

Association of Research Libraries



LibQUAL+<sup>®</sup> :

Using the Result for  
Library Management

Knowing Your Users: Assessment of Library Service Quality  
International Workshop & Symposium on LibQUAL+<sup>™</sup>

## *The Importance of LibQUAL+<sup>®</sup>*

### **Importance of Assessment in Academic Libraries**

- **Limited funding must meet competing needs**
- **The value of delivering library service in the traditional sense is being questioned**

## *The Importance of LibQUAL+®*

**ARL's search for a  
new, relevant way of  
assessing the value of  
information delivery**

*Outcomes have become  
uppermost in the minds of  
Higher Education Stakeholders*

## *The Importance of LibQUAL+<sup>®</sup>*

### **The Imperative for Our Research**

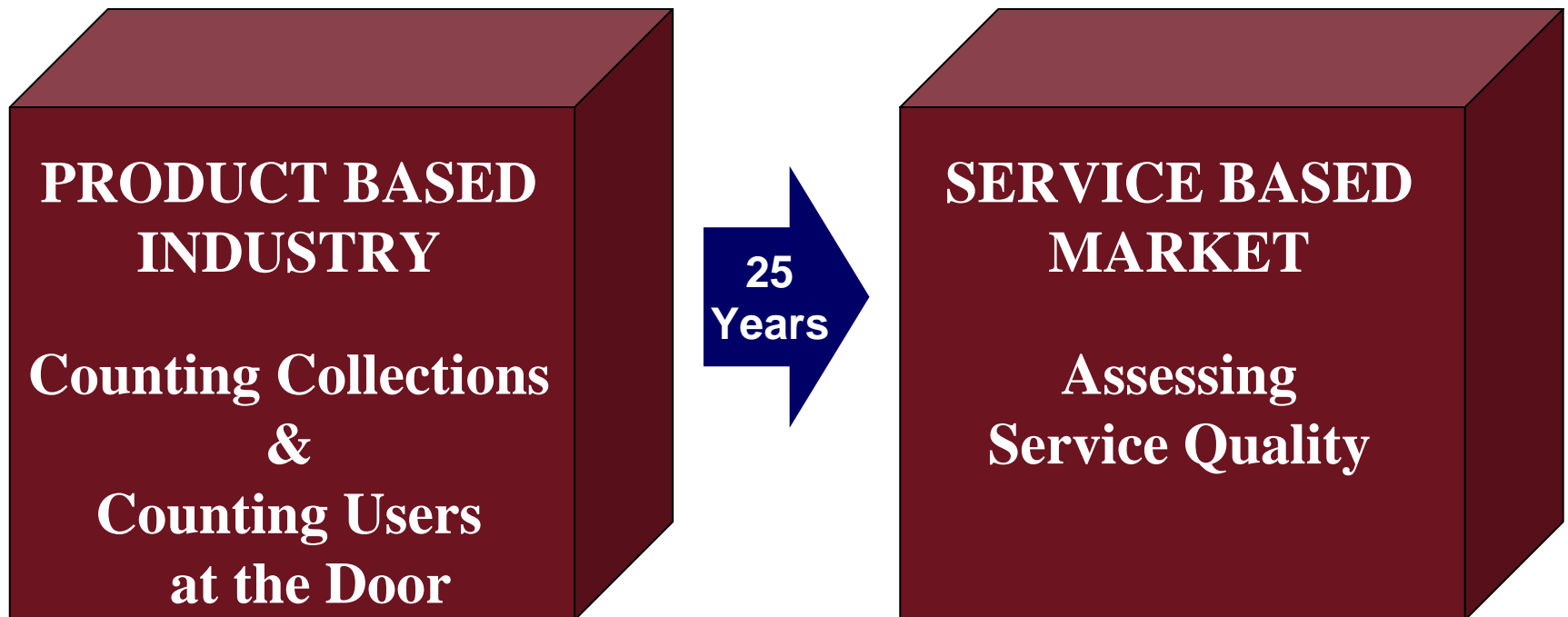
*"In an age of accountability, there is a pressing need for an effective and practical process to evaluate and compare research libraries. In the aggregate, among the 124 Association of Research Libraries (ARL) alone, over \$3.7 billion were expended in 2005/2006 to satisfy the library and information needs of the research constituencies in North America."*

## *The Importance of LibQUAL+®*

- 1. What are the impact and effect of the huge investment made to academic libraries?*
- 2. What contribution do libraries make to students who use them?*
- 3. How do libraries contribute to the research of faculty & graduate students in measurable terms?*
- 4. How do academic libraries contribute to pedagogy?*

## *The Importance of LibQUAL+®*

**Technology is forcing  
libraries to change:**



## *The Importance of LibQUAL+<sup>®</sup>*

### **Listen First**

**Listen to customers  
before allocating  
services resources.**

**Spending before listening**

- wasteful**
- hurts the credibility of  
service quality cause.**

# *The Importance of LibQUAL+®*

## **Multiple Methods of Listening**

- Mystery shopping
- Transactional surveys\*
- New, declining, and lost-customer surveys
- Focus group interviews
- Customer advisory panels
- Service reviews
- Customer complaint, comment, and inquiry capture
- Total market surveys\*
- Employee field reporting
- Employee surveys
- Service operating data capture

*\*A LibQUAL-type instrument is most suitable for these methods*



## *The Importance of LibQUAL+<sup>®</sup>*

**Prior to the Internet Library Assessment was primarily local**

- **No common set of descriptors across libraries**
- **Collecting large amounts of data across institutions was not efficient**

## *The Development of LibQUAL+<sup>®</sup>*

**LibQUAL+<sup>®</sup> was developed to ...**

*Provide a total market survey  
to compare & assess service in  
libraries longitudinally for  
benchmarking & best practices  
purposes*

