

# Still Bound for Disappointment? Another Look at Faculty and Library Journal Collections

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## Abstract

After the publication of “Bound for Disappointment: Faculty and Journals at Research Institutions” by Jim Self in 2008, academic libraries found new insights into one particularly frustrating piece of data. LibQUAL+ survey results have consistently shown that faculty at institutions with ARL libraries report negative perceptions of library service regarding journal collections. One key finding of Self’s study was the strong correlation between satisfaction with journal collections and overall satisfaction with library services for faculty. This study is a continuation of Self’s work, and applies the same methodology to recent LibQUAL+ data from ARL libraries and the faculty at Columbia University. Three years later, we hope to understand whether this trend of dissatisfaction has continued at ARL libraries, and particularly at Columbia. Why are faculty at Columbia dissatisfied with journal collections? Have other areas of library service become more important to faculty? As academic libraries continue to invest heavily in journals, particularly electronic journals, how can we continue to understand this issue, and meet faculty needs?

## Introduction

In 2006, Jim Self, University of Virginia (U.Va.), published the results of an analysis of ARL Libraries LibQUAL+ data, focusing on faculty perceptions of journal collections.<sup>i</sup> The LibQUAL+ item in question was IC-8: “print and/or electronic journal collections I require for my work.” Findings included the observation of negative adequacy gaps for IC-8 across ARL institutions from 2006, regardless of expenditures on journals.<sup>ii</sup> A correlation of 0.84 was determined for the journal collection item and the overall satisfaction item, confirming the importance of journal collections on faculty’s overall satisfaction with library services. The study also reviewed IC-8 scores for faculty at ARL institutions from 2004, demonstrating the consistently negative adequacy gap. Follow-up phone interviews with faculty at U.Va. shed some light on the complex topic. Issues of access—both physical and electronic, missing backfiles, and coverage of foreign titles were disclosed by faculty.

Since the study in 2006, U.Va. has worked to improve search interfaces, most notably by introducing a new version of the online catalog in July 2010. There has also been an ongoing effort to inform and instruct teaching faculty. Individual libraries have made improvements in their journal holdings and facilities. The Fine Arts Library transferred monographic funds to serials and devoted more physical space to journal use. The Music Library conducted a comprehensive review of all subscriptions, analyzing use and accessibility and identifying gaps in holdings. The study has educated library staff as a whole; there is recognition of the profound importance of journals.

Columbia University Libraries, which was included in Self's original 2006 analysis, participated in LibQUAL+ on a three-year basis since 2003, making 2009 the third instance of LibQUAL+ at Columbia. U.Va., however, has not participated in LibQUAL+ since 2006. Response to the survey at Columbia increased dramatically in 2009, with more than 3,800 completed surveys (a vast improvement over the response level in 2006: around 250 completed surveys).

This paper follows up on Self's initial inquiry, "Given the substantial investment in journals at ARL libraries, why are faculty at these institutions consistently dissatisfied with their library's journal collections?" In 2009, the collections budget at Columbia saw electronic resources outpace print for the first time. More than 50% of the collections budget now funds electronic resources, including e-journals. Before 2010, the collections budget at Columbia continued to grow at a healthy pace, accounting for inflation and then some. Why, then, do faculty continue to report dissatisfaction with journal collections at Columbia? This paper addresses the following questions:

- **Are faculty at institutions with ARL libraries more or less satisfied with journal collections in 2009 than in 2006?**
- **Why are faculty at Columbia continually dissatisfied with journal collections, as observed from LibQUAL+ scores?**
- **Does IC-8 continue to be the area of greatest dissatisfaction for faculty at institutions with ARL libraries, according to LibQUAL+ data?**

### **The LibQUAL+ Survey**

The LibQUAL+ Survey was developed by the Association of Research Libraries and Texas A&M University Library. The survey is administered online and collects demographic, library use, overall satisfaction, and perception feedback from library users. LibQUAL+'s central measures are the twenty-two core questions that approach library services from three perspectives: Affect of Service ("AS"), Information Control ("IC"), and Library as Place ("LP"). Respondents are asked to rate each of the twenty-two items on a scale of 1-9 in three ways: their minimum level of service, their desired level of service, and their perceived level of service. These scores together provide a rich view of user perceptions of library services. One of the key benefits to this rating scale is the analysis of the adequacy gap, i.e., the difference between the minimum ratings and the perceived ratings. This adequacy gap allows libraries to gauge whether or not they are meeting their users' expectations in each of the twenty-two areas of library service. An open-ended comment box, in which respondents are invited to share any additional feedback with the library, follows the twenty-two core items. These free-text comments provide context to the twenty-two survey items.

### **Methodology**

The methodology for this study was based directly on that used at U.Va. in 2006. Analysis includes data from ARL libraries participating in the LibQUAL+ surveys from 2006 through 2009. Notebooks for each ARL library were accessed and reviewed for the Information Control and overall satisfaction scores.<sup>iii</sup> Unlike the 2006 U.Va. study, only faculty scores were analyzed in this study; graduate students were not included. ARL institutions with fewer than 50 faculty survey participants were excluded from analysis.

At Columbia, the 2009 LibQUAL+ results were used to identify departments with negative adequacy gaps for IC-8. These departments were targeted with follow-up phone interviews using the identical interview protocol developed at U.Va. in 2006. Interview participants were asked about their minimum expectation for journal collections, their desired expectations for journal collections, and preferences for print or electronic journals. A series of themes were identified as significant. This paper includes a preliminary analysis based on the Grounded Theory methodology.<sup>iv</sup> In total, 24 faculty members were interviewed over the phone.

