



# 2009 LibQUAL+ Executive Summary

LibQUAL+ is a rigorously tested Web-based survey that libraries use to solicit, track, understand, and act upon users' opinions of service quality. LibQUAL+ is supported by the Association of Research Libraries and designed to help assess and improve library services, change organizational culture, and market the library. This survey has been used by more than 1000 libraries and 1.4 million library patrons.

The goals of LibQUAL+ are to:

- Foster a culture of excellence in providing library service
- Help libraries better understand user perceptions of library service quality
- Collect and interpret library user feedback systematically over time
- Provide libraries with comparable assessment information from peer institutions
- Identify best practices in library service
- Enhance library staff members' analytical skills for interpreting and acting on data

Below are results and comments from the latest LibQUAL+ survey of the University Library. The survey consists of 22 questions where respondents are asked to rate the minimum, desired and actual ("perceived") quality of service. By completing all three, a "gap-analysis" is determined that allows the Library to see opportunities for improvement and growth.

## LibQUAL+ at SCU

The Library used the LibQUAL+ instrument in 2003 and 2006, and this year's survey was completed by 1187 respondents, up from 474 in 2006, but down from 1482 total respondents in 2003.

LibQUAL+ also provides for narrative feedback and, in 2009, 456 comments were shared (see **sampling** below).

### The 2009 respondents:

658	Undergraduate Students
346	Graduate Students
106	Faculty
77	Staff
1187	Total

## Demographic Highlights

Female respondents were 61% of the total respondents in 2009, which was consistent with previous years.

Response rate broken down by year in school, faculty, staff, etc. mostly tracked their respective percentages in the University.

- The oversampling of first year students was somewhat higher in 2009 than 2006.
- There was a more representative sample of graduate students in 2009 than in 2006.

2009 response rates by discipline showed a good correlation with the respective populations at the University and showed improvements from 2006. The response rate for Business might be problematic.

- Business undersampling decreased from 12.34% in 2006 to 6.12% in 2009.
- Humanities oversampling decreased from 8.10% in 2006 to 3.29% in 2009.
- Social Sciences / Psychology oversampling decreased from 9.81% in 2006 to 3.53% in 2009.

# General Findings

LibQUAL+ measures service quality across three dimensions: Affect of Service (AS), Information Control (IC) and Library as Place (LP).

- Students rated Affect of Service as less important than faculty and staff.
- Information Control (collections and access to collections) showed superiority gaps from all groups. This is especially pronounced among faculty who rated 5 of 8 measures less than what they regard as the minimum level (in 2003 only 2 measures were rated less than minimum). Staff rated one of these measures as less than minimum.
- Grad students saw improvement in Information Control measures from 2003 to 2009.
- Only the IC question regarding equipment received good ratings from all groups.
- Library as Place is most important to undergraduate and graduate students, least important to faculty.
- Only faculty gave any ratings that exceeded the desired level - both were in relation to Library as Place.
- Overall, staff had the highest expectations for the Library and rated the Library the highest.

## Comparisons for 2003, 2006, and 2009 with All Groups Combined (Except Library Staff)

- Ratings from Information Control and Library as Place were generally worse (often quite bad) in 2006 than in 2003 or 2009. Since the Library was in transition in 2006, a lot of this is attributable to the impending move.
- Affect of Service
  - This domain is most consistent over time.
  - "Employees who instill confidence in users" and "Giving users individual attention" received the lowest minimum scores in all years.
  - "Giving users individual attention" lower in 2009 than previous years.
  - The superiority gap for "Employees who are consistently courteous" increased from study to study.
- Information Control
  - Access to suitable print collections is a concern in all 3 surveys.
  - The only superiority gap less than .80 in 2009 was the equipment question.
  - Ratings for "A library web site enabling me to find information on my own" are poorer in 2009 than 2003.
  - The superiority gap for "Making electronic resources accessible from my home or office" is greater than 1.00 for all years.
- Library as Place
  - Generally the minimum, desired, and perceived means were all higher in 2009 than in 2003.
  - Clearly greater expectations in 2009 than in previous years and these expectations were partly met.
  - The IC questions regarding modern equipment follows the same pattern as the first point and should probably be grouped with those measures.
  - Quiet space remains an issue.

