

# How can we serve you better?

**Assessing the quality of your library's services with  
LibQUAL+™**

**by**

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Coordinator**

# Assessment Goals & Objectives

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Performance quality assessment tools like LibQUAL+™ offer the means to go beyond traditional quantitative measures to discover:

- what our patrons value most and least about the library;
- how well we measure up to their service expectations;
- how we might improve services

# What is LibQUAL+™

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- Web-based tool for assessing library service quality
- A tool for identifying areas for service improvement
- Developed and refined over 5 years, 400+ institutions
- Based on SERVQUAL. 15 years of research and application at Texas A&M

# How Does LibQUAL+™ Measure Quality?

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## Rating of services *in context*

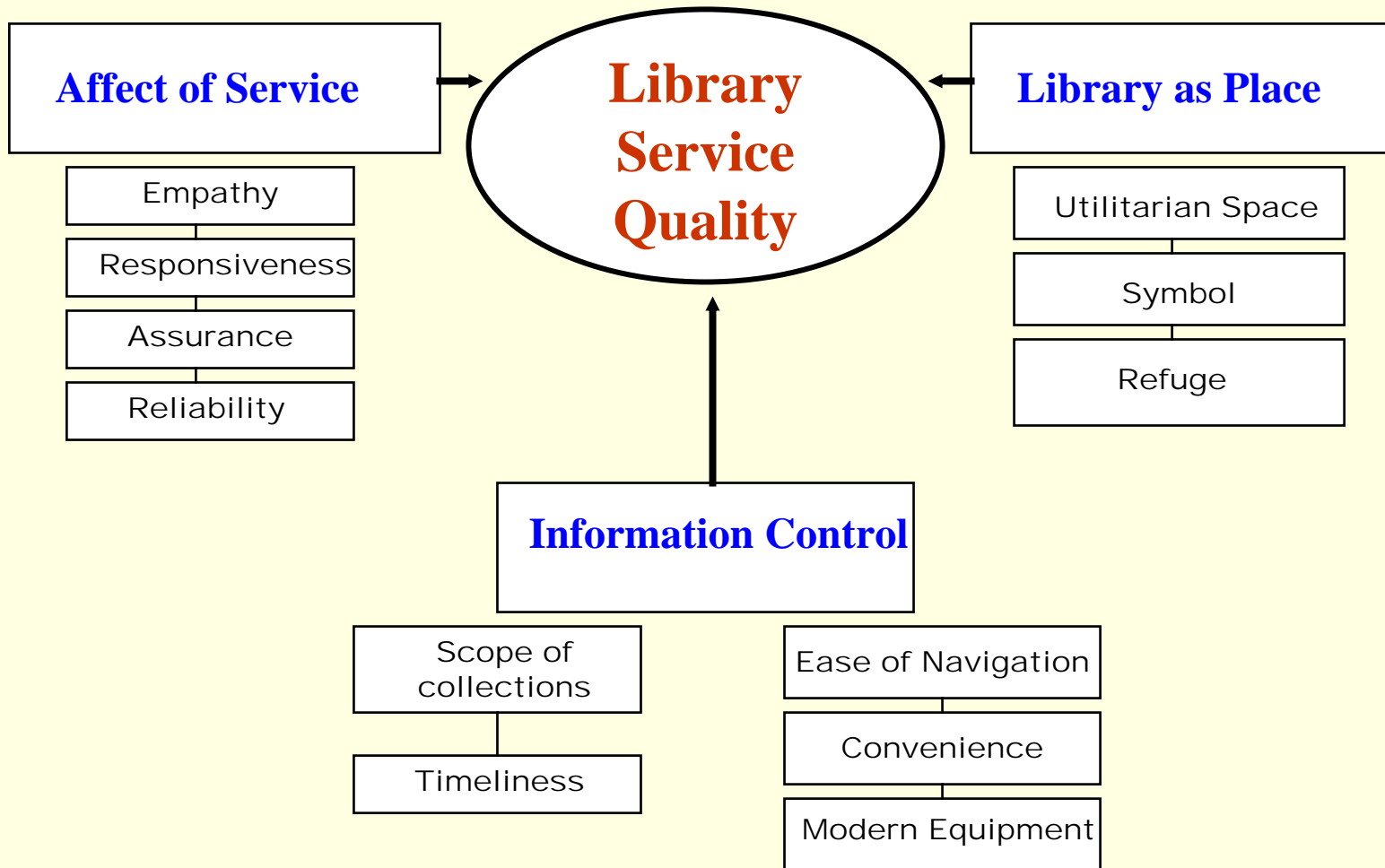
- Based on users' and non-users' perceptions and expectations
- **Gap analysis** between perceived level of service, and minimum and desired service level
- Comparison with other libraries, past years & developing norms

