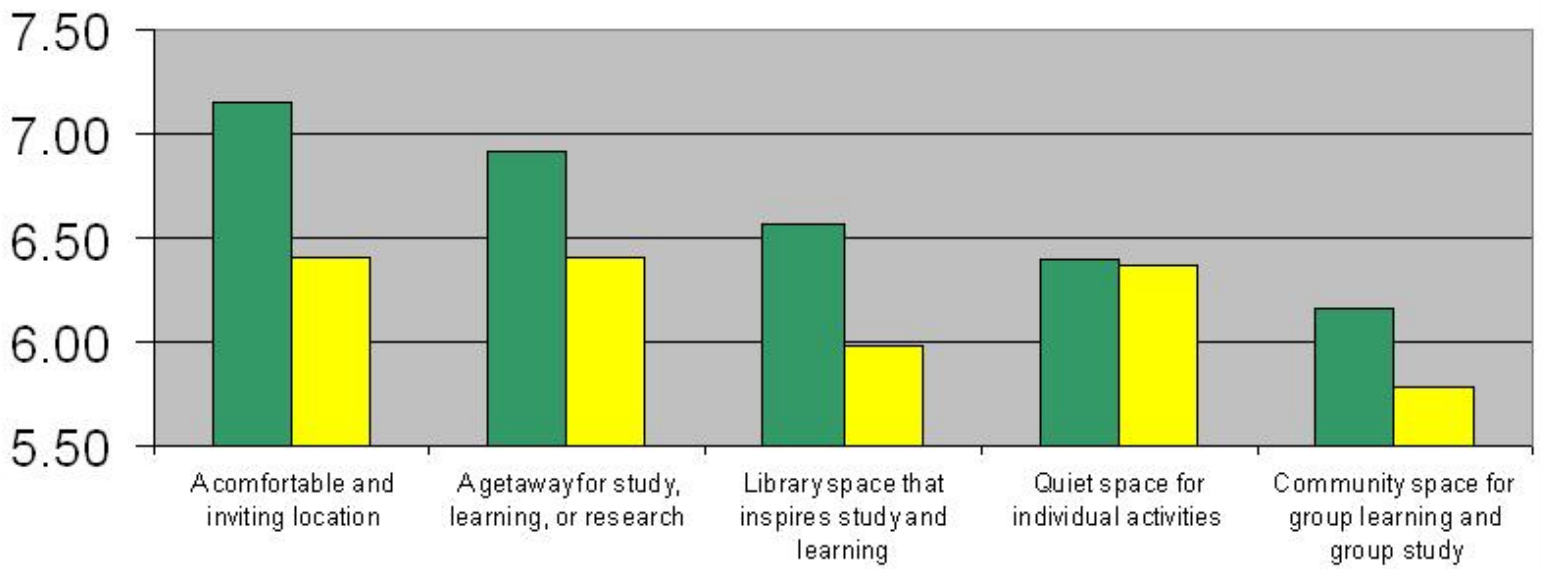
Library as Place - Graduates

■ UO ■ ARL



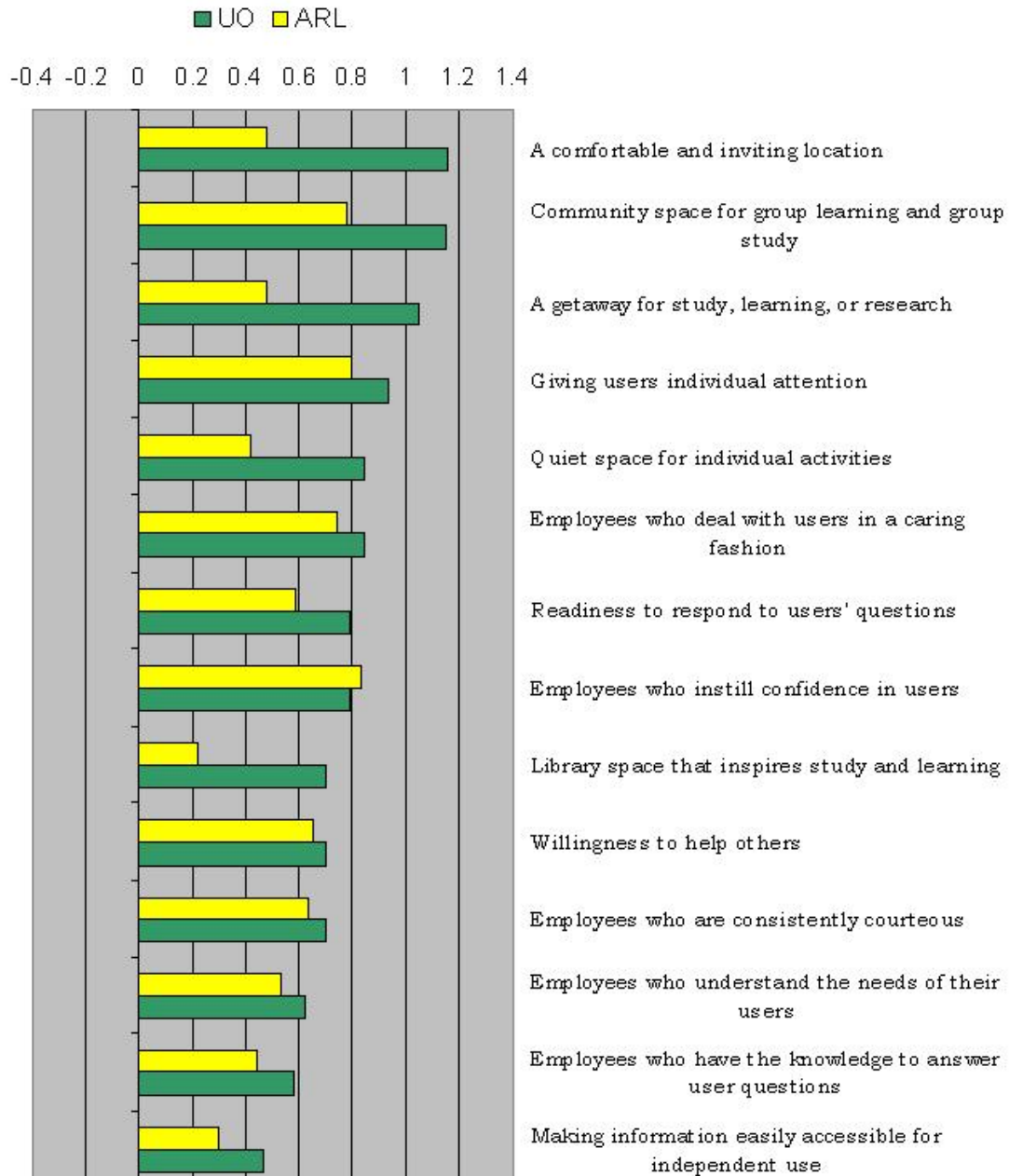
Library as Place - Faculty

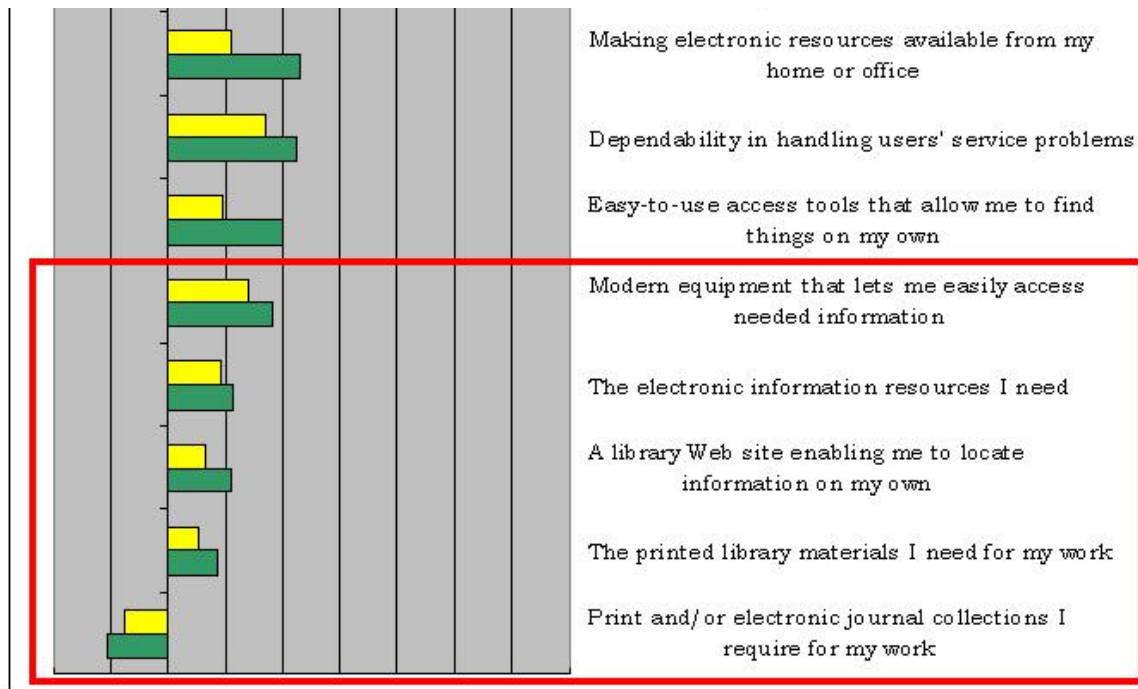
■ UO ■ ARL





Adequacy Gap - All (Excluding library staff)





The adequacy gap reflects the difference between the perceived mean and the minimum mean. In effect, this number is the truest measure of 'how the library is doing.' All 22 core aspects of the LibQUAL+ survey are presented here, in descending order. While much can be learned from the numbers represented