## *The Development of LibQUAL+<sup>®</sup>*

### **The LibQUAL+<sup>®</sup> Premise:**

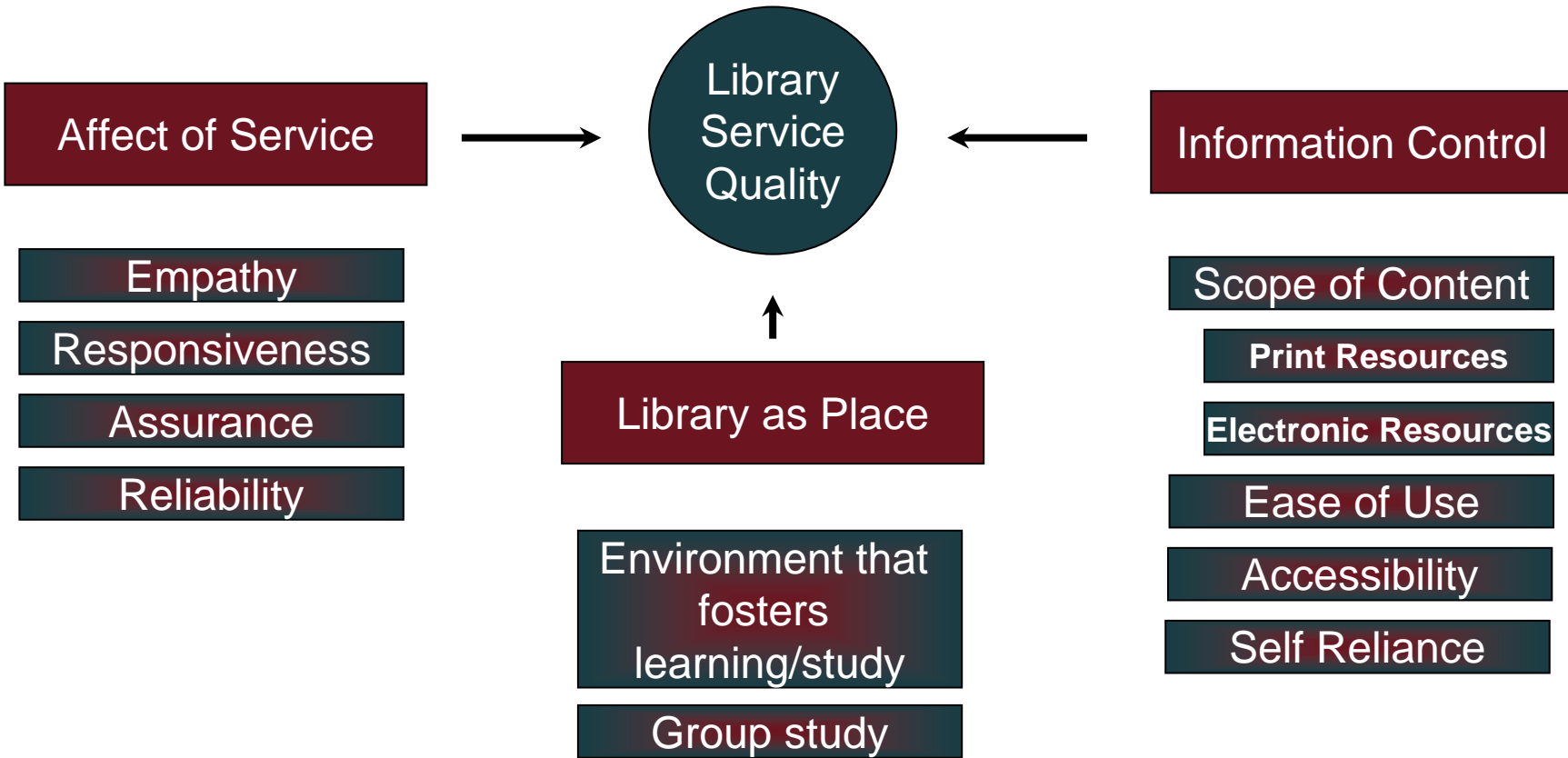
**PERCEPTIONS**  **SERVICE**

*“...only customers judge quality;  
all other judgments are essentially  
irrelevant”*

Zeithaml, Parasuraman, Berry. (1999)  
Delivering quality service. NY: The Free Press.

# The Development of LibQUAL+®

## Dimensions of Library Service Quality What the LibQUAL+® Survey seeks to discover



## *Understanding LibQUAL+<sup>®</sup> Results*

**LibQUAL+<sup>®</sup> can be useful in making management decisions and in tracking changes in user expectations**

# *Understanding LibQUAL+<sup>®</sup> Results*

## **Case No. 1:**

Using LibQUAL+<sup>®</sup> to support funding requests

Spring 2005 survey revealed the following needs and resulted in funds to address

1. Increased open hours, preferably 24 hour access to buildings
2. More group study rooms
3. Comfortable, inviting & secure physical environments in the libraries
4. Increased access to collections, particularly in digital form

## *Understanding LibQUAL+<sup>®</sup> Results*

### **Case No. 2:**

Using LibQUAL+<sup>®</sup> to determine fund allocations

Texas A&M received a technology grant

LibQUAL+<sup>®</sup> identified the following user expectations:

1. Personal control of information
2. Control of how, when & where users accessed & used information

Grant dedicated to web development & the purchase of a content management system.

## *LibQUAL+<sup>®</sup> at Texas A&M University*

### **Texas A&M University**

- Established in 1876
- 55,951 students - 7<sup>th</sup> largest in enrollment nationally
- Among top 20 in research funding w/annual spending of \$500 million
- Formal agreements with 130 institutions in 52 countries for collaborative research and faculty/student exchanges
- Vision 2020 -  
"Quest to be recognized as a consensus  
'top 10' public university by the year 2020"



## *LibQUAL+<sup>®</sup> at Texas A&M University*

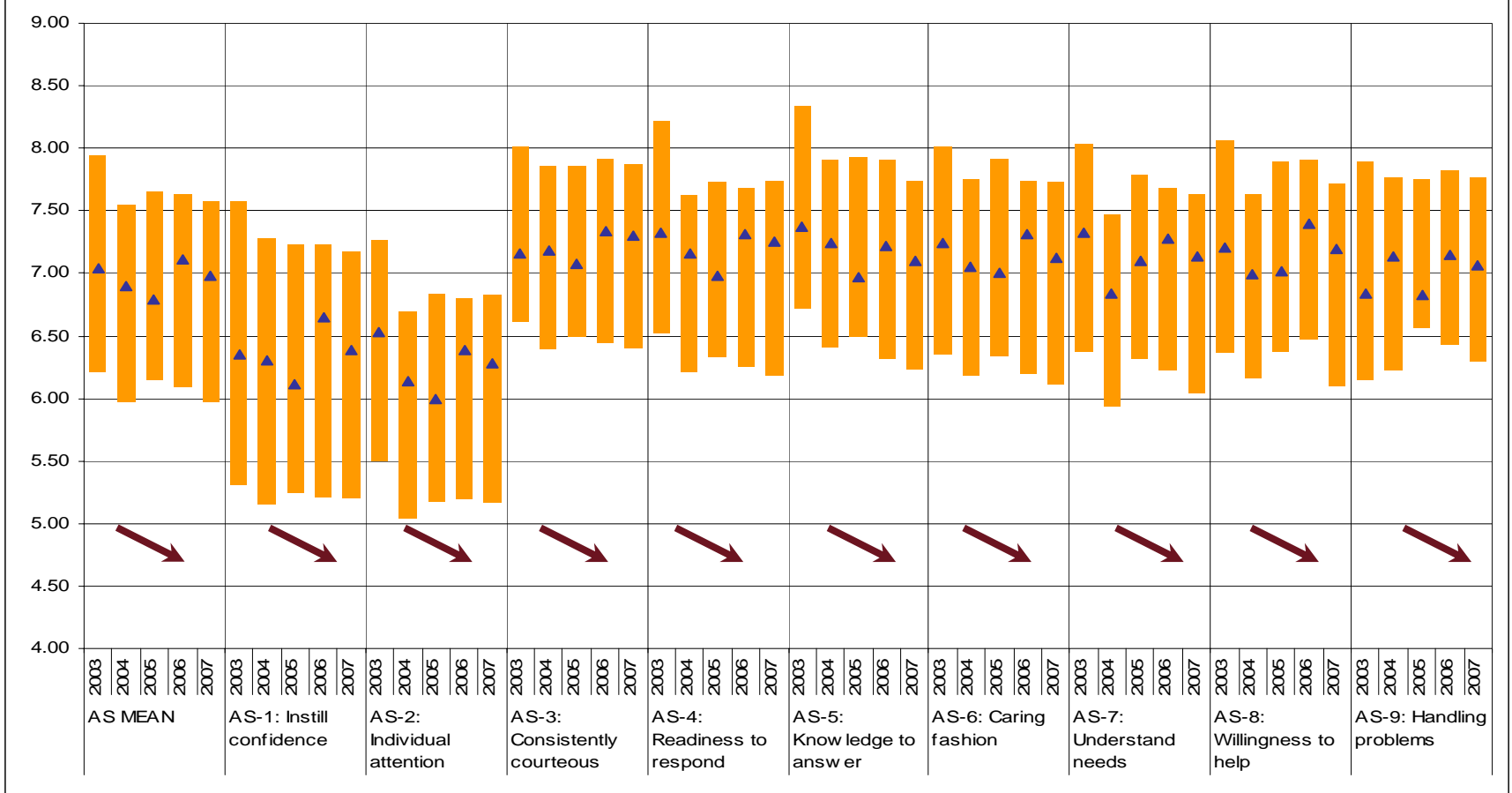
### **Texas A&M University Libraries**

- 7 Branch Libraries
- Over 3.7 million volumes
- 51,797 Current Serials (ARL Ranking: 14<sup>th</sup>)
- 444,729 eBooks
- 133 Faculty and Professionals  
(Top 20 in ARL Ranking)
- \$15.5 million Materials Expenditures  
(Top 10 in ARL Ranking)
- 1.9 million Website and Catalog visits