# Dimensions of Library Service Quality

LibQUAL+ measures three dimension of library service quality:

- **Affect of Service** (knowledgeable, responsive and courteous service)
- **Information Control** (books, journals, electronic resources easily accessible)
- **Library as Place** (environment, comfortable study space, enables collaboration)

Affect of Service (AS) is determined by the following questions:

AS-1	Employees who instill confidence in users
AS-2	Giving users individual attention
AS-3	Employees who are consistently courteous
AS-4	Employees who have the knowledge to answer user questions
AS-5	Employees who deal with users in a caring fashion
AS-6	Employees who understand the needs of their users
AS-7	Willingness to help users
AS-8	Dependability in handling users' service problems

Information Control (IC) is determined by the following questions:

IC-1	Making electronic resources accessible from my home or office
IC-2	A library Web site enabling me to locate information on my own
IC-3	The printed materials I need for my work
IC-4	The electronic information resources I need
IC-5	Modern equipment that lets me easily access needed information
IC-6	Easy-to-use access tools that allow me to find things on my own
IC-7	Making information easily accessible for independent use
IC-8	Print and/or electronic journal collections I require for my work

Library as Place (LP) is determined by the following questions:

LP-1	Library space that inspires study and learning
LP-2	Quiet space for individual activities
LP-3	A comfortable and inviting location
LP-4	A getaway for study, learning, or research
LP-5	Community space for group learning and group study

## Radar Charts

LibQUAL+ depicts survey results in radar charts and the overall responses for the 22 standardized questions are presented below.

In the gap analysis, all responses that are within "zone of tolerance" are presented in Blue (perceived greater than minimum) or Yellow (perceived less than desired).

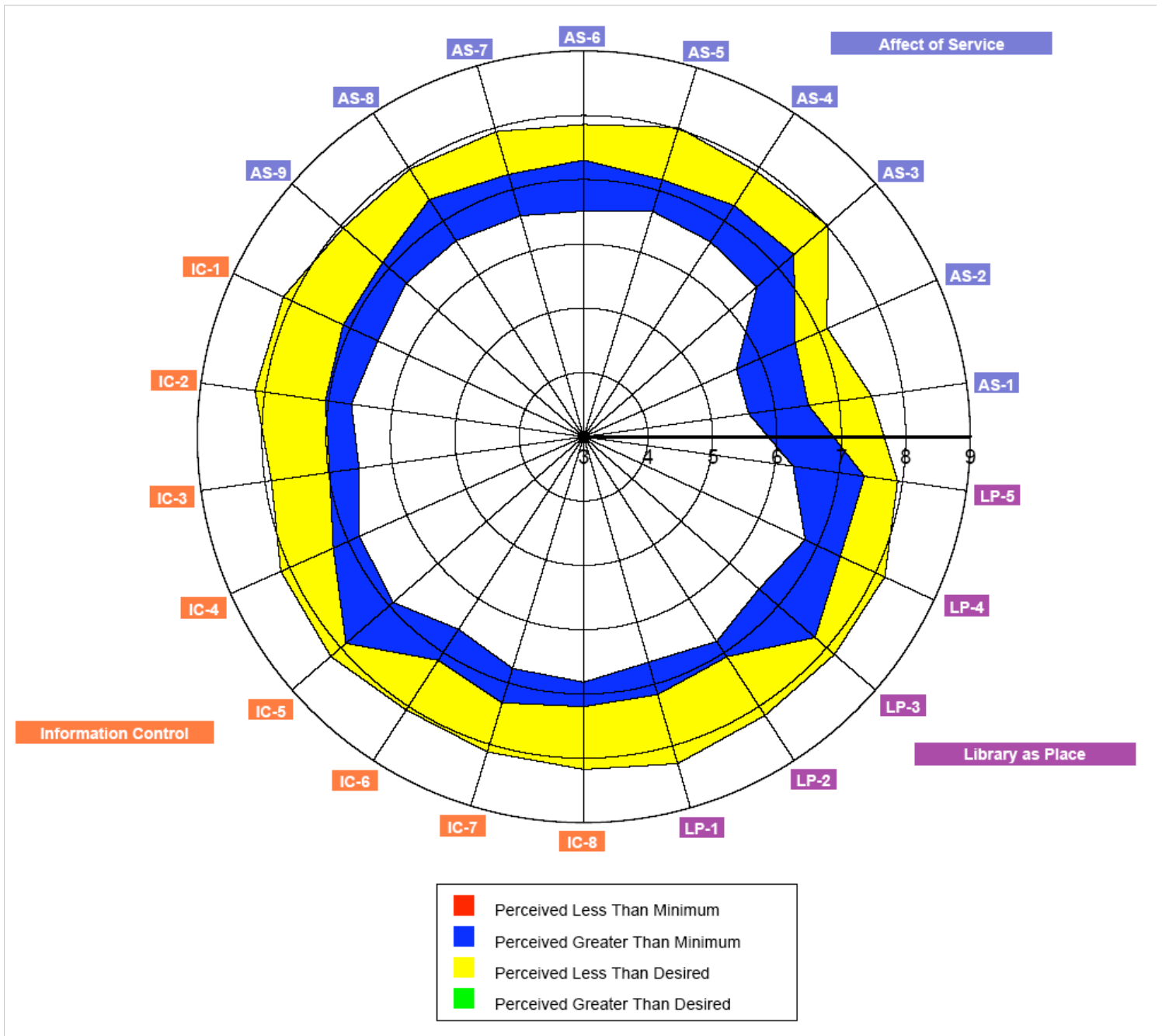
Areas of satisfaction or concerns are indicated using the color Green (perceived greater than desired) and Red (perceived less than minimum).