for each aspect, the survey is intended to help the library identify areas where attention is most needed. As such, aspects with an adequacy gap of less than .4 are enclosed in a red bracket. It is worth noting that ALL of these relate to Information Control. Only **Print and/or electronic journal collections I require for my work** shows a negative gap, where users believe the library is not meeting their minimum expectations.

Graphical Comparisons By Group

[Undergraduates](#)

[Graduates](#)

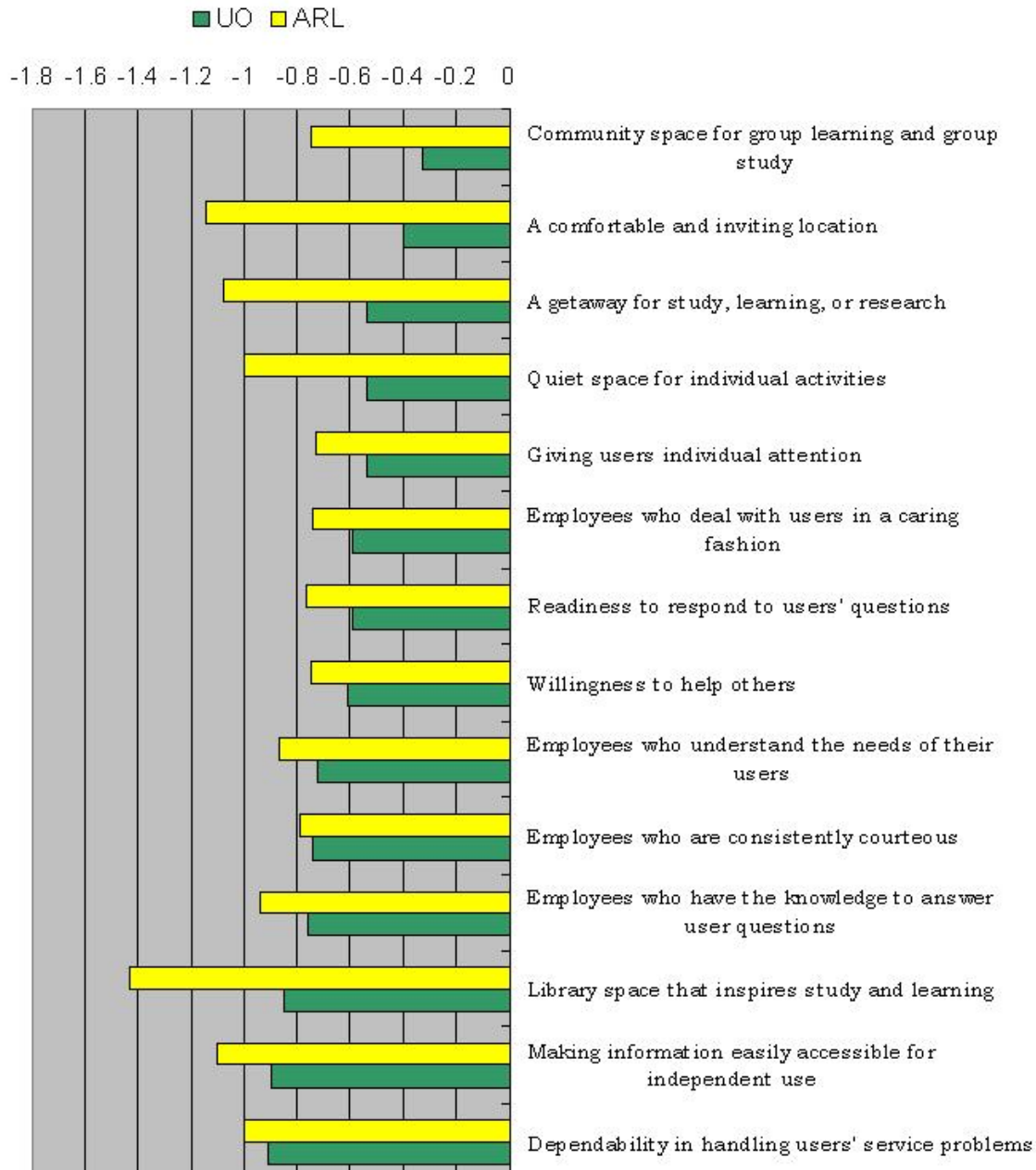
[Faculty](#)