# LibQUAL+® at Texas A&M University

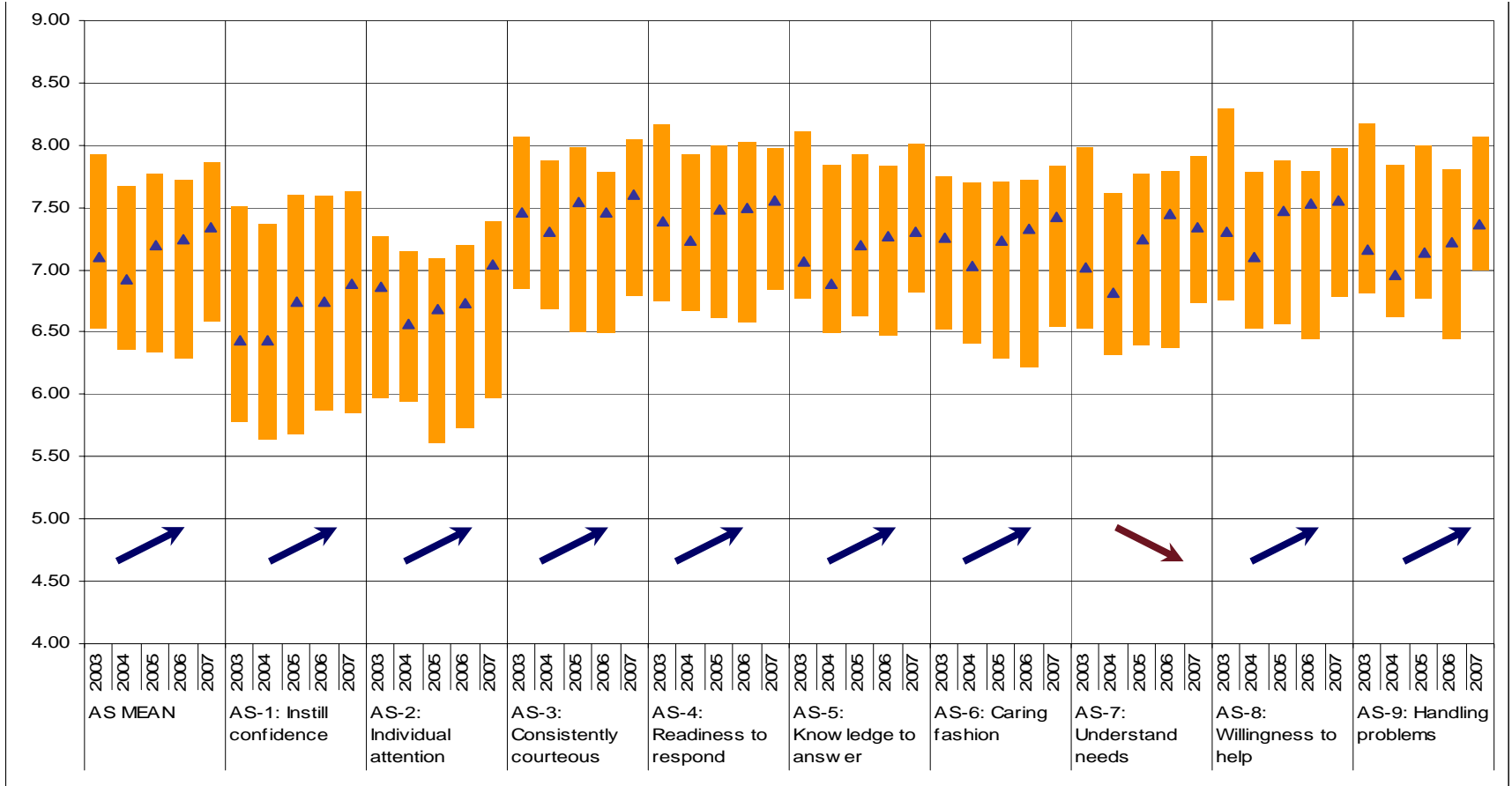
## Longitudinal Graphs

### Affect of Service - Undergraduates



# LibQUAL+® at Texas A&M University

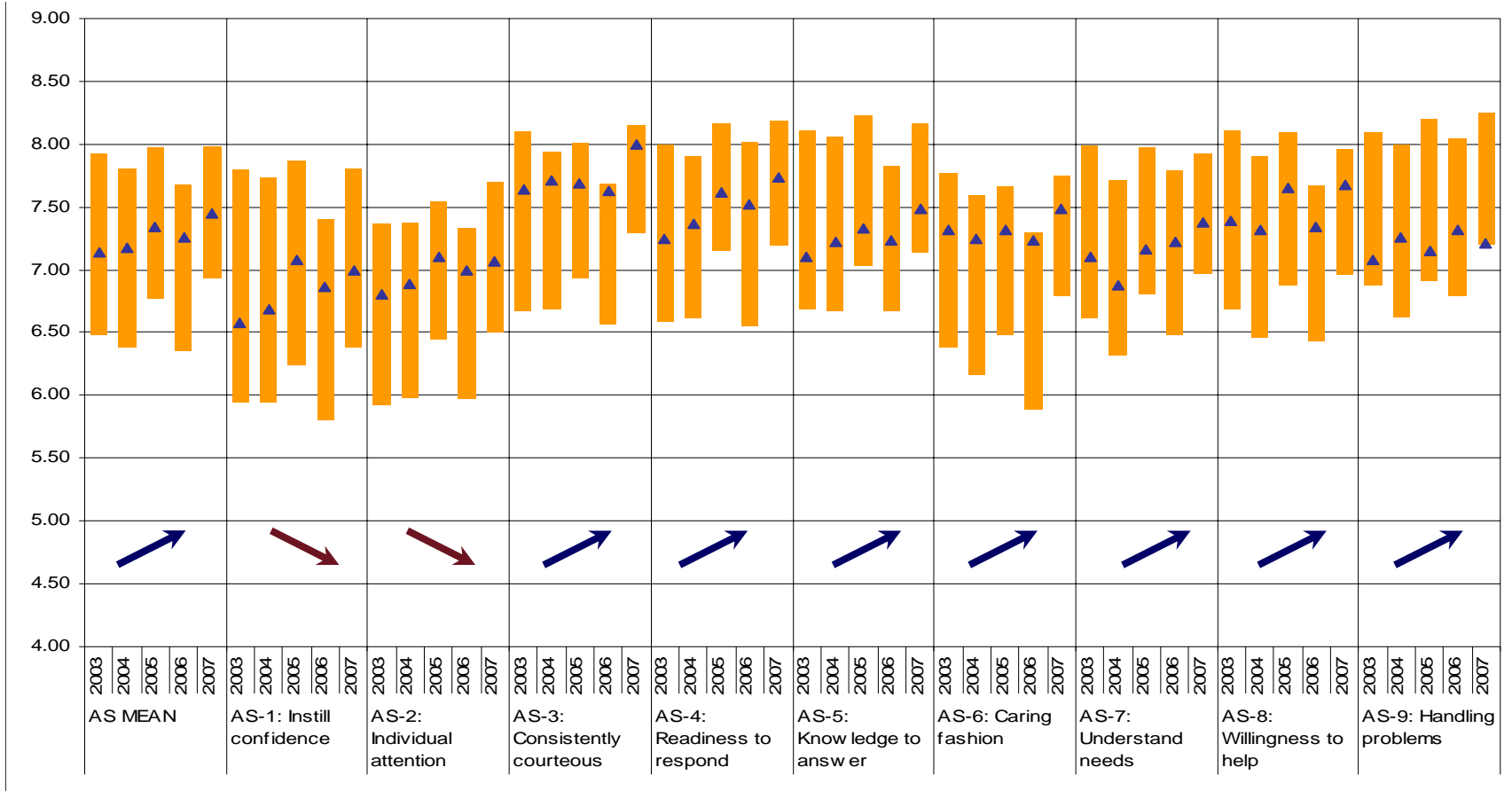
## Longitudinal Graphs Affect of Service - Graduates