Following are four radar charts which present, in a glance, the feedback on LibQUAL+ from:

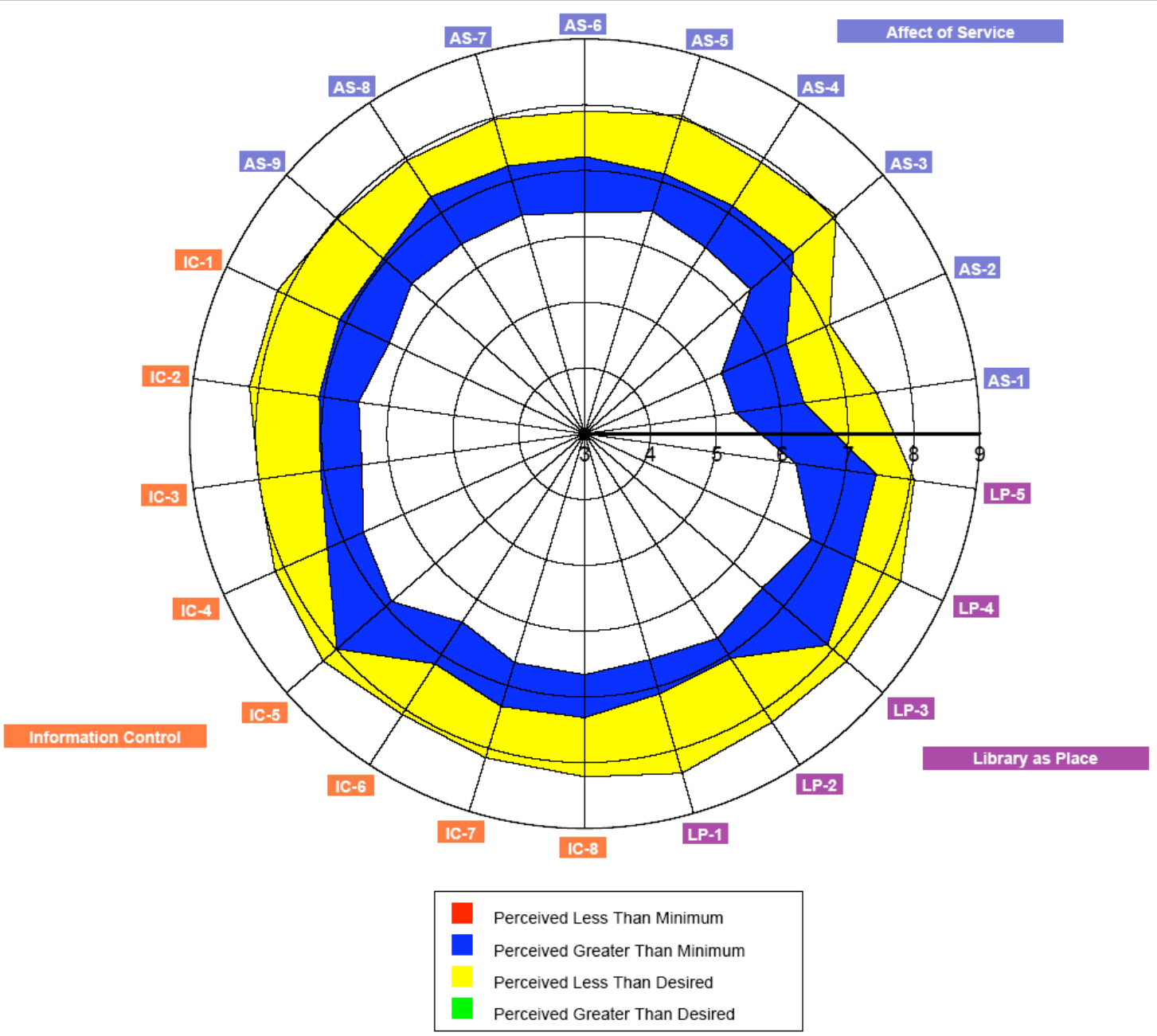
1. All SCU Respondents
2. Undergraduate Students
3. Graduate Students
4. Faculty