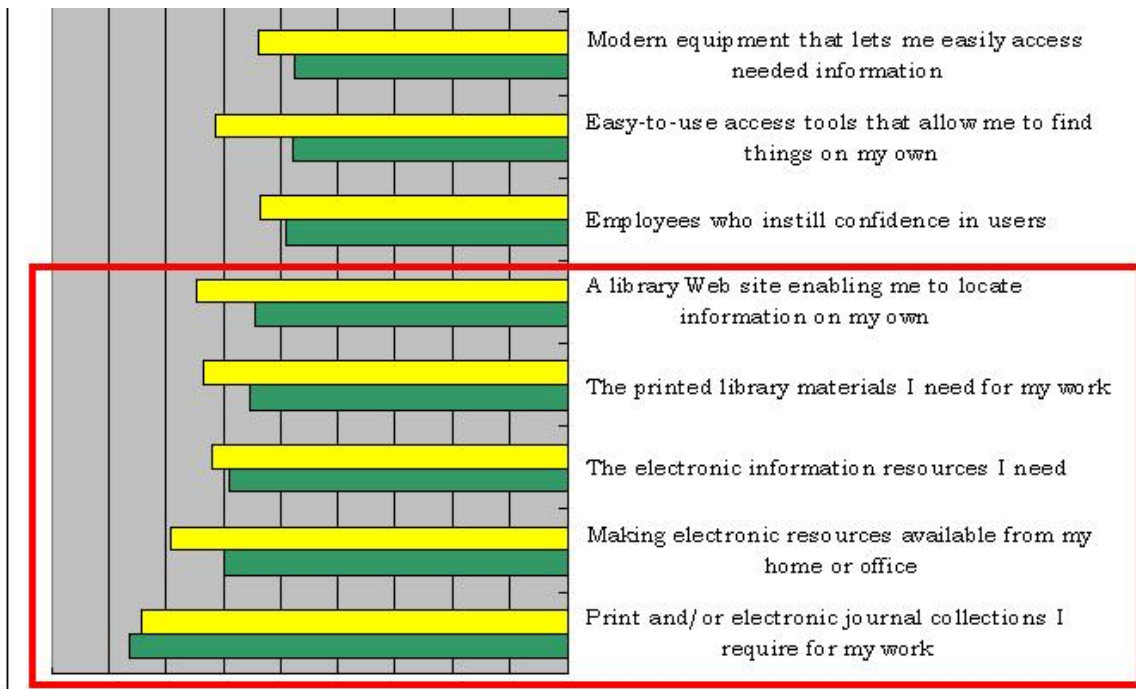
[Return to Main](#)





Superiority Gap - All (Excluding library staff)





The superiority gap measures the difference between perceived mean and the desired mean. This number represents how far the library has to go to fully and completely please the user. All 22 aspects of the LibQUAL+ survey are presented here, in descending order. While much can be learned from the numbers represented for each aspect, the survey is intended to help the library identify areas where attention is most needed. As such, aspects with a superiority gap greater than -1.0 are enclosed in a red bracket. Each of these components relate to information control, as do those bracketed on the adequacy gap graph. In fact, only **Making electronic resources available from my home or office** does not also flag for adequacy.

Graphical Comparisons By Group

[Undergraduates](#)

[Graduates](#)

[Faculty](#)