**Results at Columbia**

2009 faculty scores for IC-8 were no surprise at Columbia. As seen in Figure 1, the perceived score is well below the minimum, with an adequacy gap of -0.34.<sup>v</sup> Figure 1 displays the faculty scores for the twenty-two LibQUAL+ items, including Affect of Service (“AS”), Library as Place (“LP”), and Information Control (“IC”). The top of each bar illustrates the mean desired score, the bottom of the bar illustrates the mean minimum score, and the black dot illustrates the mean perceived score for each survey item. While the Affect of Service items show a relatively comfortable adequacy gap (other than AS-9, which has consistently garnered low scores at Columbia), nearly all of the IC items show perceived scores falling below the minimum. Library as Place items show a level of satisfaction, with lower desired scores. It is clear that from the high desired scores that faculty place the highest priority on Information Control items and report that the Libraries are not meeting minimum expectations in these areas. This is consistent with Columbia’s scores from 2003 and 2006.

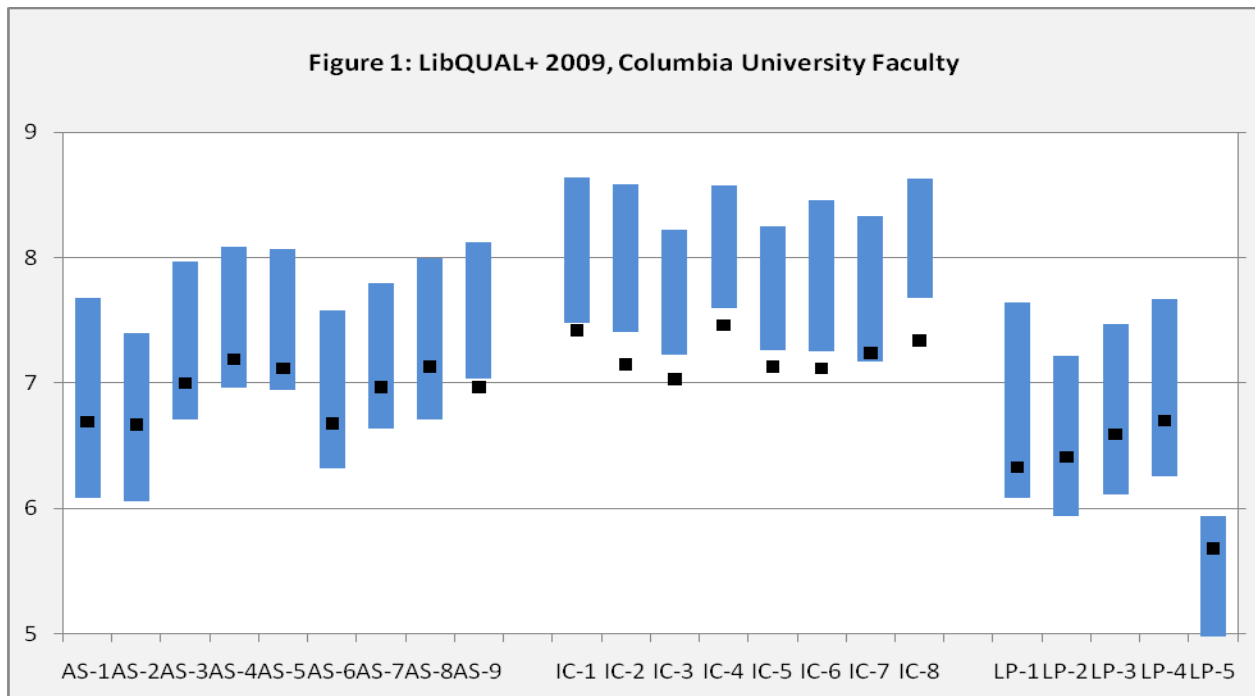
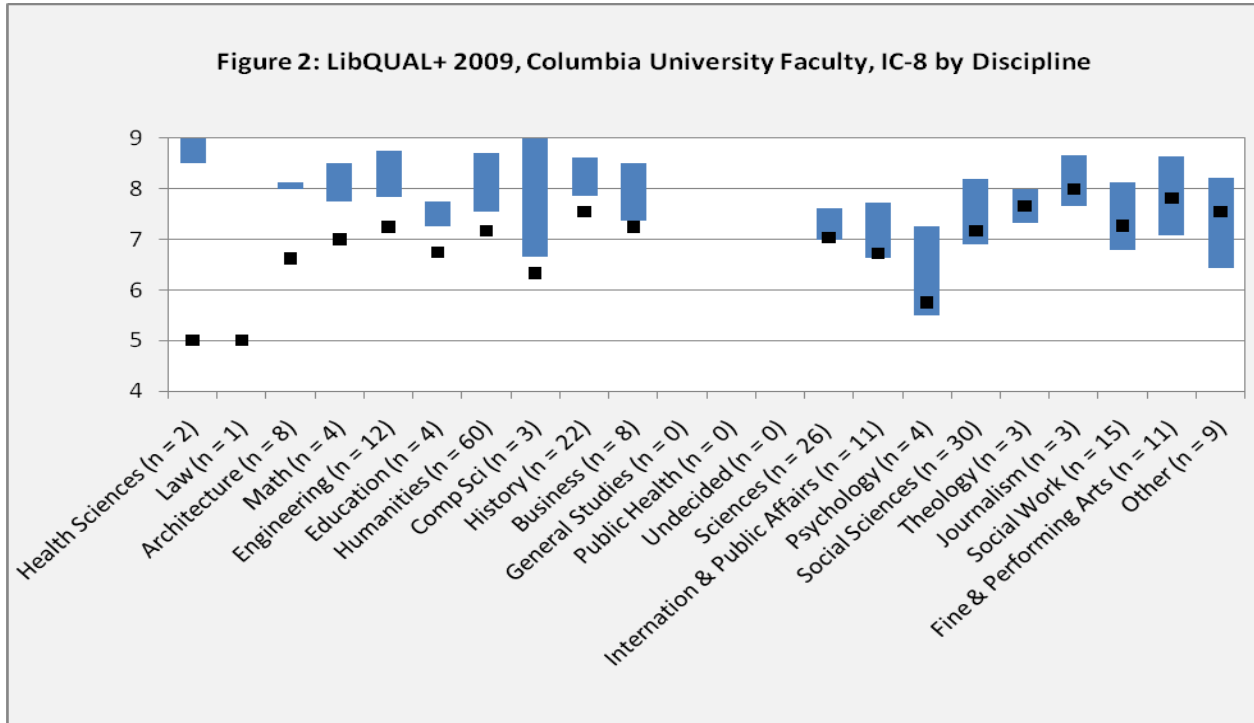