As illustrated in the first radar chart, the overall perception of services for the Library falls within the "zone of tolerance". The second and third charts show general alignment with overall findings for the undergraduate and graduate populations. However, the fourth chart, which presents faculty responses, helps to identify specific needs and concerns in the area of Information Control. In particular, faculty raised concerns with IC-3 (the printed library materials I need for my work) and IC-8 (print and/or electronic journal collections I require for my work) which appears on the radar chart in the section shaded red. Faculty are generally satisfied LP-5 (community space for group learning and group study) which appears in the green shaded section on the radar chart.

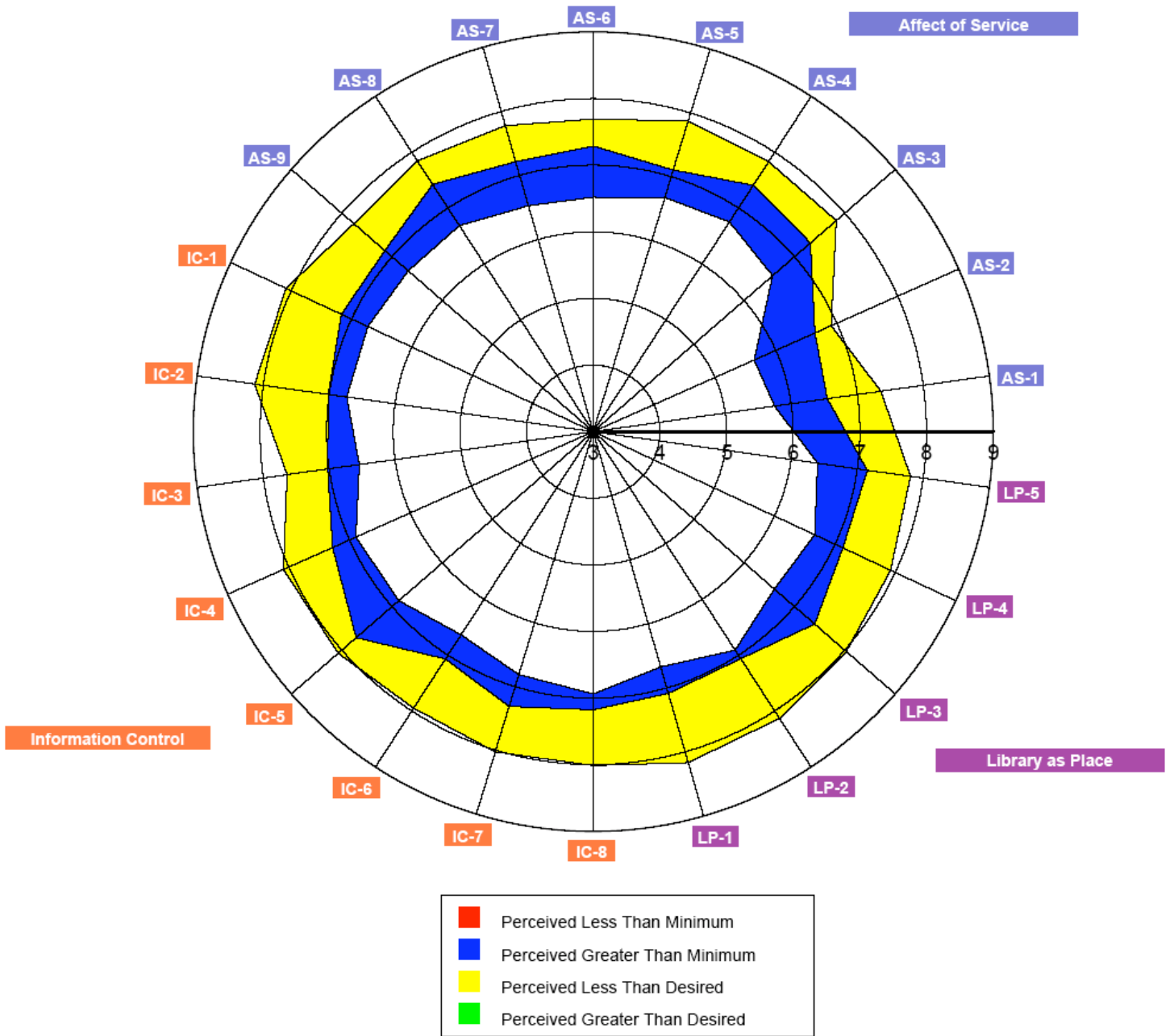
Radar Chart #1 (Summary for All Respondents)