# LibQUAL+® at Texas A&M University

## Longitudinal Graphs

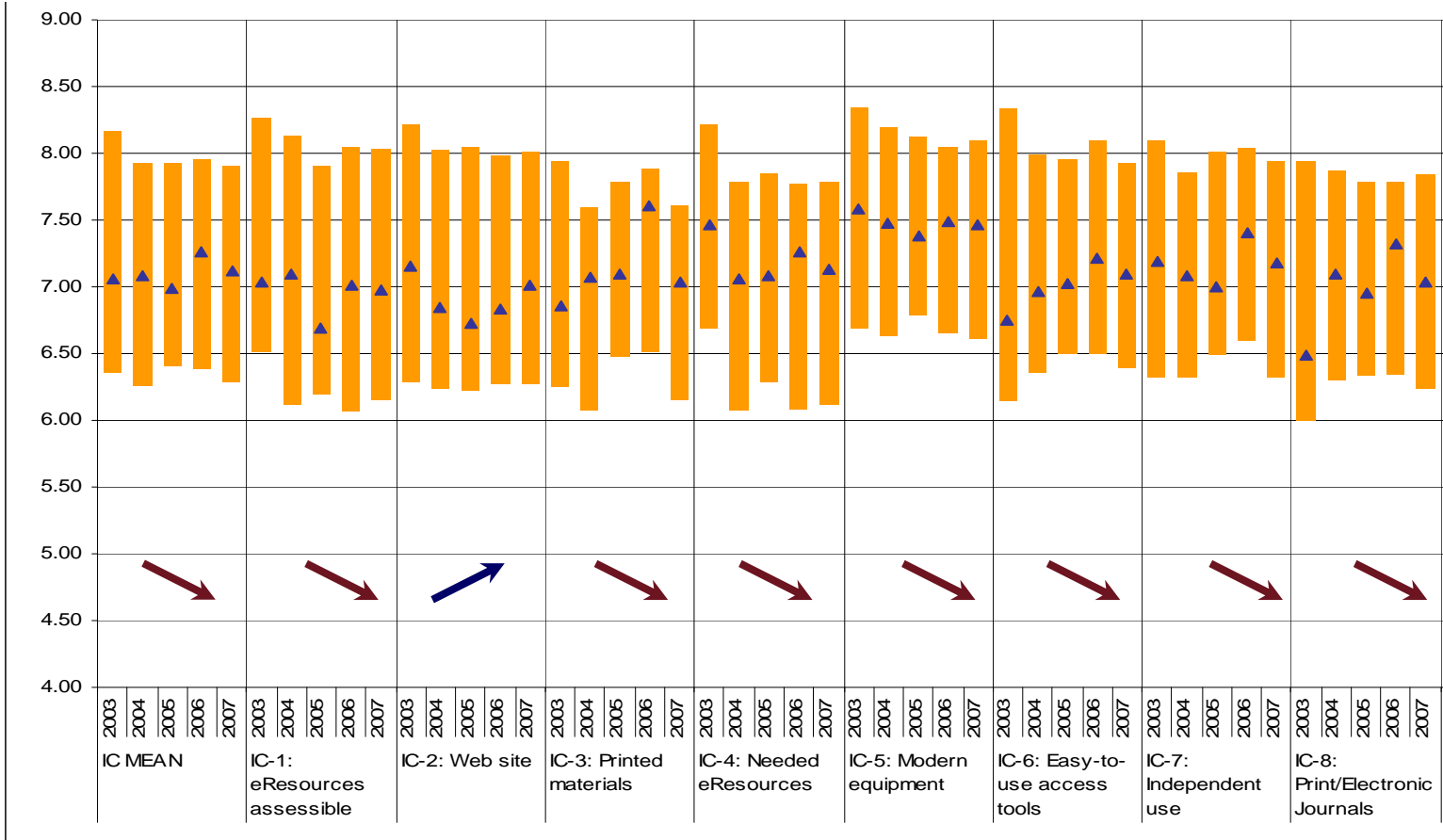
Affect of Service - Faculty (Compare 2005 to 2007)