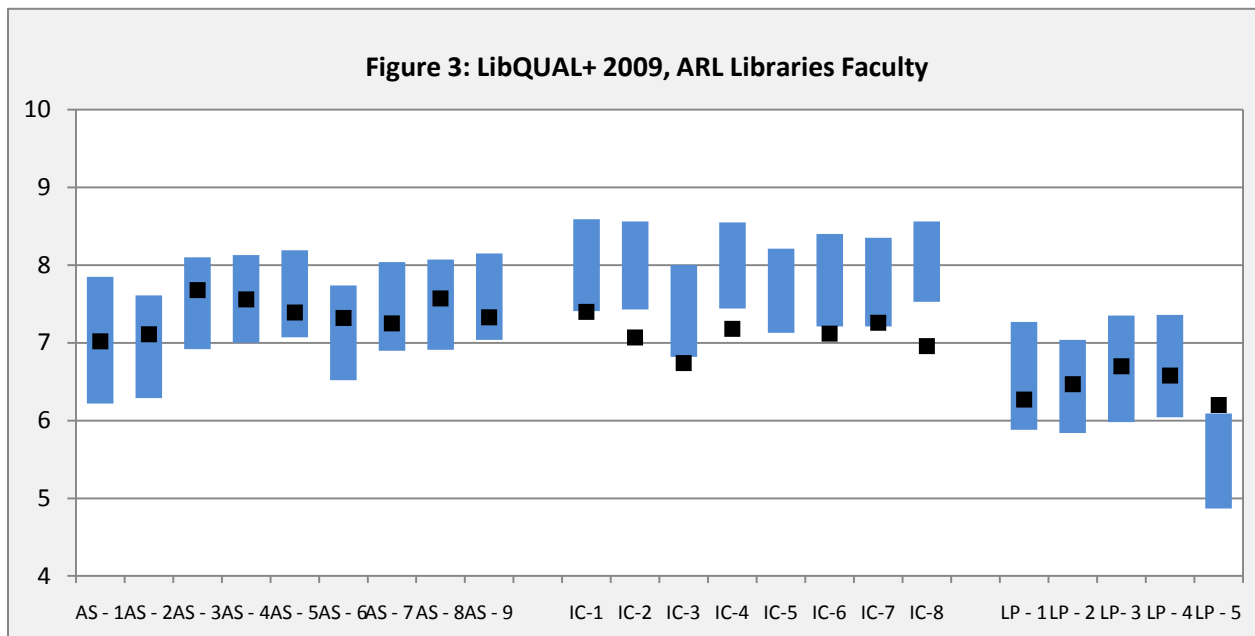
Figure 2 displays the scores for IC-8 by faculty discipline, illustrating that Health Sciences, Law, Architecture, Math, Engineering, Education, Humanities, Computer Science, History, and Business

faculty reported a negative adequacy gap for IC-8 in 2009 at Columbia. These departments were targeted for follow-up interviews with faculty, excluding the Health Sciences, Law, and Education departments, as these populations were not included in the initial survey sample. Many of the response counts for individual departments were low. However, it was felt that this was a sufficient way to identify which departments were relatively less satisfied than others, and all were included for the sake of consistency.

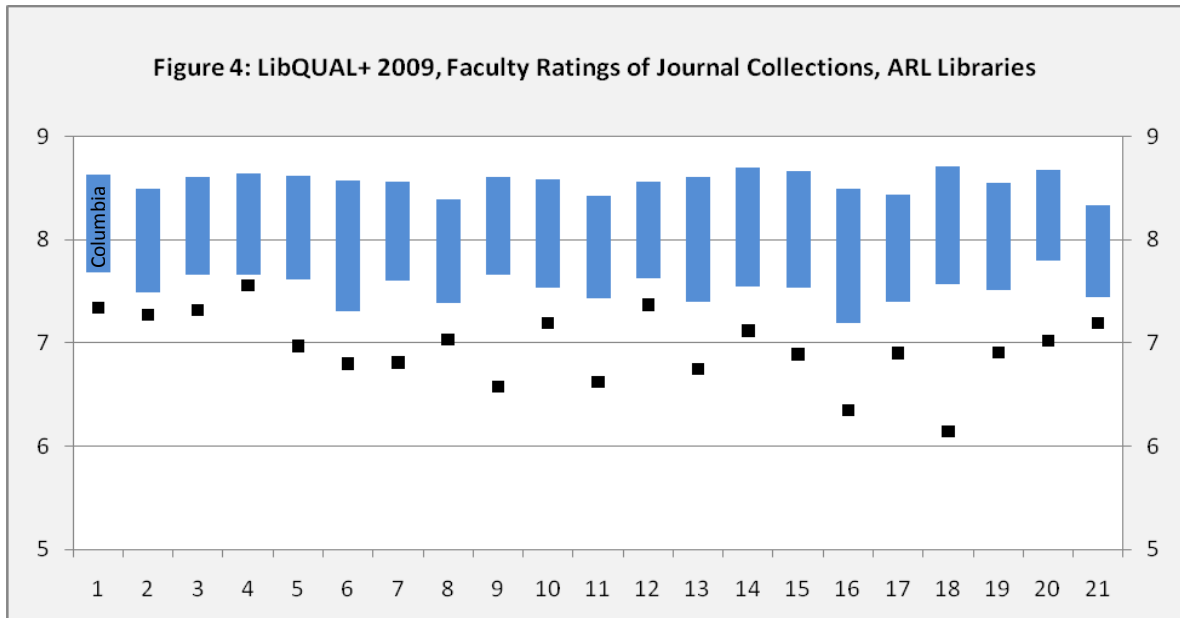


**Results at ARL Institutions**

Figure 3 displays the composite faculty scores from the twenty-one ARL libraries participating in LibQUAL+ 2009, included in this study. In 2006, Self concluded that there was no correlation between expenditures and faculty desired scores for journal collections ( $r = -0.14$ ).<sup>vi</sup> This analysis was not revisited in the current study.