# Survey Components

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- 22 service quality survey questions in three service dimensions: Affect of Service, Information Control, and Library as Place
- 5 optional “local” questions
- Demographic & usage questions
- One open comments box

# LibQUAL+™ Survey Categories



# Why LibQUAL+™

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- **Quick, easy and inexpensive**
  - ❖ Web based survey administered by Association of Research Libraries (ARL); data collected and analyzed by expert LibQUAL+™ staff
- Allows a library to see relationship to academic libraries across North America over time
- Complements other local assessments
- Starting point to identify best practices in providing library service

# Benefits of a Canadian Consortial LibQUAL+™ Survey?

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## Sharing support & data from a Canadian context

- Consortial web site & data archive
- Analysis of group results
- Optional consortial questions (customizable)
- Locally hosted workshops
- Peer institution benchmarking

# LibQUAL+™ Canada Web Site

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- [Timeline/Action Plan](#)
- [Canadian Participants](#)
- [FAQ](#)
- [Sampling](#)
- [Data Analysis](#)
- [Resource Materials](#)

# For a Successful LibQUAL+™ Survey



- ✓ Grab your clients' attention with a well-organized promotion campaign
- ✓ Clear, concise invitation to take survey
- ✓ Reminder & thank you to respondents

# Some Survey Planning Issues

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- **Organization** – establish team (if possible) to review process, establish a timeline, implement survey & “buy-in” from library staff
- **Environment** – best time for survey; are other surveys being conducted at the same time?
- **Promotion & communication** – campus & library staff, e.g., Web site, posters, campus media, presentations, newsletter, etc.
- **Incentives** – What value? PDAs, MP3s, gift certificates ...

# More Planning Issues

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- **Random Sampling** – Yes or No?  
**Expertise?**
- **LITS and ITS contacts** – valued colleagues
- **Research Ethics Review Board** – do you need to submit a proposal?
- **Mass Emailing Policy** – does your organization have one?

# Research Ethics Review

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- All Canadian research institutions have ethics review and approval requirements for research studies involving human subjects.
- Queen's GREB - any research project involving human subjects, whether funded or not, must receive ethics approval prior to the start of the project.
- Tri-Council (CIHR, NSERC, SSHRC) exempts from such review "quality assurance studies, performance reviews or testing within normal educational requirements..." (TCPS, article [1.1\[d\]](#))

[Tri-Council Policy on Ethics Review](#)