# LibQUAL+® at Texas A&M University

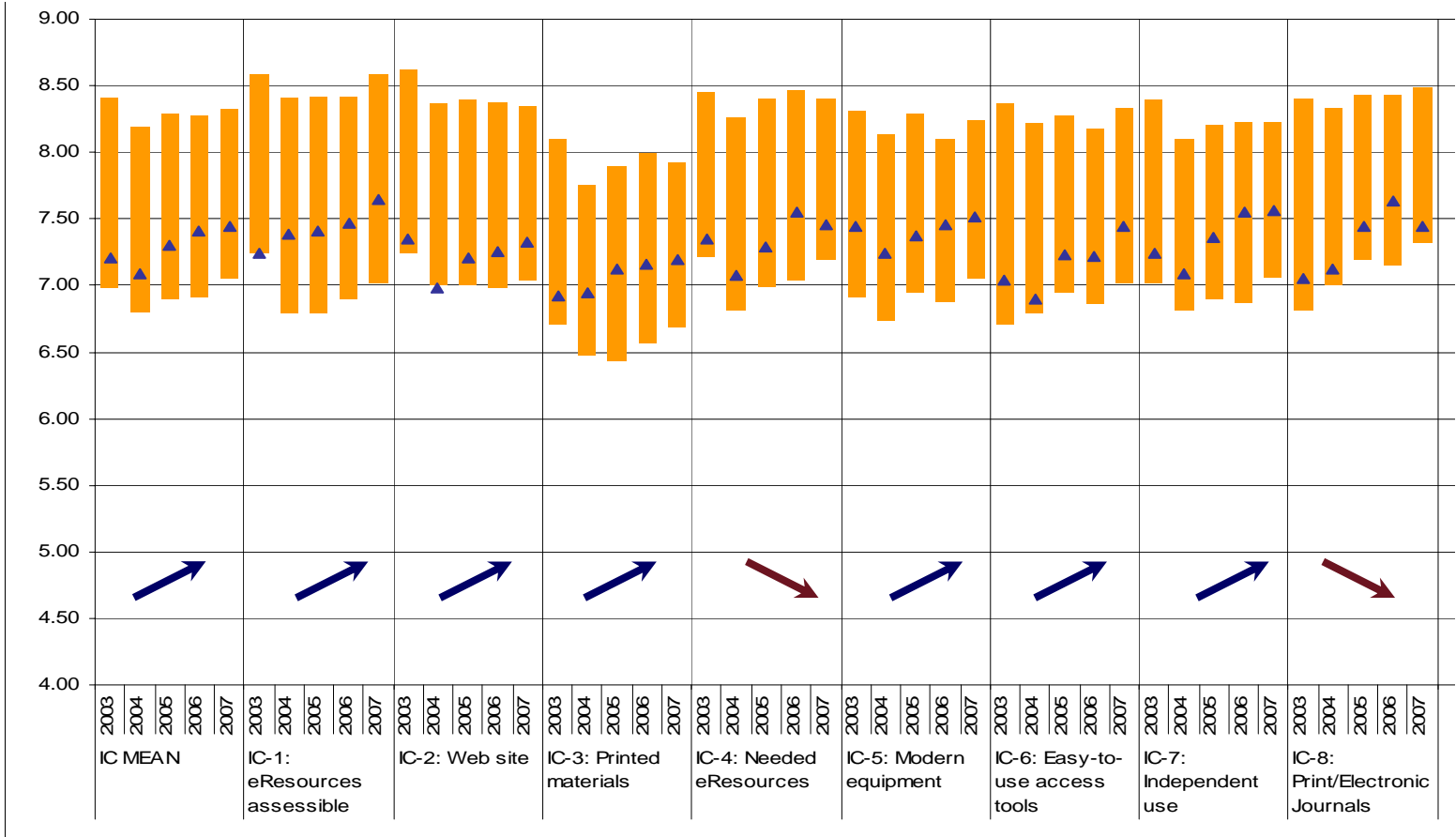
## Longitudinal Graphs

### Information Control - Undergraduates



# LibQUAL+® at Texas A&M University

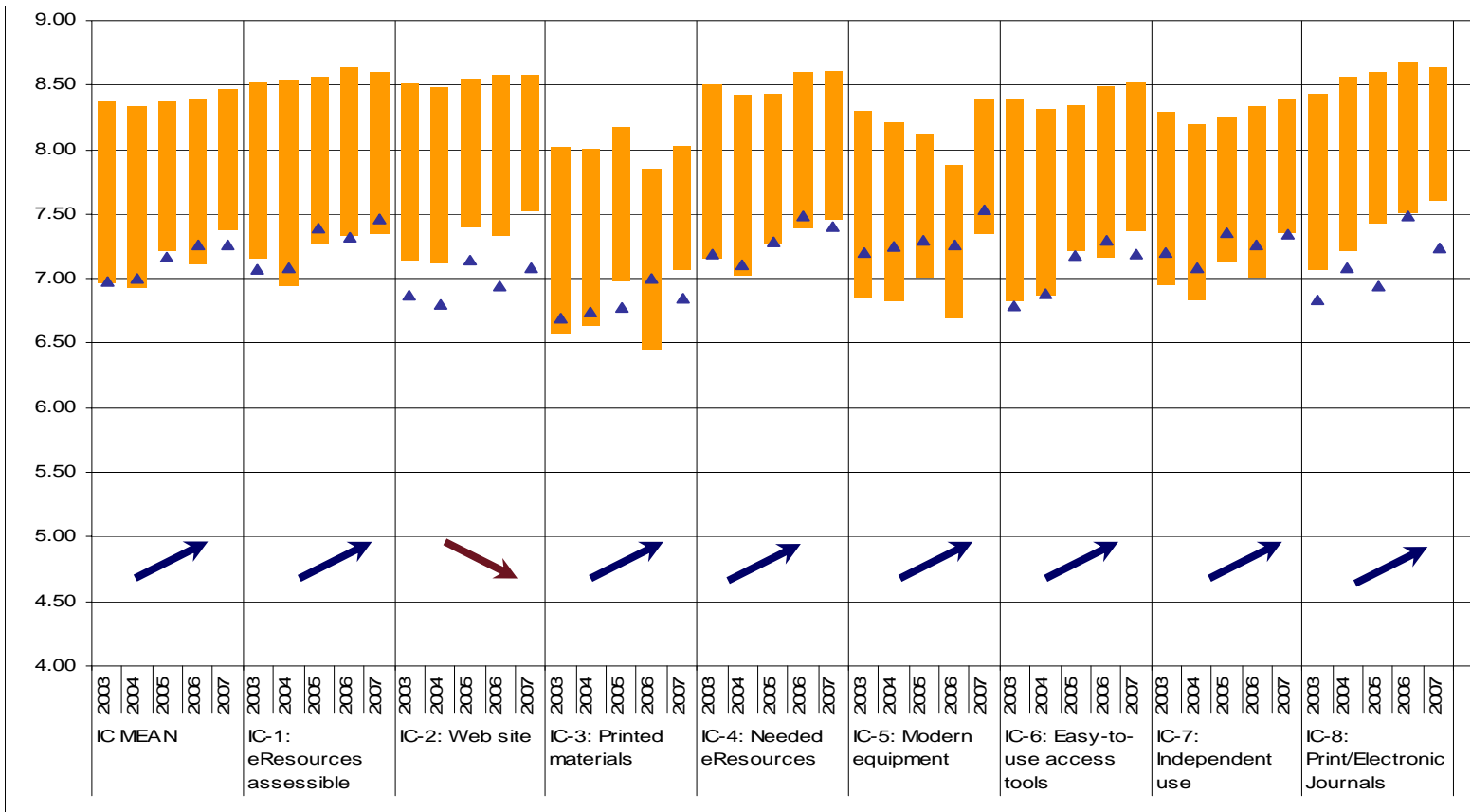
## Longitudinal Graphs Information Control - Graduates



# LibQUAL+® at Texas A&M University

## Longitudinal Graphs

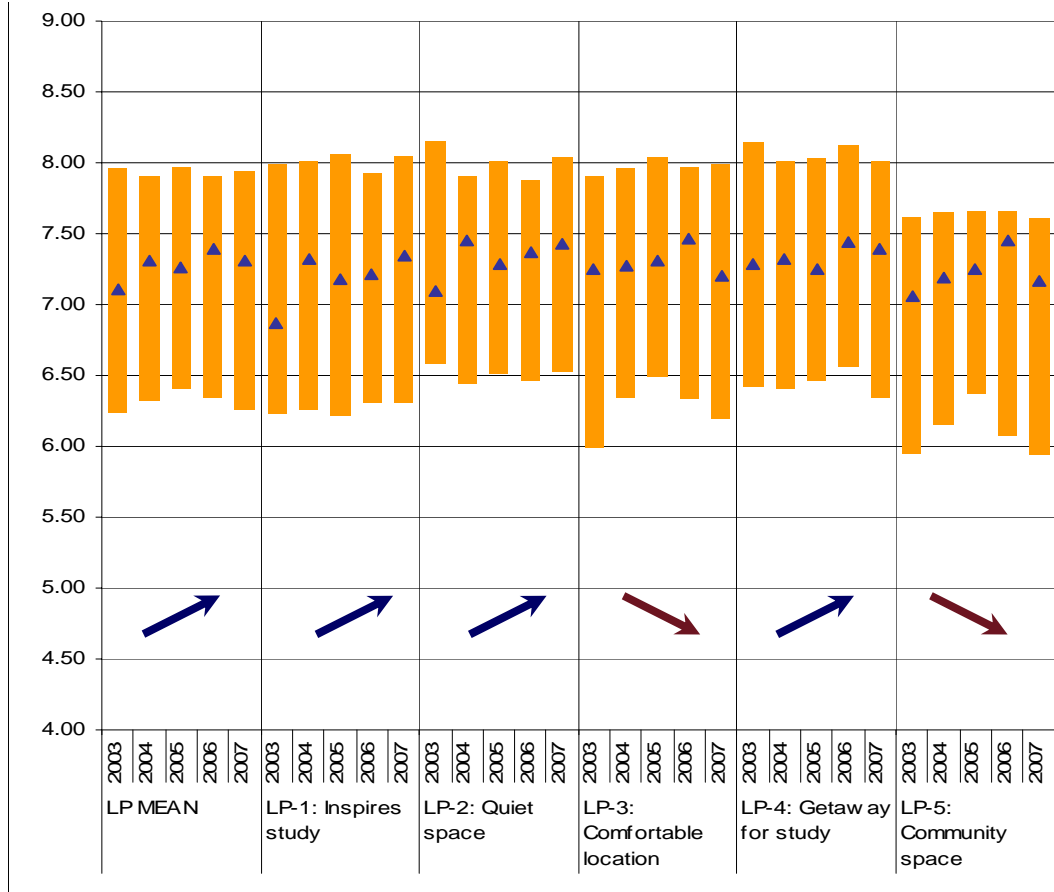
Information Control - Faculty (Compare 2005 to 2007)