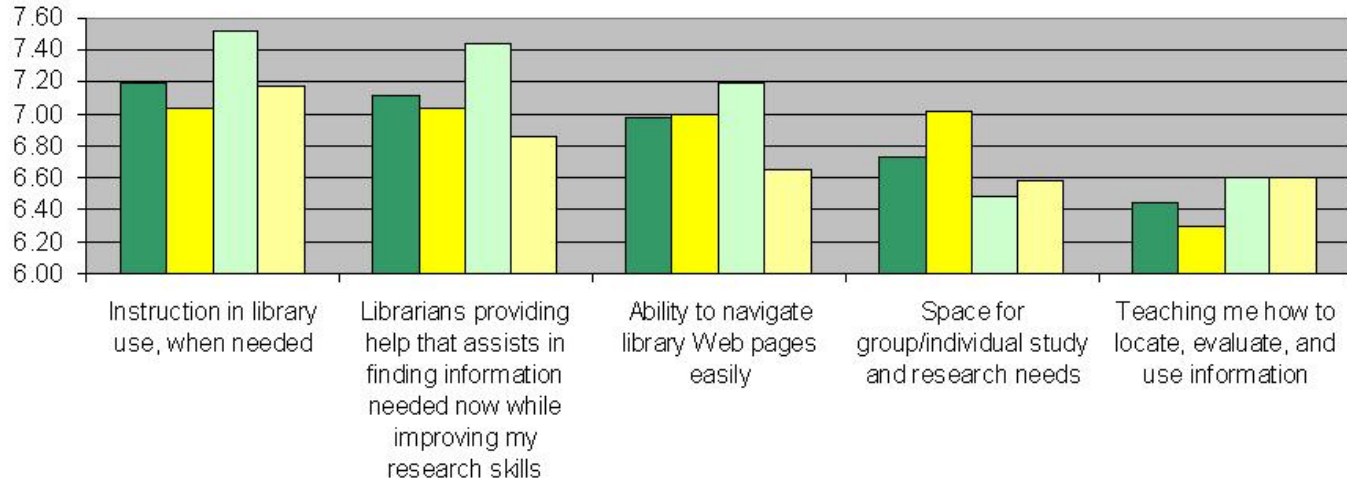
[Return to Main](#)





Local Questions

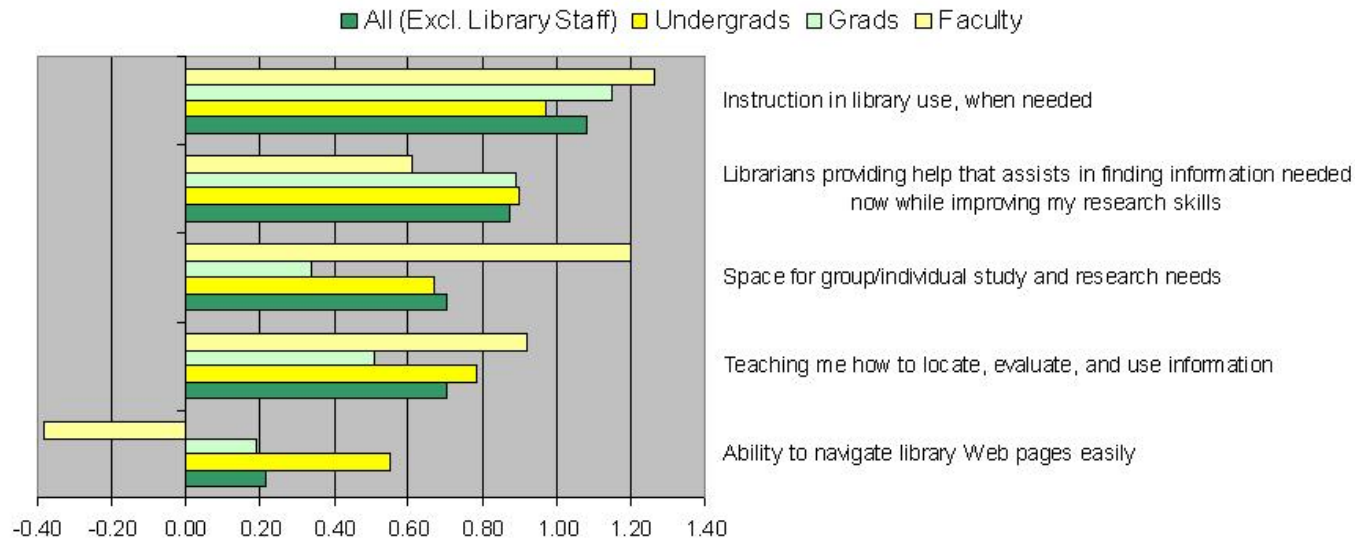
■ All (Excl. Lib Staff) ■ Undergrads ■ Grads ■ Faculty



[Return to Main](#)



Local Questions - Adequacy Gap

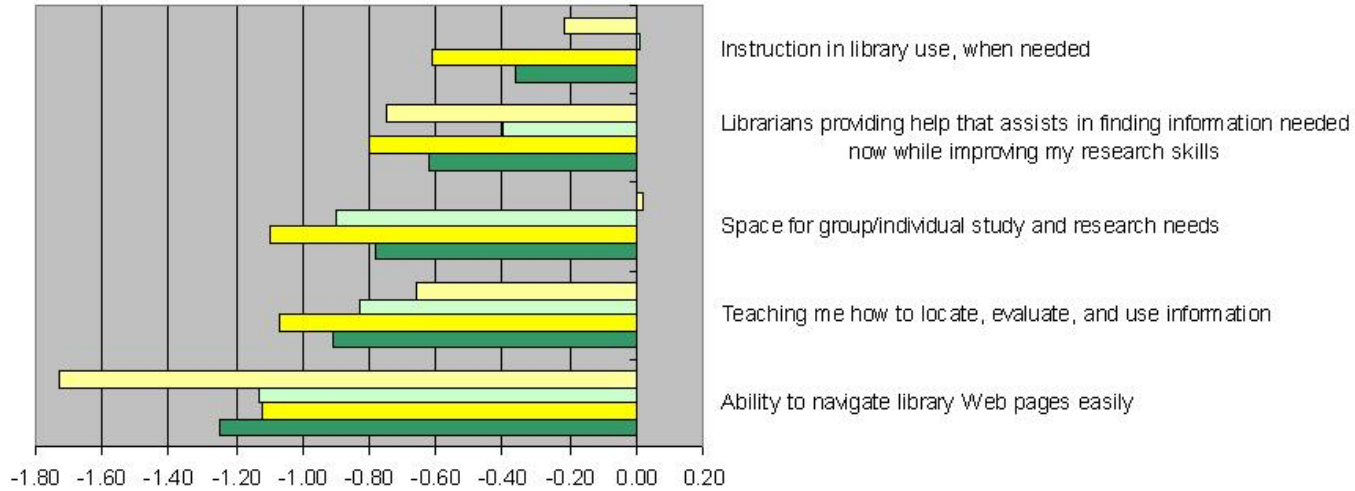


[Return to Main](#)