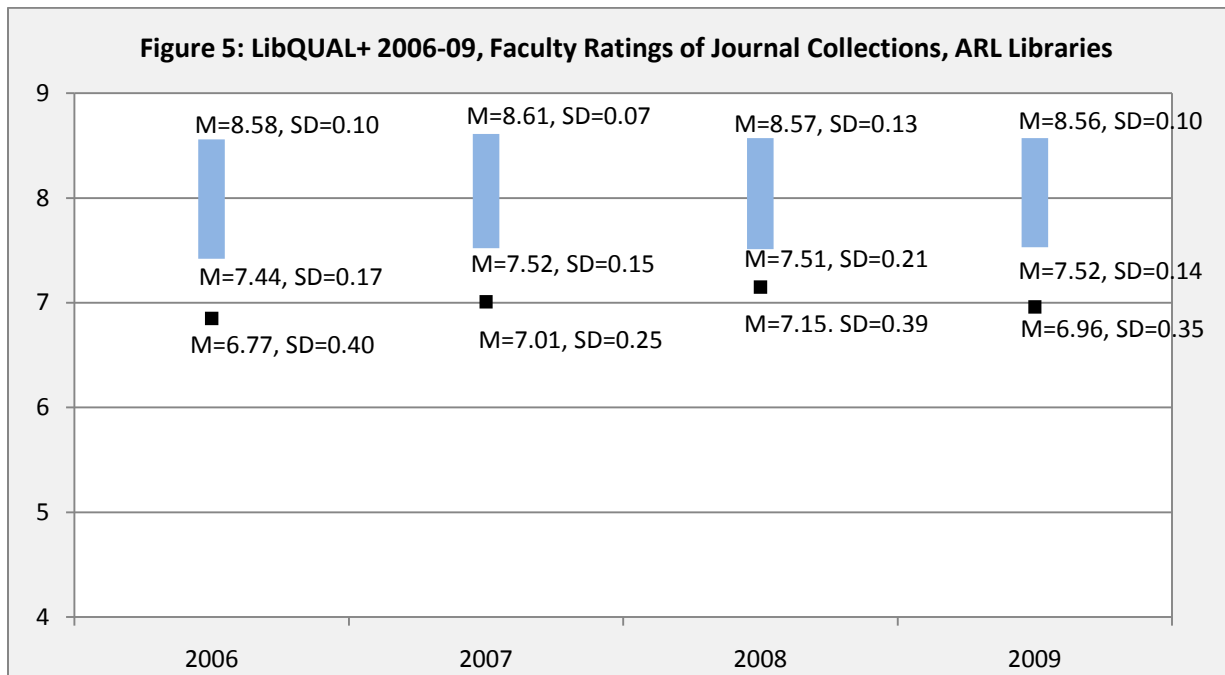


Looking at the 2009 scores for journal collections across ARL Libraries, it is clear that faculty across ARL libraries remain dissatisfied with journal collections. Figure 4 displays the scores for each of the twenty-one ARL libraries included in this analysis. Libraries are arranged from largest library (on the left) to smallest (on the right), based on total library expenditures as reported by ARL.<sup>vii</sup> Columbia is the first from the left in Figure 4. None of these twenty-one libraries achieved a positive adequacy gap in 2009. It can be observed that the desired scores appear relatively consistent between institutions (generally around 8.5) and not remarkably higher than the same desired scores for ARL libraries in 2006.<sup>viii</sup>



**Comparisons Over Time**

In his original study, Self illustrated that 2006 was not a unique year for negative adequacy gaps on IC-8, showing similar scores for ARL institutions from 2004 through 2006. Figure 5 displays IC-8 scores for ARL faculty from 2006 through 2009, further demonstrating the trend. The chart is labeled with the mean and standard deviation for each data point.