# LibQUAL+® at Texas A&M University

## Longitudinal Graphs

### Library as Place - Undergraduates

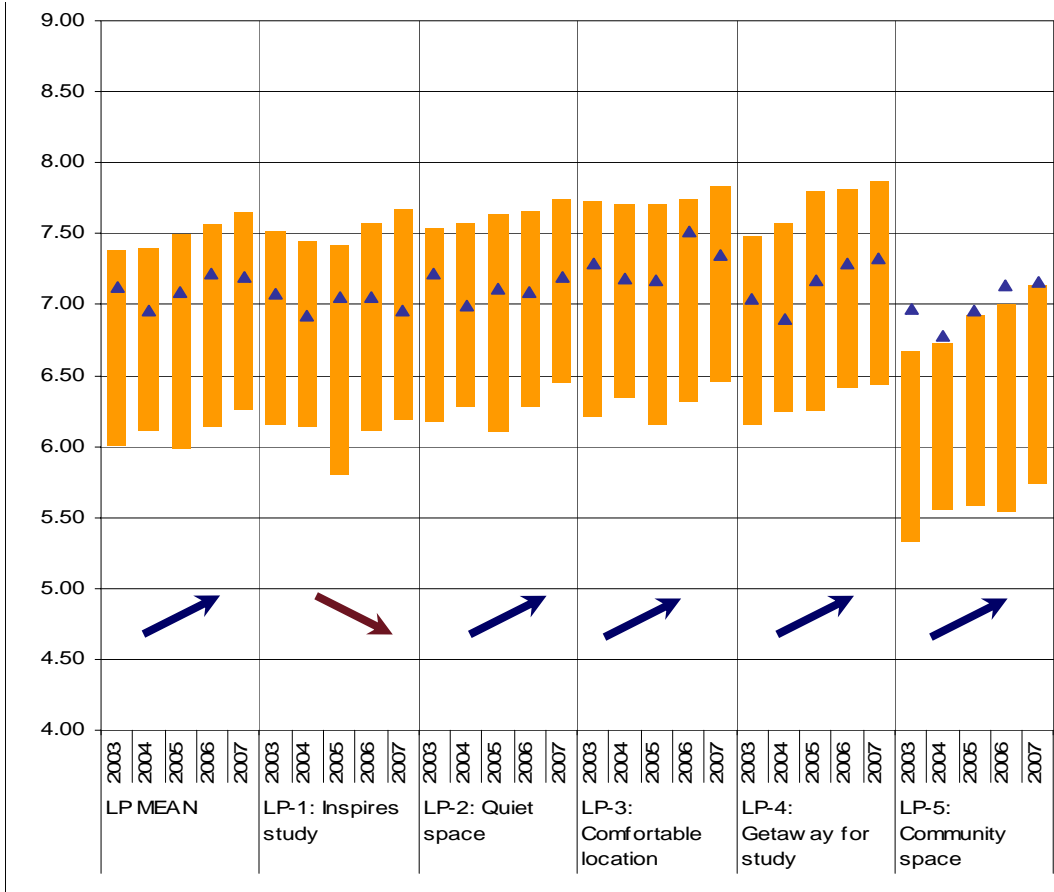




# LibQUAL+® at Texas A&M University

## Longitudinal Graphs

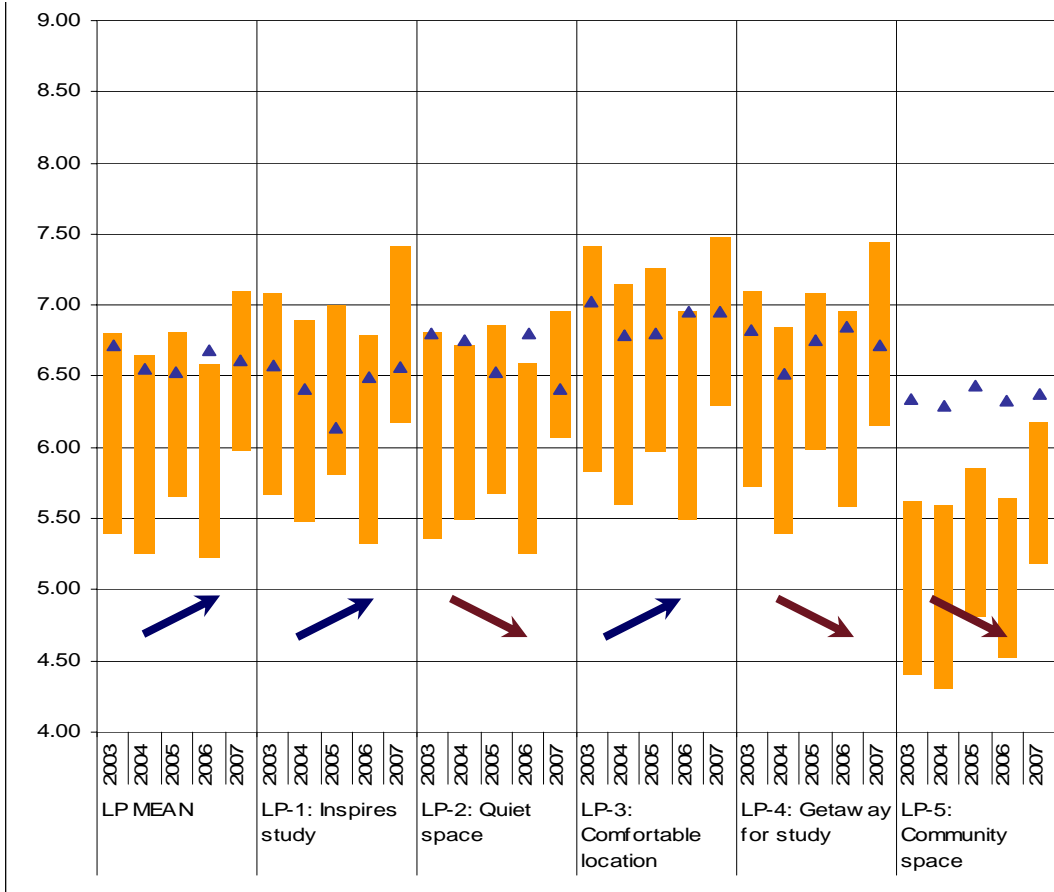
### Library as Place - Graduates



# LibQUAL+® at Texas A&M University

## Longitudinal Graphs

### Library as Place - Faculty



# LibQUAL+® at Texas A&M University

## Tracking High Scores – Desired

Level of service users require to be completely satisfied  
Undergraduates

2003	2004	Desired 2005	2006	2007
(AS-5) Employees who have the knowledge to answer user questions 8.35	(IC-5) Modern equipment that lets me easily access needed information 8.18	(IC-5) Modern equipment that lets me easily access needed information 8.11	(LP-4) A getaway for study, learning or research 8.12	(IC-5) Modern equipment that lets me easily access needed information 8.09
(IC-5) Modern equipment that lets me easily access needed information 8.34	(IC-1) Making electronic resources accessible from my home or office 8.13	(LP-1) Library space that inspires study and learning 8.06	(IC-6) Easy-to-use access tools that allow me to find things on my own 8.10	(LP-1) Library space that inspires study and learning 8.05
(IC-6) Easy-to-use access tools that allow me to find things on my own 8.33	(IC-2) A library web site enabling me to locate information on my own 8.02	(IC-2) A library web site enabling me to locate information on my own 8.05	(IC-1) Making electronic resources accessible from my home or office 8.05	(IC-1) Making electronic resources accessible from my home or office 8.04
(IC-1) Making electronic resources accessible from my home or office 8.25	(LP-1) Library space that inspires study and learning 8.01	(LP-3) A comfortable and inviting location 8.04	(IC-5) Modern equipment that lets me easily access needed information 8.05	(LP-2) Quiet space for individual activities 8.04
(AS-4) Readiness to respond to users' questions 8.22	(LP-4) A getaway for study, learning or research 8.01	(LP-4) A getaway for study, learning or research 8.03	(IC-7) Making information easily accessible for independent use 8.03	(IC-2) A library web site enabling me to locate information on my own 8.01

# LibQUAL+® at Texas A&M University

## Tracking High Scores – Desired

Level of service users require to be completely satisfied  
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2003	2004	Desired 2005	2006	2007
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# LibQUAL+® at Texas A&M University