# Analyzing Your Results

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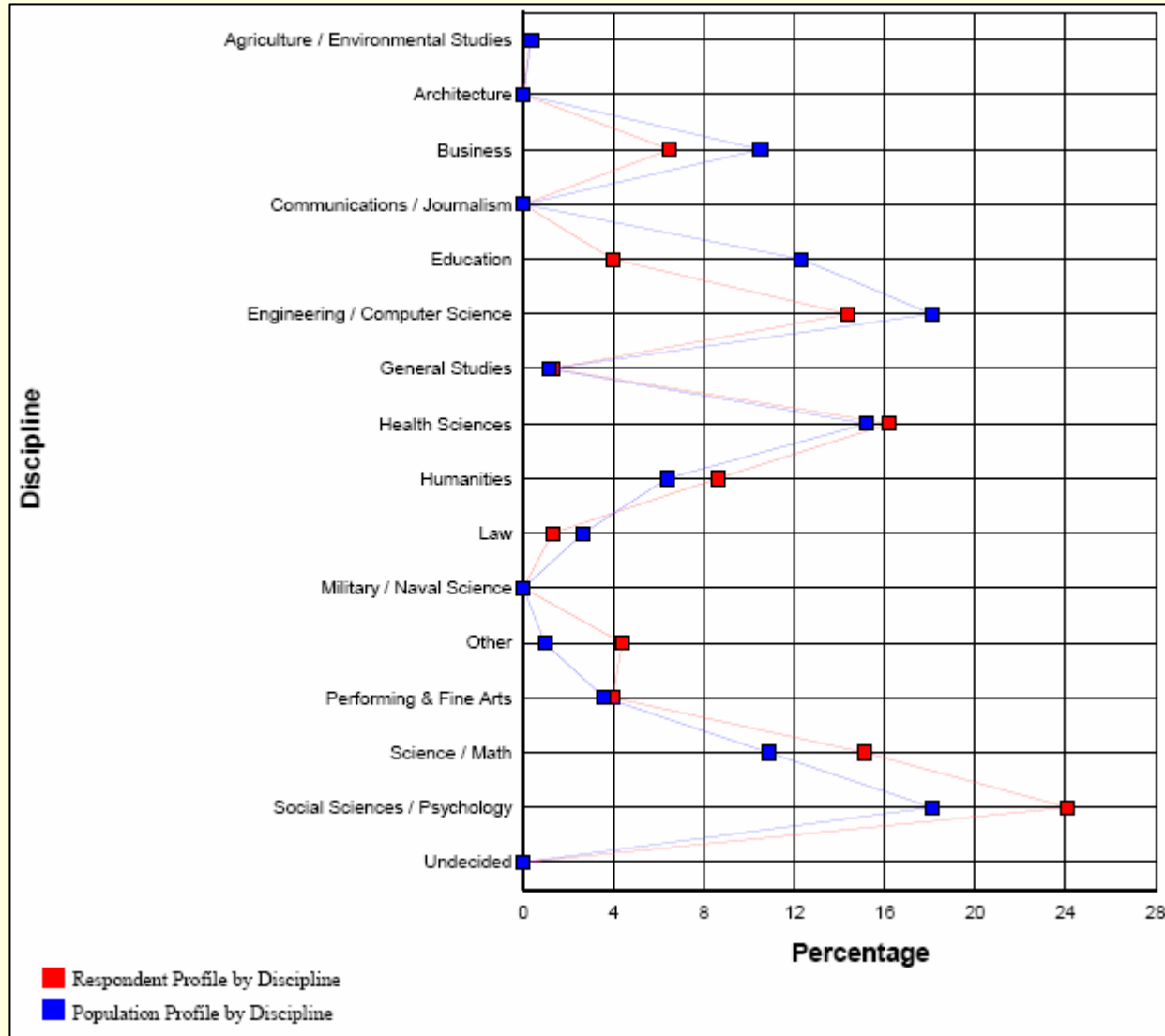
**Useful** statistics are **valid** inferences drawn from a **representative** sample population

# Sampling – Relevant Methods

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- Entire population if small
- **Random sampling.** All members have equal chance to be measured.
- **Proportional, stratified random sampling.** Each key demographic factor is represented in the same proportion as the total population, e.g. 20% faculty, 30% grad students, etc. **[preferred]**
- If a demographic group is small you may choose to sample the whole group (e.g. faculty) while sampling a larger demographic (e.g. undergrads)

# Representation by Discipline



# Reliability or How small is too small?

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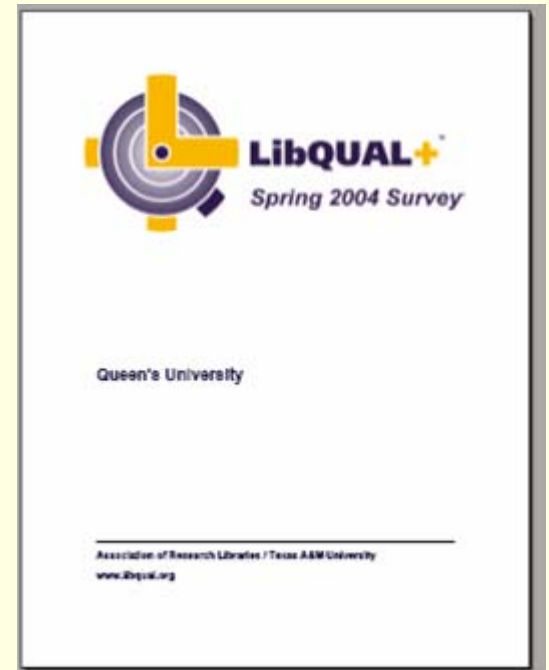
- Can the results confirmed by sources beside the LibQUAL+™ figures?
- Do the free-text comments support or contradict the scores?