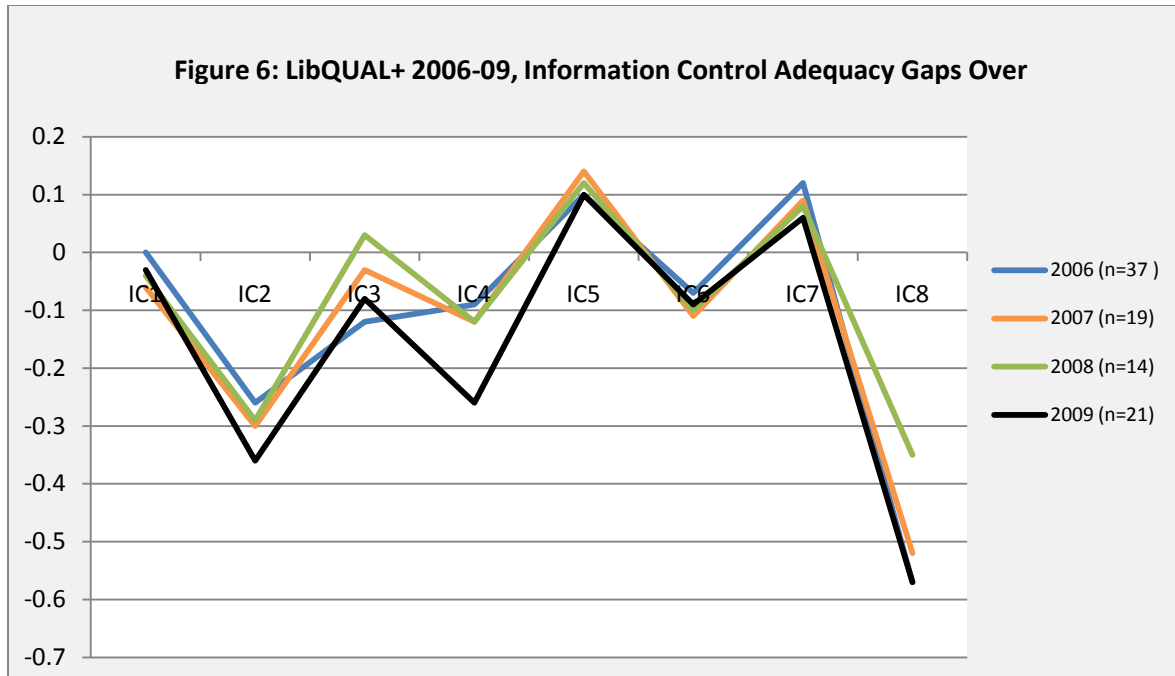


Taking this analysis further, another question was asked: Has there been a statistically significant change in IC-8 scores—indicating a change in faculty satisfaction—since 2006? After conducting an ANOVA (analysis of variance) using the mean adequacy gaps from each ARL institution for IC-8 from 2006 through 2009, the significance was calculated to be 0.119, which is not deemed statistically significant.<sup>ix</sup> In other words, there has been no significant change in the adequacy gap for IC-8 since 2006, and satisfaction relative to expectations remains consistent, showing neither improvement nor decline. Faculty are just as dissatisfied with journal collections today as in 2006. A more meaningful evaluation of change over time might involve the use of the individual respondent scores from each institution rather than means; unfortunately, this data is not available. ANOVA analysis was not conducted on the item scores (minimum, desired, perceived), and would be recommended to explore the topic further. Looking at the data in Figure 5, it can be observed that the desired scores have remained relatively stable, while the minimum scores and perceived scores have increased slightly. Is the zone of tolerance shrinking?

### **Information Control**

Information Control items have consistently shown the highest desired scores (indicating high-priority) among faculty, as well as the largest negative adequacy gaps. How does IC-8 compare to the other IC items in LibQUAL+? Charting the adequacy gaps over time illustrates the change in the size of the gaps, and whether the gaps are positive or negative. Figure 6 shows that the adequacy gaps for IC-1, IC-5, IC-6, and IC-7 have remained relatively stable. Items IC-2, IC-3, IC-4, and IC-8, show greater change over time. The observed change in these scores (aside from IC-8) has not been evaluated for statistical significance.

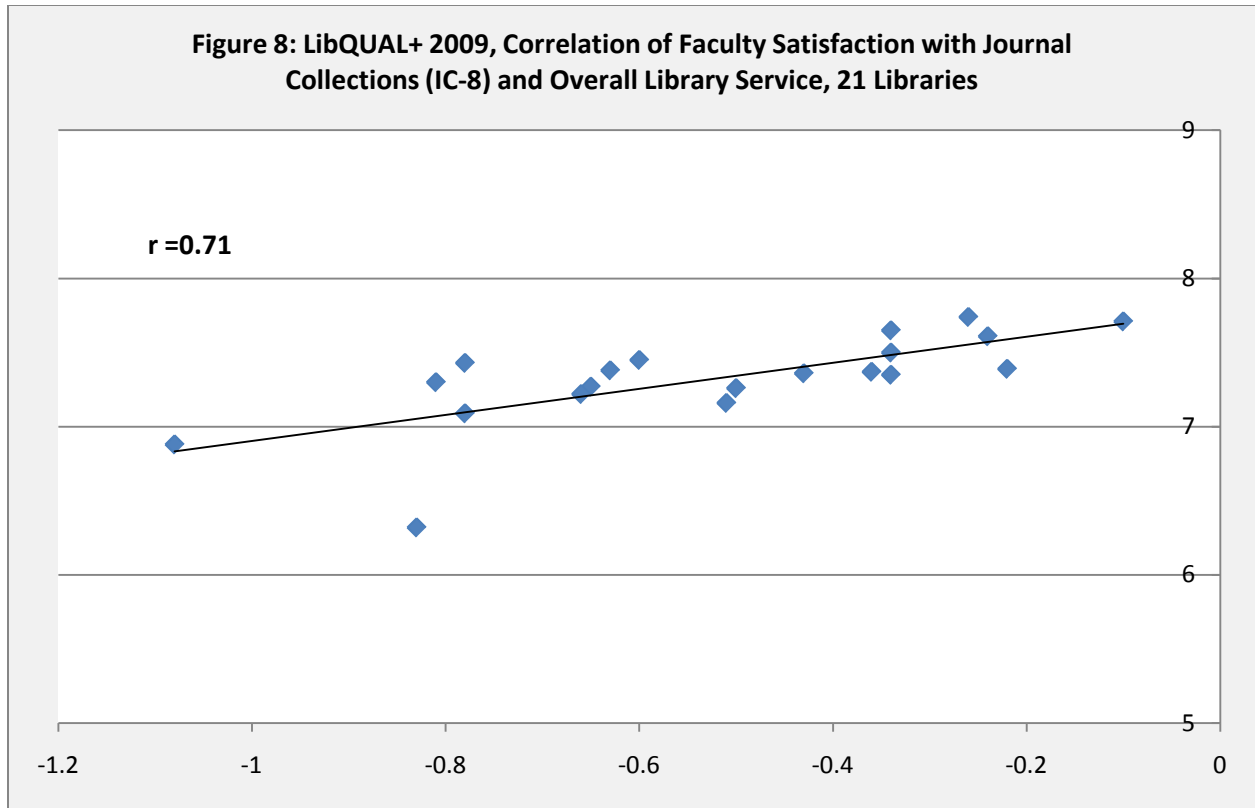
IC-4, addressing electronic resources, has had a consistently negative adequacy gap, indicating faculty dissatisfaction with service in this area. Looking at the IC-2 scores from ARL libraries since 2006, a similar trend to IC-8 can be observed. Faculty perceptions are consistently negative: libraries are not meeting faculty's minimum expectations for "a library Web site enabling me to locate information on my own." Due to the increasingly digital nature of journal collections as well as faculty dependence on the library website to access them, future analysis should explore the correlation between IC-2, IC-4 and IC-8. At the very least, it appears that IC-2 may be "the next IC-8," in terms of consistently negative adequacy gaps. Further, the website may play a critical role in improving journal collection and e-resource scores over time.