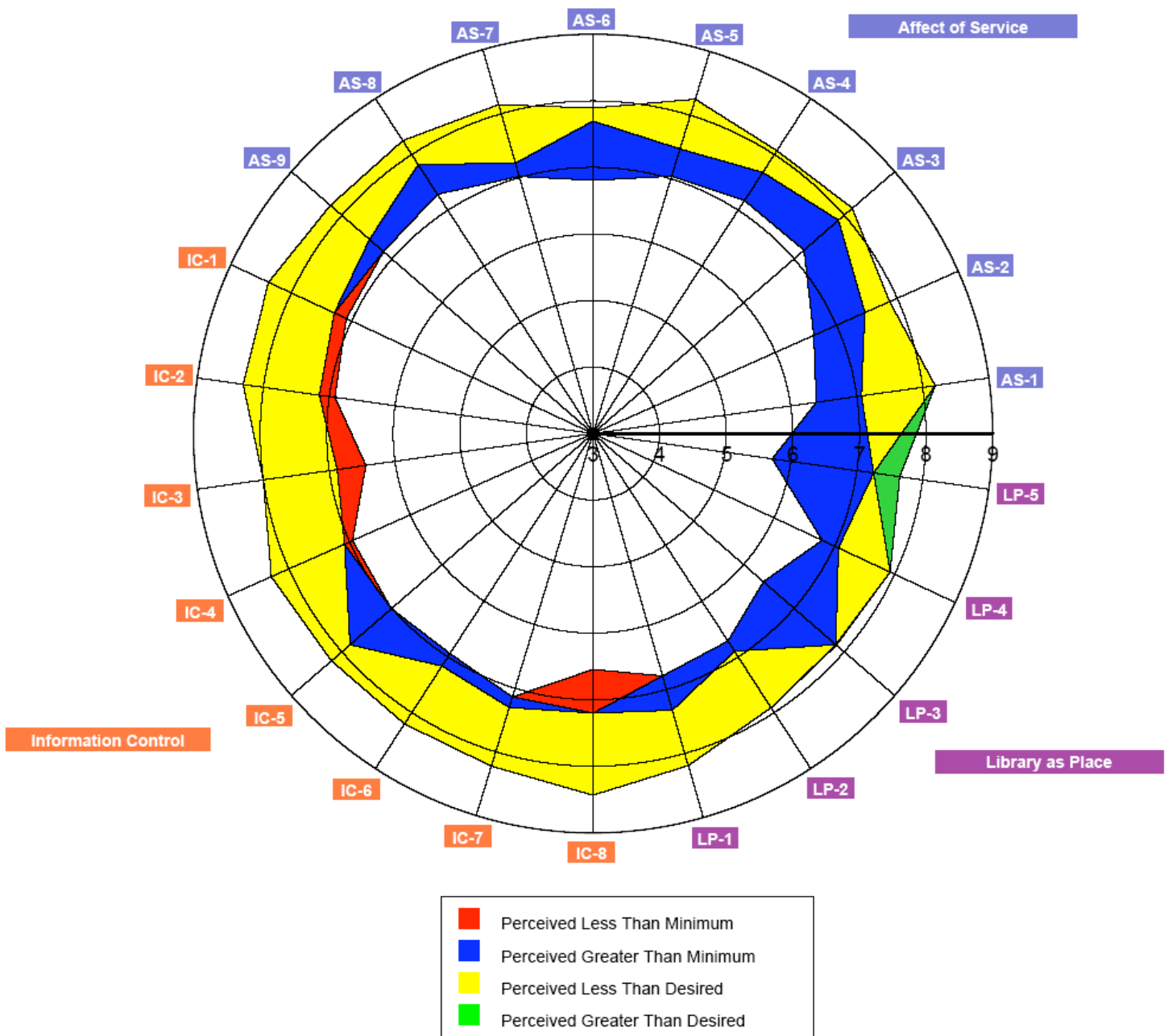
Radar Chart #2 (Summary for Undergraduate students)