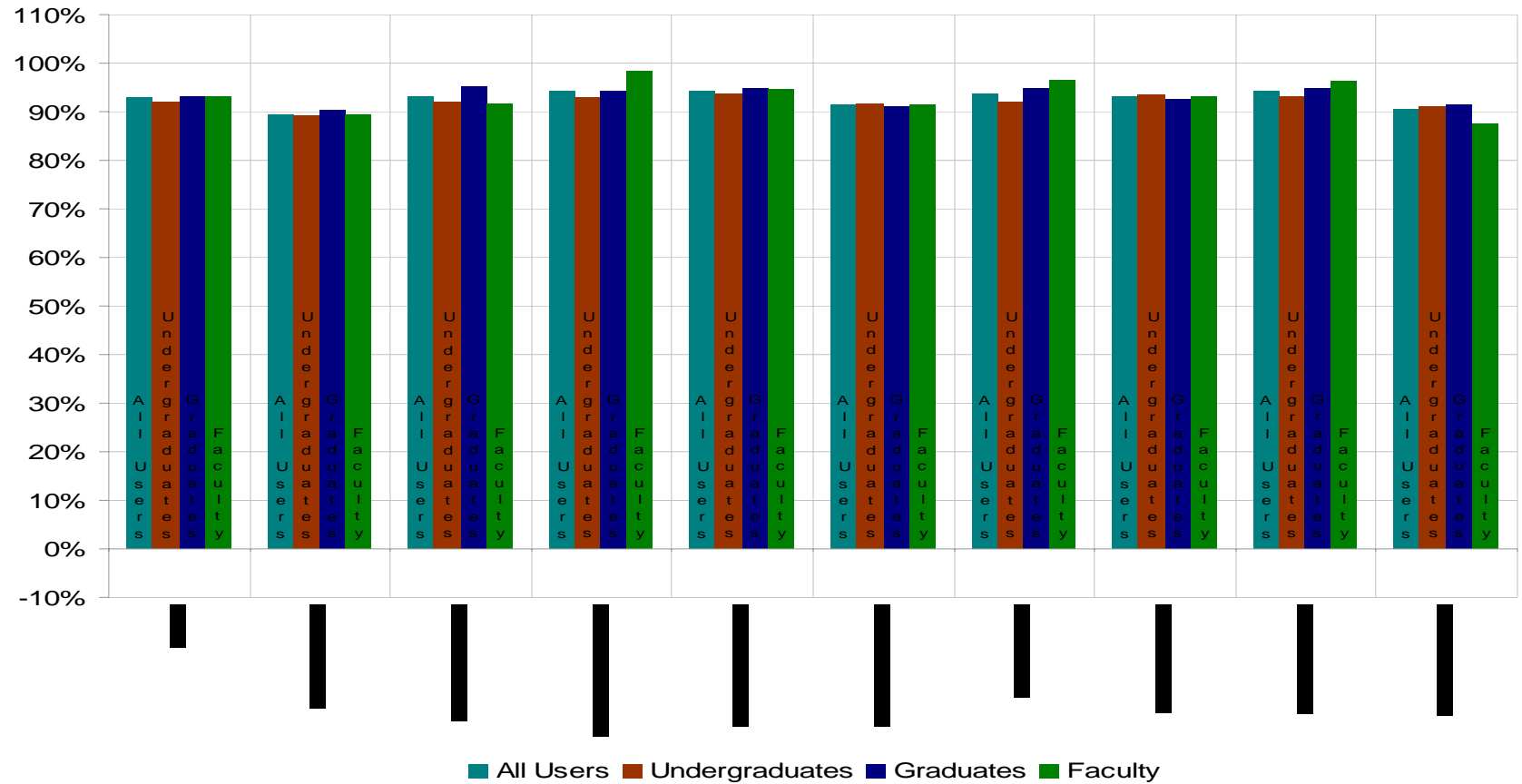
## Tracking High Scores – Desired

Level of service users require to be completely satisfied  
Faculty

	2003	2004	Desired 2005	2006	2007
(IC-2) A library web site enabling me to locate information on my own	8.52	(IC-8) Print and/or electronic journal collections I require for my work 8.56	(IC-8) Print and/or electronic journal collections I require for my work 8.59	(IC-8) Print and/or electronic journal collections I require for my work 8.68	(IC-8) Print and/or electronic journal collections I require for my work 8.63
(IC-1) Making electronic resources accessible from my home or office 8.51	(IC-1) Making electronic resources accessible from my home or office 8.53	(IC-1) Making electronic resources accessible from my home or office 8.56	(IC-1) Making electronic resources accessible from my home or office 8.63	(IC-4) The electronic information resources I need 8.61	
(IC-4) The electronic information resources I need 8.50	(IC-2) A library web site enabling me to locate information on my own 8.48	(IC-2) A library web site enabling me to locate information on my own 8.56	(IC-4) The electronic information resources I need 8.60	(IC-1) Making electronic resources accessible from my home or office 8.60	
(IC-8) Print and/or electronic journal collections I require for my work 8.42	(IC-4) The electronic information resources I need 8.42	(IC-4) The electronic information resources I need 8.43	(IC-2) A library web site enabling me to locate information on my own 8.57	(IC-2) A library web site enabling me to locate information on my own 8.57	
(IC-6) Easy-to-use access tools that allow me to find things on my own 8.39	(IC-6) Easy-to-use access tools that allow me to find things on my own 8.32	(IC-6) Easy-to-use access tools that allow me to find things on my own 8.35	(IC-6) Easy-to-use access tools that allow me to find things on my own 8.49	(IC-6) Easy-to-use access tools that allow me to find things on my own 8.52	