**Any survey results can be a useful starting point for further investigation**

# Survey Results from ARL

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- ARL LibQUAL+™ report
- Real time online analysis
- Norms



# Survey Results – Data Analysis

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- **To further analyze the numerical data:**
  - MS Excel
  - SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences)
- **To analyze user comments:**
  - Atlas.ti (content-analysis software to )
  - In-Magic Database developed by Queen's University (to analyze user comments)
  - Any other database software

# Evaluating an Online Survey

## Potential Pitfalls

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- Self-reporting of responses
- Bias
- Accuracy of opinions
- Beware of making false links

# Aggregate Data & Local Results

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## Very High Importance – ARL & Local

Making electronic resources accessible from my home or office

A library Web site enabling me to locate information on my own

Print and/or electronic journal collections I require for my work

## Very Low Importance – ARL & Local

Giving users individual attention

Employees who instill confidence in users

Library space that inspires study and learning

# Differences among User Groups

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## Faculty at Queen's

- ❖ **Affect of Service** – perceived that libraries are **more than meeting minimum level** expected, close to desired
- ❖ **Information Control** – perceived that libraries are **not meeting minimum level** of service expected
- ❖ **Library as Place** – perceived that libraries are **more than meeting desired level** of service

# Differences among User Groups

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## Undergraduates at Queen's

- **Affect of Service** – more than meeting minimum level expected
- **Information Control** – more than meeting minimum level expected
- **Library as Place** – more than meeting minimum level expected

# Affect of Service

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Highly rated for:

- ❖ Employees who deal with users in a caring fashion
- ❖ Willingness to help others

# Information Control

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- ❖ Clearly the most important out of the three dimensions to all user groups & generally the lowest rated in service performance
- ❖ Faculty most dissatisfied; low negative rating
- ❖ Undergraduates are most satisfied; positive rating almost matches overall ARL rating.

# Library as Place

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- ❖ Service dimension with lowest priority for all three user groups
- ❖ Important to undergraduate students who are most frequent users of physical libraries

# Assessing Library as Place

## Multi-library system

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### Demographic criteria:

- Most used library

- + captures users regardless of discipline
  - some clients use more than one library frequently
- TIP: Add “remote only” as a “most used library” option to capture distance users.*


- Discipline or program


- + captures perceptions of users by discipline
- assumes certain disciplines frequent particular libraries

Survey Year: 2004

Sort Order:

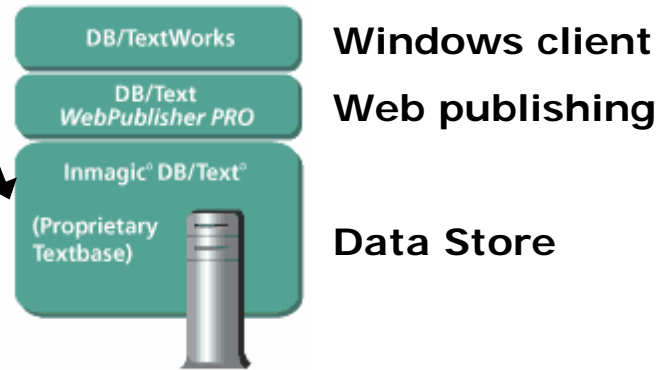
Show Comments:

 All comments as an Excel file

 All comments as a plain text file

Downloading & analyzing the free-text comments @ Queen's

Libqual\_export.csv



<http://db.library.queensu.ca/libqual/>

# Summarize major “themes”



**LibQUAL+**  
Home

## Results & Actions

- **Affect of Service**
- **Library as Place**
- **Information Control**
- **Comments**

FAQ

Invitation to Participate

LibQUAL+ Working Group:

LibQUAL+ Presentation (ppt)

Prize Winner

Project Timeline/Action Plan

Survey Progress Monitor

ARL LibQUAL+ Site

Questions? Comments?

libqual@post.queensu.ca

Sam Kalb, 533-2830

## LibQUAL+™ Library Service Quality Survey 2004 - Results



### Comments

361 respondents (45%) took the time to fill in the Comments box on the survey form. You told us that you are generally pleased with staff and services and think the Library does a good job with available resources. Some issues are clearly common concerns among our University communities. These have been summarized with some early indications of actions taken by the Library to affect improvements. You also offered numerous valuable suggestions and comments about specific services and facilities which will be reviewed by Library staff over the coming year. In some cases, further investigation will be needed before appropriate solutions can be found.