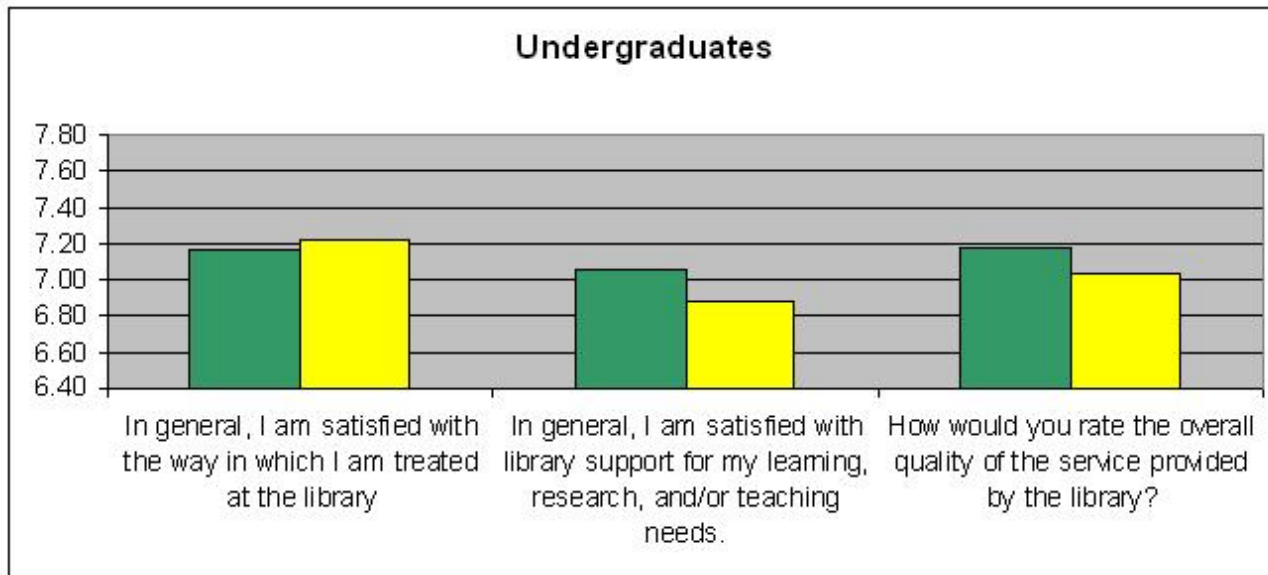
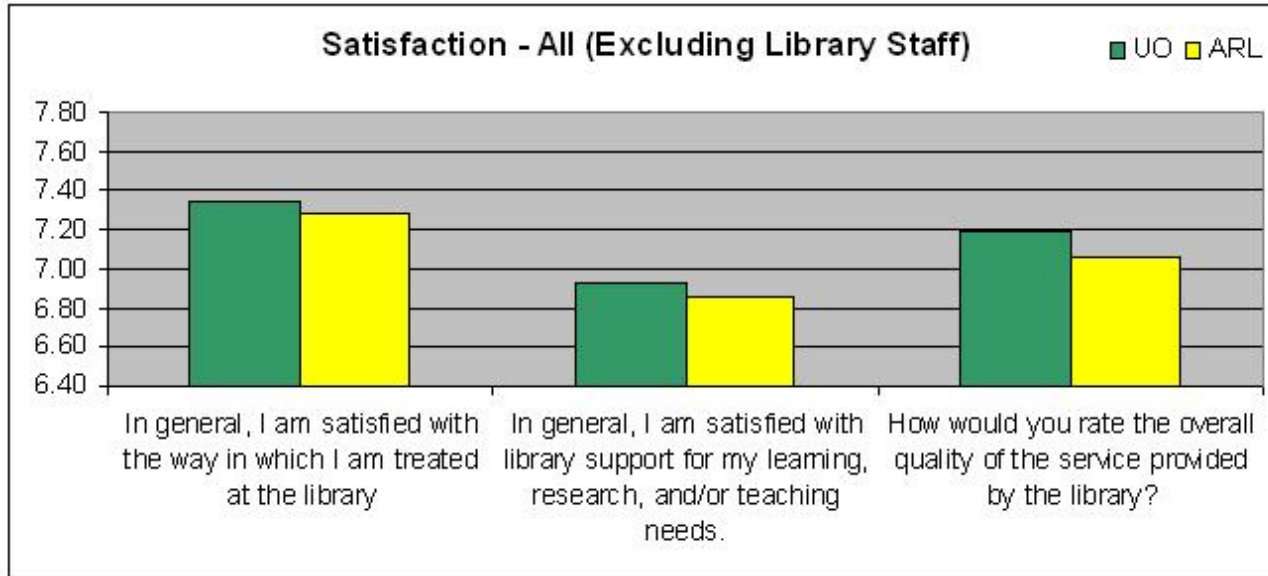