Radar Chart #3 (Summary for Graduate students)



Radar Chart #4 (Summary for Faculty)



## Narrative Comments

The LibQUAL+ survey instrument also provides a box to share free-form comments and feedback. This year, of the 1187 total respondents, 456 students, faculty and staff offered additional narrative detail which helps better understand the particular concerns and areas for improvement for the Library. A sampling of representative feedback is shared below.

### 1. Affect of Service

*"I was very impressed with the service in terms of learning how to collect information for research projects. The library staff helped me to learn how to retrieve all the materials I needed for my research paper." (Undergraduate student, Humanities)*

*"I am in my second quarter of my master's program and so far I am very much impressed with the library! Everyone is very helpful and I have gotten every resource I've needed so far. I especially appreciate the breadth and quickness of Interlibrary loan, which I've already utilized 4 times. Thanks!" (Graduate student, Counseling Psychology)*

*"Librarians are generally helpful. Could improve by having more self-help machines and making resources available online when we're working at home." (Undergraduate student, Undeclared)*

*"It's a wonderful library with people who are willing to help. I tell my students to go to the reference librarians for help." (Faculty member, Social Sciences)*

*"The staff is exceptionally caring and willing to contribute to instruction. I find the electronic resources (journals, etc.), however, to be wanting." (Faculty member, Communications)*

## 2. Information Control

*"Please purchase more new or updated computer engineering books. Most books are so outdated." (Graduate student, Engineering)*

*"The library needs more computers. Its frustrating when there are classes in both labs and there aren't any computers to use." (Undergraduate student, Business)*

*"Our library is beautiful, but access to resources is often the most difficult challenge. Computers are always in use and the study rooms are difficult to reserve." (Graduate student, Counseling Psychology)*

*"There are not enough books or journals in my field or in my students' fields of interest, and the electronic resources are not as expansive as they ought to be for an institution of our stature. We need more database and e-journal subscriptions, particularly since we don't have enough in-library collections." (Faculty member, Humanities)*

*"Library is doing a good job with limited resources. Library needs to be more vocal/visible with faculty and the development office regarding increasing the acquisitions budget. SCU cannot keep pushing the "teaching-scholar" model when the library can't support our research." (Faculty member, Humanities)*

## 3. Library as Place

*"I would like more designated quiet areas in the library like the St. Clare room." (Undergraduate student, Humanities)*

*"I appreciate that it has a wide range of study resources, from movie viewing stations to computers to group collaboration rooms." (Undergraduate student, Social Sciences)*

*"There should be more tables and chairs for students (especially during finals week). I see a lot of empty spaces that we can use to fit more individual tables & chairs. I also see that the library lacks place for students to have meetings during busy weeks." (Undergraduate student, Business)*

*"I feel that the layout of the library sometimes makes it more difficult to study. There are few places where you can sit and feel that you can focus on yourself because it is so open. It is easily distracting when everyone is in such an open space with few barriers." (Undergraduate student, Undeclared)*

*"The library is a wonderful facility that provides a quiet place to work with. The resources available are very useful, the online website has also been tremendously useful. The library provides students a space to work alone and with groups as well and they really cater to a student's needs. The help desk is always very, well, helpful. I especially like the 'soda machine' near the back with student supplies like scantrons, green books, and flashcards." (Undergraduate student, Engineering)*

*"The library is severely lacking in usable tables. there is a plethora of trendy furniture with desks and tables that are too small or too low for efficient study, but very few tables that are comfortable to sit at and large enough to spread out a binder and a textbook." (Undergraduate student, Humanities)*

*"Thanks for providing such a beautiful new library. SO much better than that grotesque building we were stuck with for so long." (Faculty member, Humanities)*

*"The new library offers something for everyone. It provides some terrific hardware & software on the lower levels and quiet study space on the upper levels. The group space is great too, but sometimes hard to find an open room due to popularity." (Staff member)*

# Additional LibQUAL+ Information

More information on LibQUAL+ at Santa Clara University, including the complete 94-page 2009 survey results notebook and past survey results, are available online at <http://www.scu.edu/library/info/assessment/libqual/>.