Review the complete file of comments at:

<http://db.library.queensu.ca/libqual/>

You can search by keyword, descriptor, most used library, academic program, & more.

Link to  
full DB  
query

### What you told us about ...

#### Library Staff & Services

- We may have a service or resource that you need but can't find. So you may assume it is not there. We have to find better ways to tell you about our full range of services and collections.

#### § Action Taken or Planned §

You may have noticed a new feature on the [Library homepage](#) called:

***You have said to us: "Wouldn't it be great if ..."***

where we have begun to post brief answers to questions about library services and resources you may not have thought to ask.

#### Access to Collections

- Access to online resources from off-campus is highly valued but it needs to be

# Query DB: What do grad students have to say about the Eng/Sci Library as space?

## LIBRARY SERVICE QUALITY AT QUEEN'S 2004 - SURVEY PARTICIPANTS' COMMENTS

**Search the comments** which survey respondents have submitted to date, using one -- or a combination -- of free-text keywords (use the **Help** button to learn the keyword boolean commands for this database). **Alternatively:** You can simply search by one of the "Descriptors" assigned by Library staff. In either case, to start your search, click on the **Submit Query** button (located at the bottom of the screen).

### Free-text keyword search:

### Descriptor search:

### In addition:

You can narrow your search by adding one, or a combination, of the following demographic categories, **OR**, you can search by these categories alone (either singly or a combination of categories):

### Campus Library most often used:

### User Group:

### Academic Program:

### Female or Male:

### Age:

Retrieval software: DB/Text *WebPublisher*, produced by [InMagic](#)


Done

# Communicating Results

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- Do not just post the ARL report
- Post interim results asap
- Summarize results as clear explanatory **text**
- Put most of the **charts** in appendices to support your explanation
- Insert **action items**  
**done, in process & to be planned**

# Client Assessment + Library Action



**LibQUAL+**  
Home

## Results & Actions Summary

Much has been accomplished already since the survey was completed, as indicated by the ticked boxes  below, but striving to exceed user expectations is an ongoing endeavour.

### Results & Actions

- **Affect of Service**
- **Library as Place**
- **Information Control**
- **Comments**

**FAQ**  
**Invitation to Participate**  
**LibQUAL+ Working Group:**  
**LibQUAL+ Presentation (ppt)**  
**Prize Winner**  
**Project Timeline/Action Plan**  
**Survey Progress Monitor**  
**ARL LibQUAL+ Site**

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**Questions? Comments?**  
[libqual@post.queensu.ca](mailto:libqual@post.queensu.ca)  
Sam Kalb, 533-2830

### Affect of service (Customer service) [Top](#)

Queen's strong overall ratings are supported by the many respondent comments praising customer service throughout the system. The comments also indicated some specific areas for improvement throughout the library system.

#### Areas for improvement

- Students and faculty are often unaware of library information resources and services they would find valuable, and how to make the best use of them

#### Actions

- Further develop liaison librarians' relationships with department faculty members and students (ongoing)
- Continue to work with faculty members and teaching assistants to integrate information literacy into the curriculum, and provide general, departmental and individual instruction (ongoing)
- Implement periodic "did you know" items on the Library home page to remind users of services and collections

\* Create a plan for promotion of library resources and services to Queen's students, faculty and staff (2005/06)

\* Re-investigate the demand and options for providing remote reference services and extending reference hours (2005/06)

# Creating Change - Summary

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- Consultation within the library staff & clientele to:
  - identify key areas of concern and initiatives already underway;
  - develop and implement plans for improvements, especially in weaker areas
  - publish the action items to be done & celebrate your successes.

# Next Steps

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- Develop strategies to address some of the longer term challenges highlighted in the survey
- Further investigation where necessary, e.g. focus groups, etc. *LibQUAL+™ is only one assessment tool*
- Continue doing LibQUAL+™ in future to assess improvements undertaken and to identify services that continue to need improvement as well as new concerns

# Resources

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- ARL LibQUAL+™ Site: <http://www.libqual.org/>
- LibQUAL+™ Canada Site:  
<http://library.queensu.ca/webir/canlibqual/carl-libqual.htm>
- Queen's University LibQUAL+™ Site:  
<http://library.queensu.ca/webir/libqual.htm>

# Thank You

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## Questions??

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