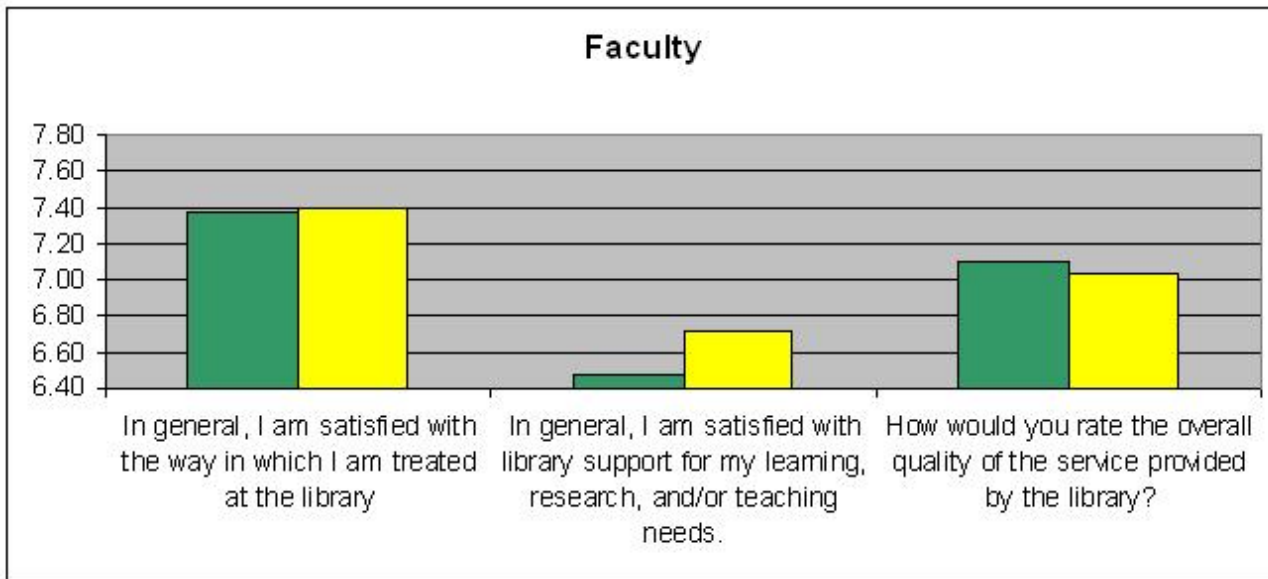
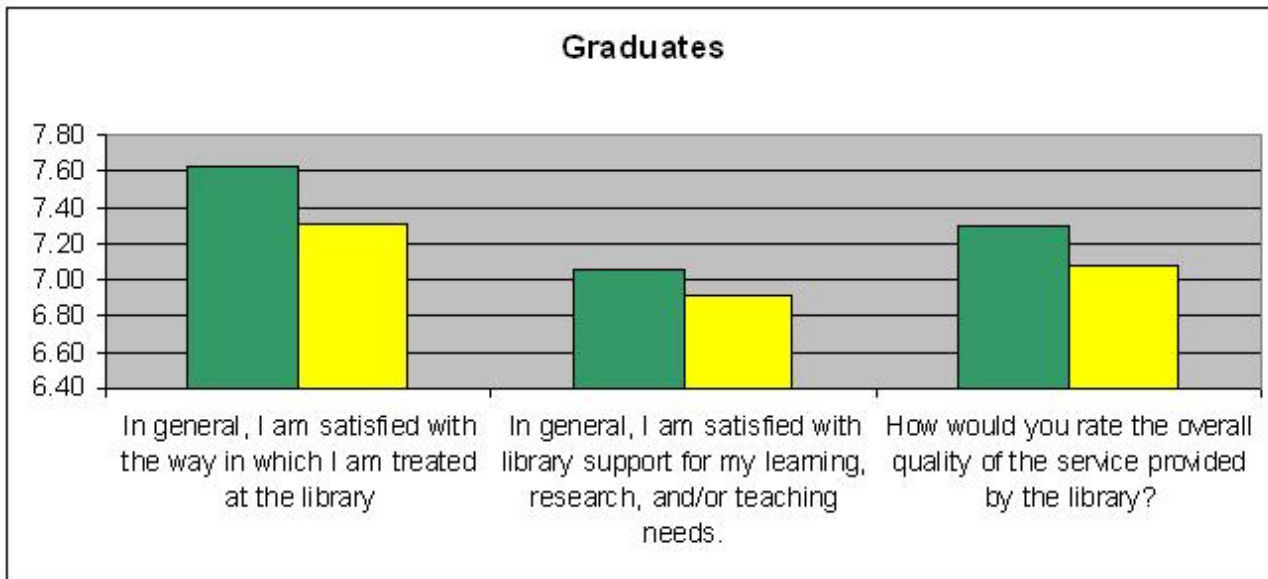
Local Questions - Superiority Gap