**Journal Ratings and Overall Satisfaction**

Following up on Self’s correlation analysis of IC-8 and overall satisfaction (“How would you rate the overall quality of the service provided by the library?”), additional correlations were run as part of this study. In 2006, Self found a strong correlation of 0.84 between journal collections and overall satisfaction. In 2009, a correlation of 0.71 was found (Figure 8).





When reviewing the correlation between each item and overall satisfaction with library services over time, IC-8 does show the highest mean correlation (0.67) with the smallest standard deviation between years (0.11). Looking at the correlations by year, 2008 shows the strongest correlations between IC items and overall satisfaction, with a mean of 0.78 and a standard deviation of 0.10. These correlation calculations would be stronger, and perhaps more accurate, were they computed using the individual scores for each faculty respondent from each institution, rather than the mean scores of all faculty respondents at each institution.

In Figure 9, there appear to be two clusters in the correlations. IC-2, IC-3, IC-4, and IC-7 show correlations in the high 50s across time. IC-1, IC-5, and IC-6 show correlations in the high 40s and low 50s. This may indicate that the collections, both print and electronic, and the ability to access them easily, are of greater importance to faculty's overall satisfaction with library services.

**Figure 9: LibQUAL+ 2006-09, Correlation Coefficient of IC-8 Adequacy Gap and Overall Library Service Score**

| IC Item | 2006 | 2007 | 2008 | 2009 | Standard Deviation (by question) | Mean (by question) |
|---------|------|------|------|------|----------------------------------|--------------------|
| IC-1    | 0.44 | 0.61 | 0.44 | 0.55 | 0.08                             | 0.51               |
| IC-2    | 0.71 | 0.55 | 0.61 | 0.42 | 0.12                             | 0.57               |
| IC-3    | 0.86 | 0.42 | 0.31 | 0.73 | 0.26                             | 0.58               |

|                              |      |      |      |      |  |      |      |
|------------------------------|------|------|------|------|--|------|------|
| IC-4                         | 0.71 | 0.67 | 0.4  | 0.61 |  | 0.14 | 0.60 |
| IC-5                         | 0.72 | 0.49 | 0.27 | 0.45 |  | 0.19 | 0.48 |
| IC-6                         | 0.73 | 0.58 | 0.42 | 0.12 |  | 0.26 | 0.46 |
| IC-7                         | 0.81 | 0.46 | 0.40 | 0.67 |  | 0.19 | 0.59 |
| IC-8                         | 0.80 | 0.60 | 0.55 | 0.71 |  | 0.11 | 0.67 |
|                              |      |      |      |      |  |      |      |
| Standard Deviation (by year) | 0.13 | 0.08 | 0.11 | 0.20 |  |      |      |
| Mean (by year)               | 0.72 | 0.55 | 0.43 | 0.53 |  |      |      |

### Following Up at Columbia

Twenty-four follow-up phone interviews were conducted with faculty from departments identified via LibQUAL+ scores as being dissatisfied with library journal collections (Figure 10). History faculty were not included in recruitment for this phase of the study. Faculty at Columbia were asked identical questions to those used at U.Va. in 2006. Faculty were asked about whether journal collections were meeting their minimum and desired service levels, as well as their preferences for print or electronic journals.

**Figure 10: LibQUAL+ 2009, Columbia Disciplines with Negative Adequacy Gaps**

| Columbia Discipline | Phone Interviews Conducted | N for LibQUAL+ 2009 | 2009 IC-8 Departmental Mean Adequacy Gap |
|---------------------|----------------------------|---------------------|--|
| Architecture        | 5                          | 8                   | -1.375                                   |
| Business            | 6                          | 8                   | -0.125                                   |
| Computer Science    | 4                          | 3                   | -0.333                                   |
| Engineering         | 4                          | 12                  | -0.583                                   |
| History             | 0                          | 22                  | -0.318                                   |
| Humanities          | 5                          | 60                  | -0.379                                   |
| Math                | 1                          | 4                   | -0.750                                   |

Overall, participants responded positively regarding the Libraries' journal collections, stating that, yes, the collections meet the minimum expectations. However, 15 of the 24 participants stated that, no, the library is not meeting their desired level of service for journal collections. Further probing uncovered some key issues: support, work-arounds, search and online access, collection gaps, coverage, quick list, and resources. (See *Appendix A* for additional quotes from each category.)

### **Support: Service provided by library staff and systems regarding journal acquisition, use or problems.**

These statements generally focused on the quality of automated responses from library systems, or lack thereof. Service issues could indicate a correlation between certain Affect of Service items and

satisfaction with journal collections. As the online collections continue to become more complex to navigate, expert support from library staff will become more important.

*“What would be great for faculty would be if when things are not available, there was one source in the library, extraordinarily skilled at tracking down items. [...] This happens about once a week for me that I need this service. [...] These people would be specialists in working the electronic and journal capabilities.”*

**Work-Arounds: Faculty’s alternate methods for accessing the journals they need.** There was some discussion about barriers to access when using library resources. Expectedly, faculty will find their own ways to access the articles they need, and are generally comfortable with their work-arounds. These work-arounds seemed rather common, and often complex or expensive. Librarians rarely played a role in this process, as reported in the interviews. While a primary concern is that faculty find access to materials, through the library or otherwise, there are some clear disadvantages to the work-arounds.

*“I just buy them individually from my research funds, so it’s coming out of my research money. I can afford to buy only individual subscriptions, so I can’t share with my students.”*

One professor reported an elaborate process of seeking out articles for a course (after using CUL’s search tools without success) and working with a colleague at another institution to get copies of the articles. *“It was kind of unwieldy, but I got her on the phone and I needed six articles from the journal from different years. We got on the phone and I would tell her the citation, and she would go to her collections, download the PDF, and sent it to me.”* This anecdote is striking for two reasons. One: it has since been confirmed that CUL *had* subscribed to the journal in question. Two: this professor *did* reach out to a librarian for assistance, but remembers receiving no response.

**Search and Online Access: Use of online tools to identify and access needed information.** Libraries typically present users with a series of search tools developed by various vendors, based on widely differing search processes. It’s no wonder that search and interface design are key issues for faculty. The comments on this topic reflect concerns about the Libraries’ catalog (CLIO), the journal search interface, and specific e-journal interfaces. There was also some discussion of the quality of indexing for journals—both print and electronic, and the ability to easily and efficiently use the Libraries’ website to find them.