■ All (Excl. Library Staff) ■ Undergrads ■ Grads ■ Faculty

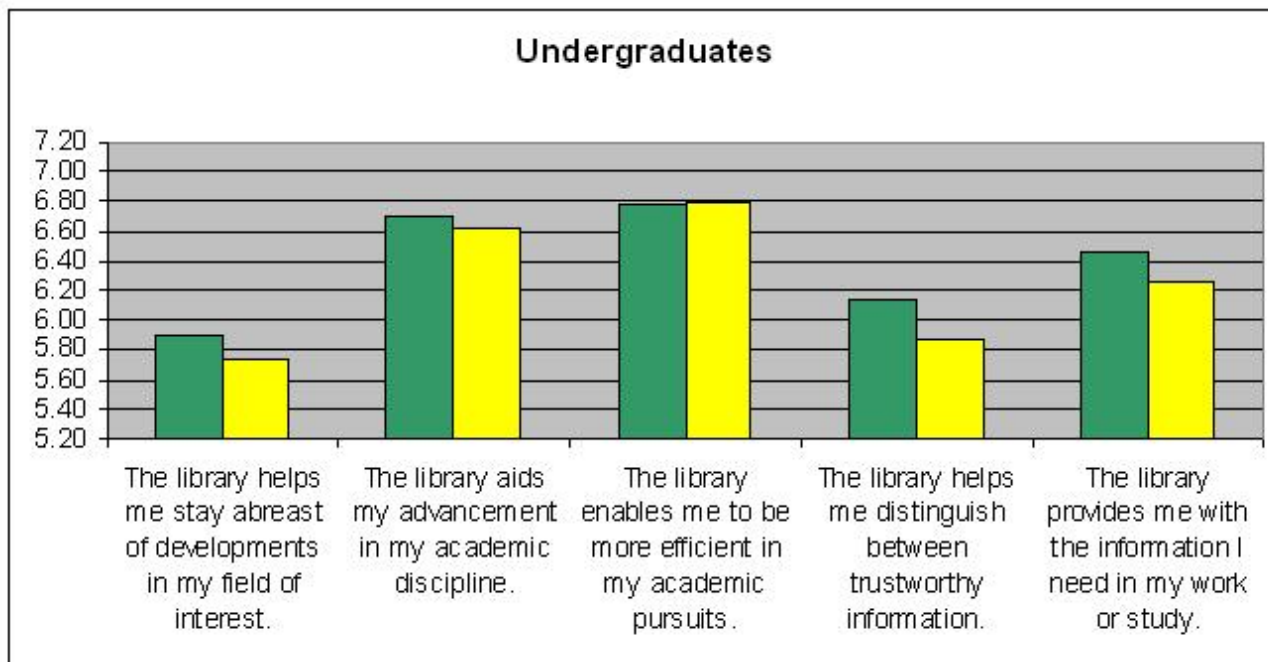
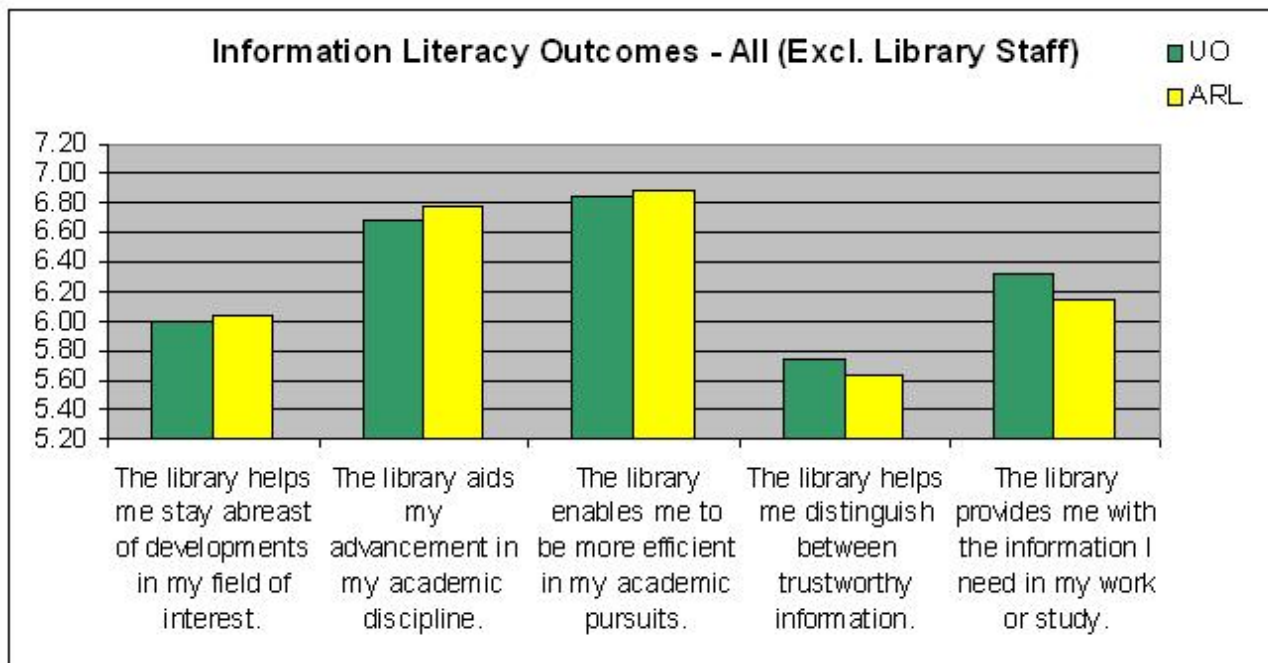


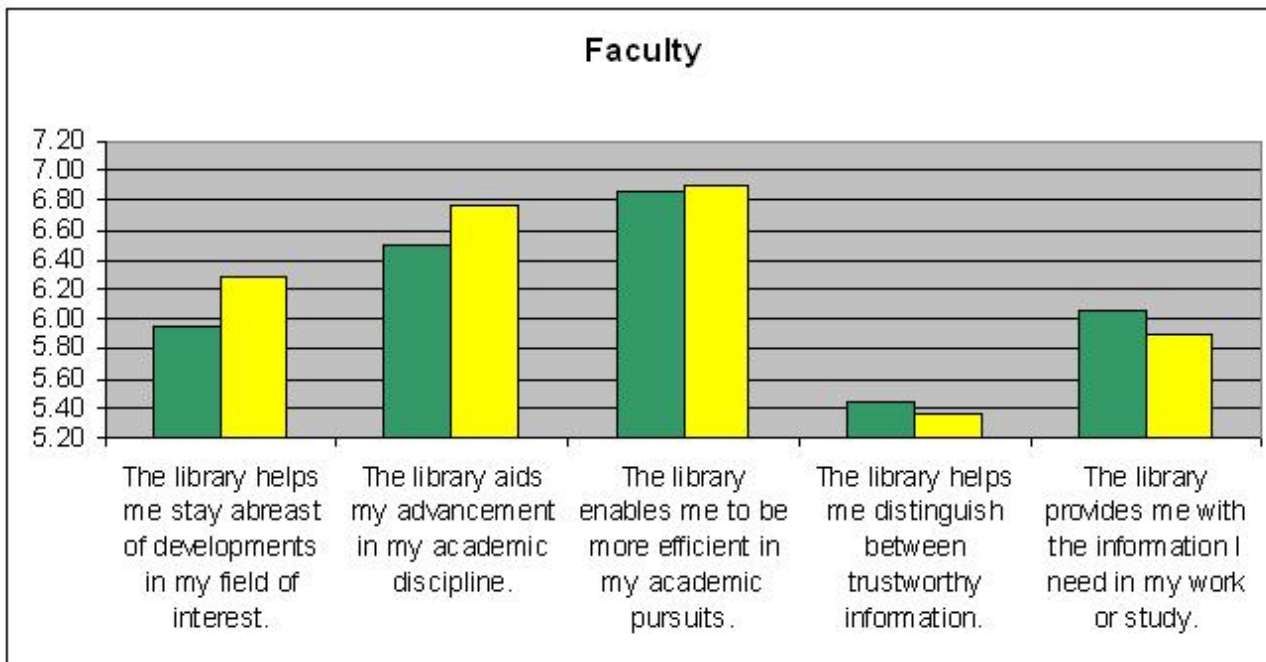
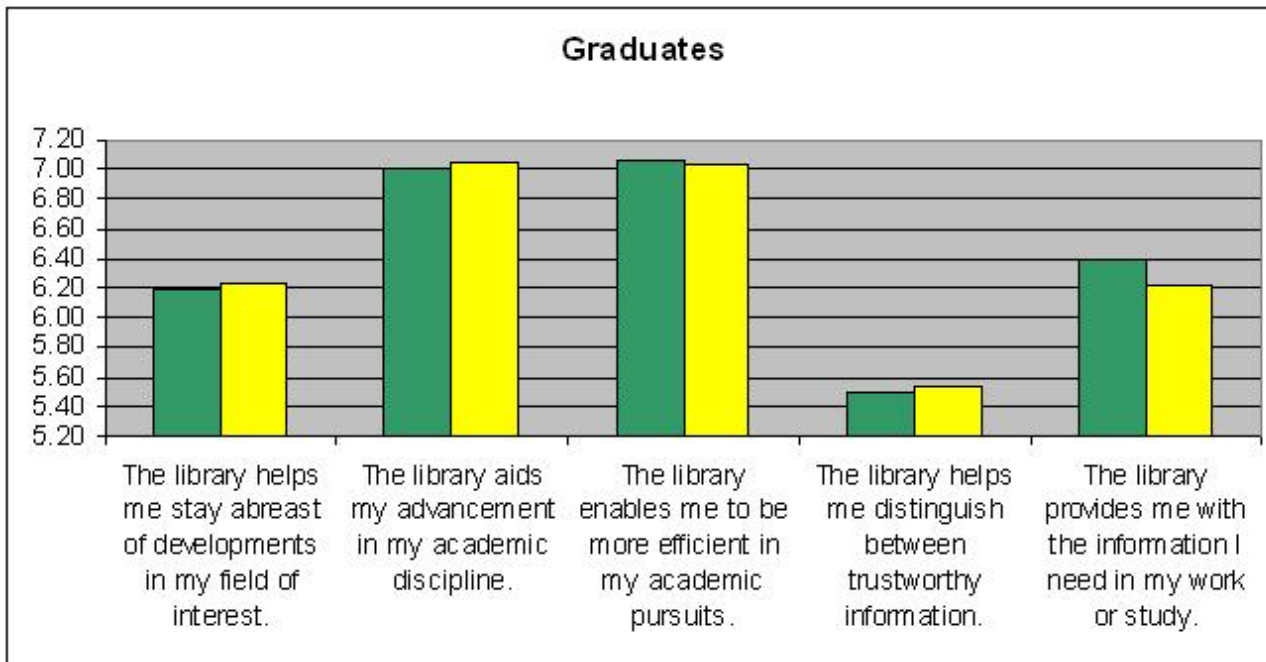
[Return to Main](#)





[Return to Main](#)





[Return to Main](#)

Previous to 2005, the UO Library last participated in LibQUAL+ in 2001. Because the survey has changed significantly from 2001 to 2005, direct comparison is impossible. However, a look at the superiority gap (the difference between perceived and desired scores), especially those aspects with a significant disparity will show whether certain trends are still present or whether new trends have emerged.

Undergraduates

In 2005, the five aspects with the greatest superiority gap were:

- Employees who instill confidence in users (-1.22)
- Making electronic resources available from my home or office (-1.12)
- Employees who are consistently courteous (-1.1)
- The electronic information resources I need (-1.06)
- Library space that inspires study and learning (-1.01)

In 2001, these five aspects had the greatest superiority gap:

- Enabling me to find information myself 24 hours a day (-1.83)
- Convenient business hours (-1.59)
- Full text delivered electronically to individual users (-1.33)
- Making electronic resources accessible from my home or office (-1.30)
- Complete runs of journal titles (-1.26)

Absent from the 2001 list are the aspects of service that cover confidence and courtesy. While not in the top five, there are analogous prompts in the 2001 survey that cover 'caring' and 'understanding,' and the gaps for these are similar to the gaps for their modern counterparts.

In 2005, only the aspect with the fifth greatest superiority gap involved the library as place. In 2001, the two aspects with the greatest gaps can be seen to fall into this grouping.

In one case, the wording of the survey was almost identical. The gap for 'making electronic resources available/accessible from my home or office' has decreased over time, though not enough to knock this aspect from top five.

Graduates

In 2005, the five aspects with the greatest superiority gap were:

- Print and/or electronic journal collections I require for my work (-1.93)
- The printed library materials I need for my work (-1.33)
- Making electronic resources available from my home or office (-1.26)
- The electronic information resources I need (-1.22)
- Modern equipment that lets me easily access needed information (-1.16)

In 2001, these five aspects had the greatest superiority gap:

- Convenient business hours (-2.06)
- Complete runs of journals (-1.98)
- Comprehensive print collections (-1.92)
- Space for individual/group study and research needs (-1.83)
- Resources added to Library collections on request (-1.77)

Both lists indicate graduate students were concerned about the library collection in 2005 and 2001. All five of the 2005 aspects relate

to the area of Information Control, as do three of the five in 2001.

Convenient business hours were of paramount importance in 2001. Such a question does not exist in the 2005 LibQUAL+ survey.

Space for individual/group study and research needs, with a significant gap in 2001, is an aspect that has been split in two on the 2005 survey. Interestingly, these two aspects show some of the narrowest gaps in 2005 – **Community space for group learning and group study** (-.2) and **Quiet space for individual activities** (-.4).

Faculty

In 2005, the five aspects with the greatest superiority gap were:

- Print and/or electronic journal collections I require for my work (-2.14)
- A library Web site enabling me to locate information on my own (-1.61)
- The printed library materials I need for my work (-1.45)
- The electronic information resources I need (-1.31)
- Easy-to-use access tools that allow me to find things on my own (-1.22)

In 2001, these five aspects had the greatest superiority gap:

- Complete runs of journals (-2.06)
- Comprehensive print collections (-1.87)
- Resources added to Library collections upon request (-1.73)
- Convenient business hours (-1.61)
- Full text delivered electronically to individual users (-1.36)

Faculty concerns in 2005 all relate to Information Control. Except for **Convenient business hours**, the same was true in 2001.

Journal access tops both lists, with an increase in the superiority gap over four years. Take into account recent budget concerns, this result might be expected.

Faculty concerns mirror graduate student concerns to a very high degree.

[Analysis of the 2001 LibQUAL+ survey](#)

[Return to Main](#)