*“I think just having free text search, like Google book search, would be something that would be very, very useful to have. I still feel like we are living 20 years behind where the rest of the world is in terms of being able to search these databases and large collections of books that we have.”*

**Collection Gaps: Instances where the Libraries do not subscribe to a particular title, or type of journal.** Foreign language journals were mentioned regularly. When participants were asked if they request titles that the Libraries does not currently subscribe to, most said no. The general sentiment was that the process for requesting could be streamlined.

*“There are things published around the world we don’t have. Things that are between journals and edited books [...]. University publications or things like that. Foreign journals.”*

Interlibrary Loan also plays an important role in managing collection gaps. A few interview participants noted that they wouldn’t be satisfied with the collections if ILL couldn’t get items from other libraries. *“I don’t recall not being able to get something at Columbia. And, when I needed it and they didn’t have it, it*

*was there through ILL.*” The consequences of these collections gaps are uncertain. One participant stated *“Fifty percent of the time [that I can’t locate an item] I go without. Fifty percent of the time I will email the authors or I will go to the author’s website.”*

**Coverage: Within a journal title, there are gaps in the back-file coverage.** Complete coverage of a held title is consistently desired.

*“Even if they’ve stopped issues for a year or two, I think it’d be good if they could at least get the back issues.”*

There are also issues of coverage currentness, particularly with e-journals. *“One obvious problem is that the [electronic] journals are always behind. We’re sending students to the library to read more recent issues.”*

**Quick List: Desire for a discipline-specific “quick list” that would provide easy access to the most important online journals.** These comments spoke directly to a relationship between the online search interfaces (perhaps indicated in IC-2) and the collections.

*“If I was to give a suggestion, maybe to have discipline-specific pointers that could help each discipline find things. [...] We need help remembering how to use the interface. It’s more of an interface issue than a collections issue.”*

PDFs were mentioned frequently and have clearly become the preferred format for accessing electronic content. Given that the Libraries’ website provides links to multiple vendors for a particular title (each with its own access caveats) there is a desire to know which one is “best.” “Best” would be, according to interviews, the one vendor that provides complete coverage of a title and PDFs for download.

**Resources: The Libraries’ allocation of resources.** Startlingly, two participants implied that they would prefer to have library funds diverted from acquiring additional materials for the collection, to making the collection more easily accessible.

*“The size of the collection is not as important as getting the current collection working as smooth as possible. Before, when we used to go to the library, we got service.”*

**Print vs. Electronic:** Regarding the preference for print or electronic, two of twenty-four participants stated a clear preference for print. A small number of participants responded that they would prefer to have both print and electronic available (as is often the case, currently) or that print is preferable for historic or archival materials only. Overwhelmingly, the flexibility and access to electronic journals was highly desired and praised, particularly when PDFs are available.

Some faculty stated that because some journals are currently available in print, they expect to keep accessing them in this manner. This may change over time, as more materials are digitized at higher quality and made available online. One participant stated their preference for electronic materials, noting *“A few years ago, I wouldn’t have said that. But, I guess things have changed.”*

**Remote Access:** There were far fewer complaints about connecting to online resources from off-campus than expected. The topic came up a handful of times but wasn’t at a “crisis” level for the majority of participants. In general, this did not seem to be a barrier for using journal collections for the majority of study participants.

### **Moving Forward at Columbia**

As of the writing of this paper, the Collections & Services directors, along with the Collection Development unit, are reviewing the results of this study. It is expected that the interview information, along with formal usability studies, will be useful in the upcoming redesign of the Libraries' website, as well as in the implementation of future search tools. Columbia will continue to engage faculty in discussions about journal collections. Their active involvement will be crucial in improving this area of library service. LibQUAL+ scores and comments will continue to play a role in tracking this issue at Columbia.

### **Summary**

Returning to our initial motivation for this study—"Given the substantial investment in journals at ARL libraries, why are faculty at these institutions consistently dissatisfied with their library's journal collections?"—what have we learned? Without question, faculty at ARL libraries continue to show dissatisfaction with journal collections, despite the continuing evolution of access tools, delivery services, and growing collections which ARL libraries provide. Given the economic downturn of 2010, LibQUAL+ scores may show a noticeable decrease in satisfaction with journal collections, depending on the impact of budget cuts throughout ARL libraries. Faculty at Columbia are satisfied with many aspects of the journal collections at CUL. Of course, they also want easier access to online journals, reliable PDF downloads, and better support from library systems and staff. Providing faculty with discipline-specific "quick lists" may be one way to bridge the gap in satisfaction with journal collections.

What, if anything, has changed since 2006? Relative satisfaction with journal collections at ARL libraries has not changed significantly since 2006. Faculty continue to show dissatisfaction with journals collections across ARL libraries. While it may be observed that desired scores for journal collections remain consistent and minimum scores are on the rise, the gap between the minimum and "reality" remains the same. And, it is a complex reality to navigate.

Information Control issues, as measured by LibQUAL+, continue to be top priority for faculty at ARL libraries, as well as a consistent area of dissatisfaction. As seen from the LibQUAL+ scores, print and electronic collections, including journals, and the ability of a library website to provide easy access to materials, are critically important to overall satisfaction with library services. As noted in the interviews, access and use of journal collections is dramatically more complex when dealing with electronic resources. Libraries will need to continue to address these needs by re-allocating resources and staff to this growing area of service.

Finally, are there other Information Control items that libraries should be watching? Yes: the library website—typically the sole tool for accessing and using journal collections—is becoming an area of consistent dissatisfaction among faculty. Journal collections, however, continue to be the area of least satisfaction for faculty at institutions with ARL libraries. It is expected that the relationship between the website and collections will only strengthen over time, for better or worse.

Clearly, the issue of satisfaction with journal collections is complex, ever-more technical, and faculty have little tolerance for faulty systems, as seen in LibQUAL+ scores since 2004. The evolution of the

electronic journal collections and the inherent access challenges will continue to play a critical role in faculty satisfaction as libraries strive to provide ever-better service.

### Collection Gaps

*"I tried to actually put in a request for this, but I couldn't find the web form."*

*"I don't know how easy it is to recommend a journal you don't have. [...] Maybe that could be a little easier."*

*"[...] We're global, so for us not to have various European or Asian journals, particularly older ones, is problematic."*

*"I've started to tailor my searches to the journals I know the library has."*

*"Especially in foreign languages. Some of them are quite new, you know, no one has probably ever requested them before."*

*"Send out a list every year; we could submit a list of what the library should [have]."*

### Interlibrary Loan

*"There are so many other means of access, whether it's via JSTOR or Borrow Direct or some other resource. I always manage to get the article I'm looking for."*

*"I will say, it's rare – ILL is wonderful; it's rare that they [ILL] can't find a copy of an article somewhere or a journal somewhere. But, it can take a very long time and sometimes on rare occasions, they can't."*

### Quick List

*"[...] One thing that we used to have a long time ago that's no longer there is a list of the most commonly used journals, or the top journals in economics and finance. So a page on the website that would then be a collection of links to maybe the top thirty or so journals in economics and finance, and just go there. It saves a few steps. It would be good to reinstate that, and maybe have different lists for different departments."*

*"On my web page I have my favorite journals, and it worked fine until you changed it. [...] So, originally, my idea of a home page was one stop. Everything's here. You don't have to do anything else."*

*"It would be nice if there was just a quick list and easy guide to the most popular titles."*

*"To create real interface pages for particular disciplines and fields that are annotated connections to journals online and databases."*

*"If there's an opportunity to improve the web interfaces, and add discipline-specific hints for navigating to the online collections. I don't do it often enough to always remember how to do it."*

*"You know, top ten lists of highly recommended books or articles that someone has really benefitted from. And, I suppose if the library had some way of selecting things that would be specifically of interest and very targeted, that might make a difference."*

## **Resources**

*"Don't touch the collection, and put the money into figuring out how to be able to use it off campus or on, so it's transparent."*

*"The collection is a pain. It's throwing away money until I can use it."*

*"That would be something I would have the field of librarianship work on. How to use the technology to make it more user-friendly, rather than spend resources trying to collect print."*

## **Search and Online Access**

*"In CLIO, if I want to do a search, it's not always accurate as to what journals are available and what we don't have. So, you have to go through multiples resources to know for sure."*

*"There might be a way to streamline ways of downloading articles. Sometimes you go to the web site and see five different sources for the same journal. One's cleaner, some are better formatted, some are the same, and it's not always easy to tell which ones are best. [...] If there's five sources someone could go through them and see which ones are best."*

*"I counted once how many times I had to click to get to what I wanted, finally in PDF form, and it was something like ten clicks."*

*"I had the impression that, depending on how I searched [in the catalog], I would get completely different results."*

*"I'll be browsing nature.com and then I'd like to read an article and there's no easy way for me to suddenly be at that same page but logged in with my CU credentials. Instead I have to open a new browser and go through Columbia's interface to get back to the same page [...] That's certainly consistent with the minimum required."*

*"Sometimes it's a bit difficult. Sometimes I just go and talk to a reference librarian because I'm not very good at navigating the system."*

## **Support**

*"I want a response that someone got my request. And if nothing happens, someone to call."*

*"I need training."*

*"I do always feel that if I have any questions that I always get a sense of helpfulness in all the libraries."*

## **Work-Arounds**

*"I've never had any problems getting what I wanted, but that's also because I have a research assistant."*



*“If it’s directly in my work, I’ll just buy it myself.”*

*“When I can’t find something through ILL, I ask colleagues in the field if they know of a place to get it, and then to resources of their university. Can they make a copy of the given article or something like that.”*

*“I personally subscribe to several journals which are the ones that I most read. Which are the ones that I would most read if they were in the library, but I have them myself as part of, in some cases, society memberships.”*

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<sup>i</sup> Self, James. “Bound for Disappointment: Faculty and Journals at Research Institutions,” *ARL: A Bimonthly Report* 257 (2008): 7-11.

<sup>ii</sup> Adequacy gaps, when dealing with LibQual+, measure the difference between the minimum score and the perceived score of a given survey item. A negative adequacy gap, such as -0.5, tells us that perceived service ratings were lower than the minimum service ratings, i.e., that respondents are dissatisfied with the level of service.

<sup>iii</sup> Cook, Colleen, et al., *LibQUAL+ 2009 Survey Notebook*. Washington DC: Association of Research Libraries, 2009, [http://libqual.org/documents/LibQual/notebooks/57\\_6.pdf](http://libqual.org/documents/LibQual/notebooks/57_6.pdf). [Notebook 2009.pdf](http://libqual.org/documents/LibQual/notebooks/57_6.pdf). LibQUAL+ notebooks are available only to survey participants within a given year, through the LibQUAL+ website. This article complies with the LibQUAL+ Policy on Disseminating Results “Institutions may use other libraries’ data in a confidential manner without disclosing the institutional identity of other libraries.”

<sup>iv</sup> Anselm L. Strauss. *Qualitative analysis for social scientists*. Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press, 1987.

<sup>v</sup> Special thanks to Rebecca Chovnick for her work as a Research Assistant for this project.

<sup>vi</sup> Self, “Bound for Disappointment,” 9.

<sup>vii</sup> ARL Statistics. Washington DC: Association of Research Libraries, 2008, <http://www.arl.org/bm~doc/arlstat08.pdf>, 86. Accessed August 28, 2010.

<sup>viii</sup> Cook, Colleen, et al., *LibQUAL+ 2006 Survey Notebook*. Washington DC: Association of Research Libraries, 2006, [http://old.libqual.org/Manage/Results/Results\\_2006/index.cfm](http://old.libqual.org/Manage/Results/Results_2006/index.cfm).

<sup>ix</sup> Special thanks to Shanna Jaggars for her assistance and advice with analysis.