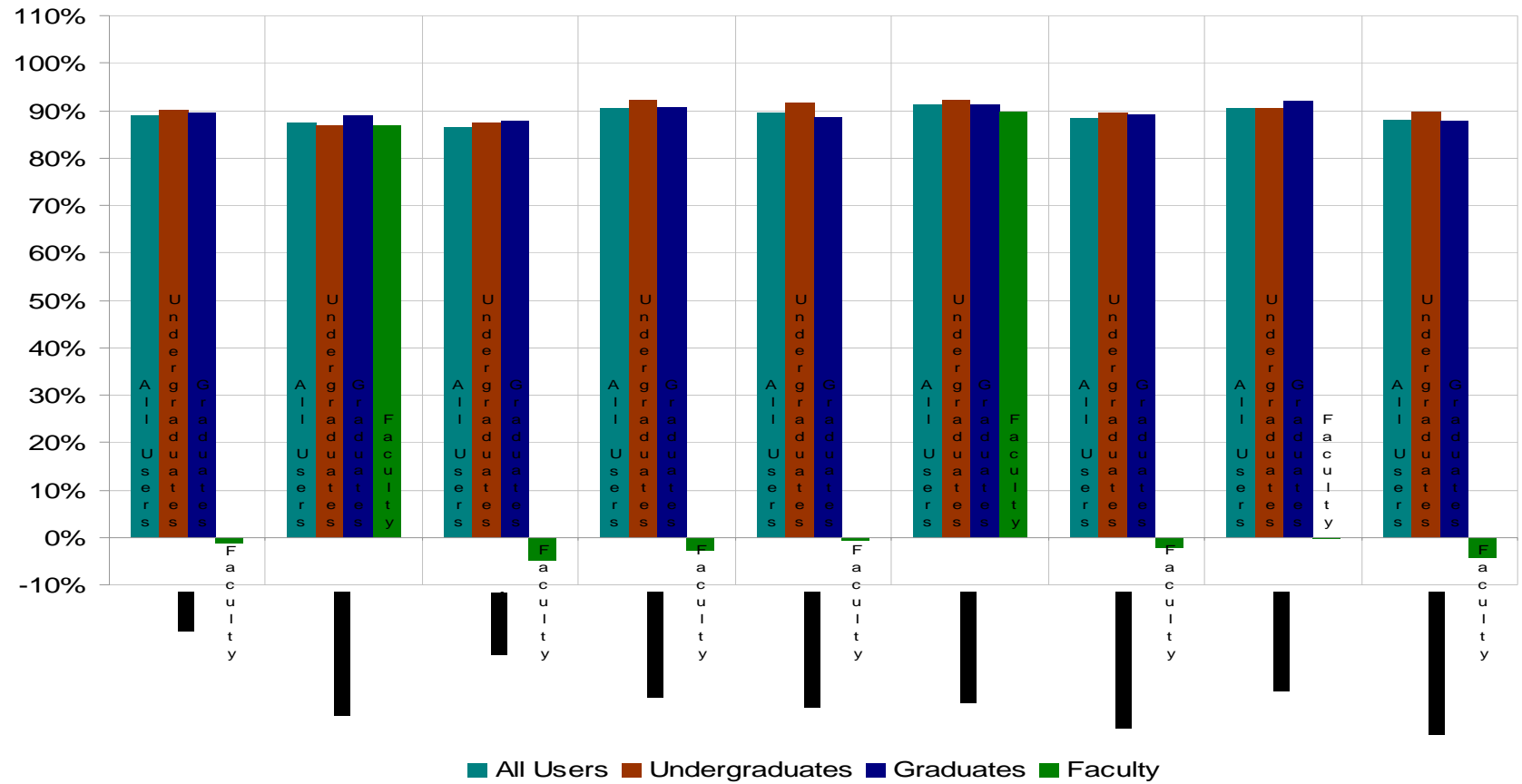
# LibQUAL+® at Texas A&M University

## Reviewing Zone of Tolerance Affect of Service



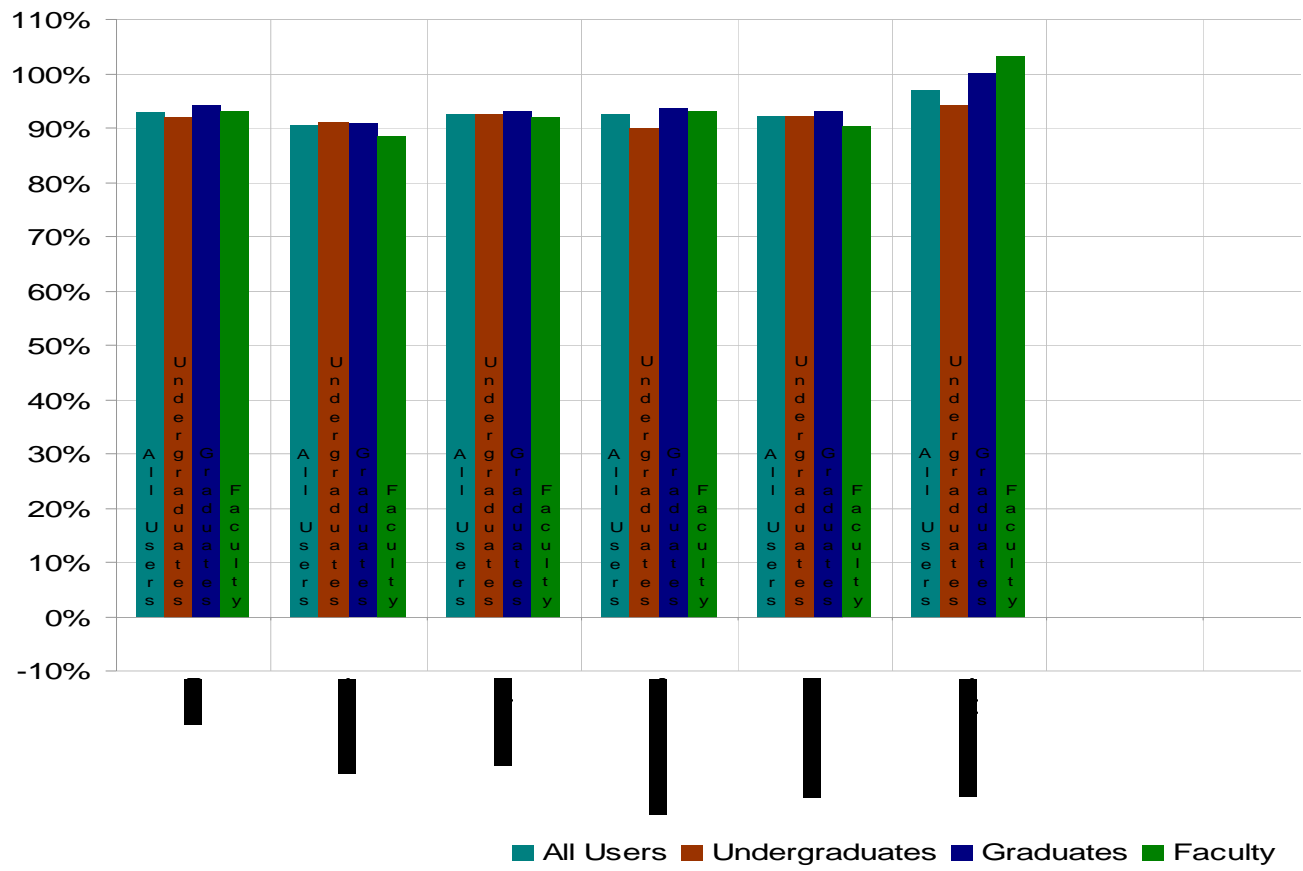
# LibQUAL+® at Texas A&M University

## Reviewing Zone of Tolerance Information Control



# LibQUAL+® at Texas A&M University

## Reviewing Zone of Tolerance Library as Place





# LibQUAL+® at Texas A&M University

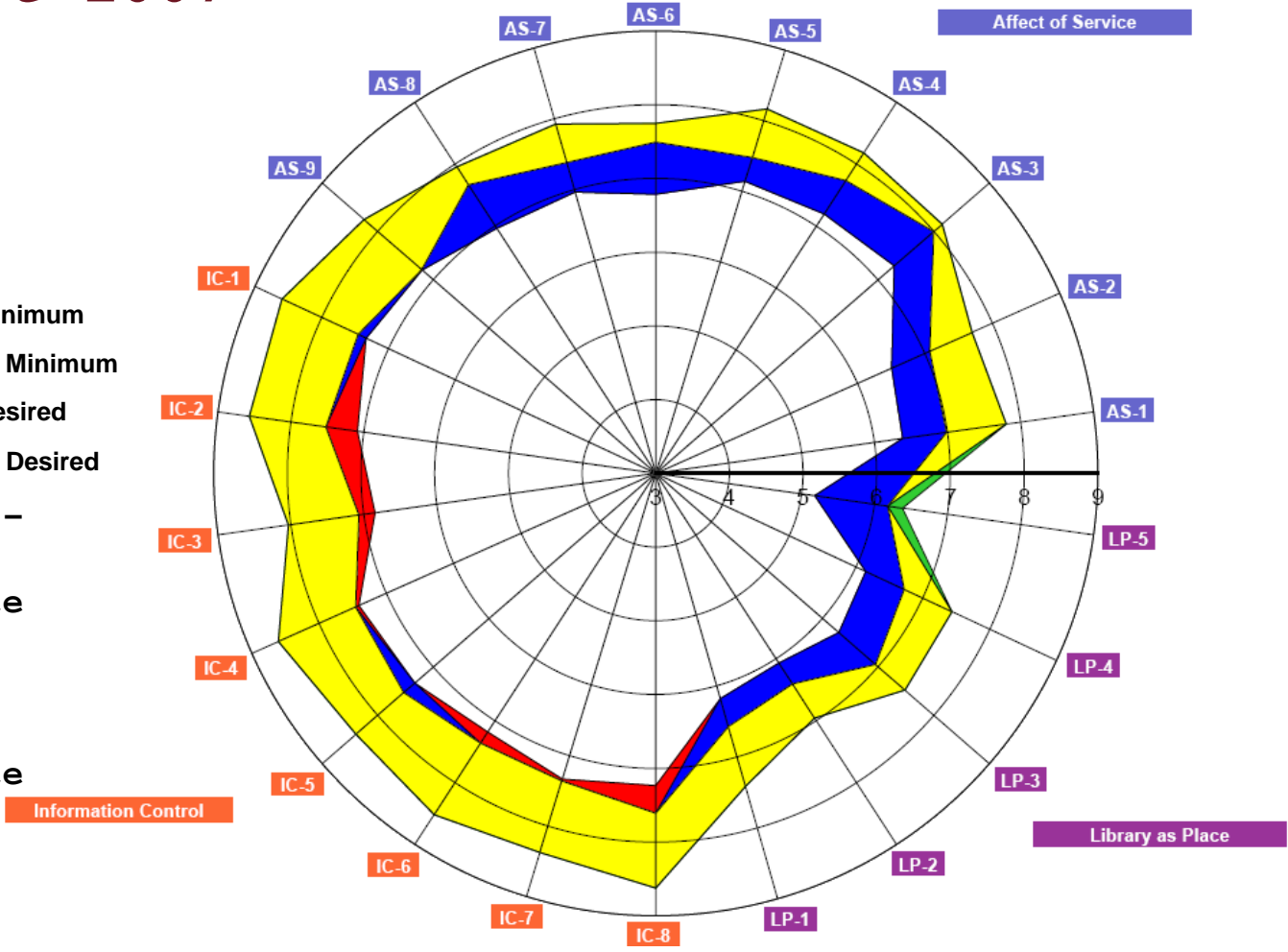
## Radar Chart 2007

Perceived score evaluated against *Minimum Score* and then by *Desired Score*

- Perceived Less Than Minimum
- Perceived Greater Than Minimum
- Perceived Less Than Desired
- Perceived Greater Than Desired

Blue and Yellow - within the Zone of Tolerance

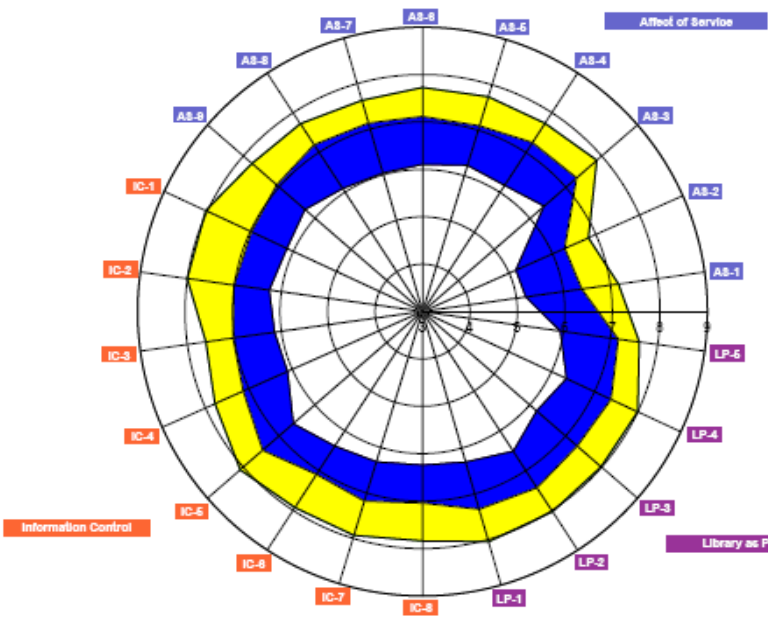
Red and Green - outside the Zone of Tolerance



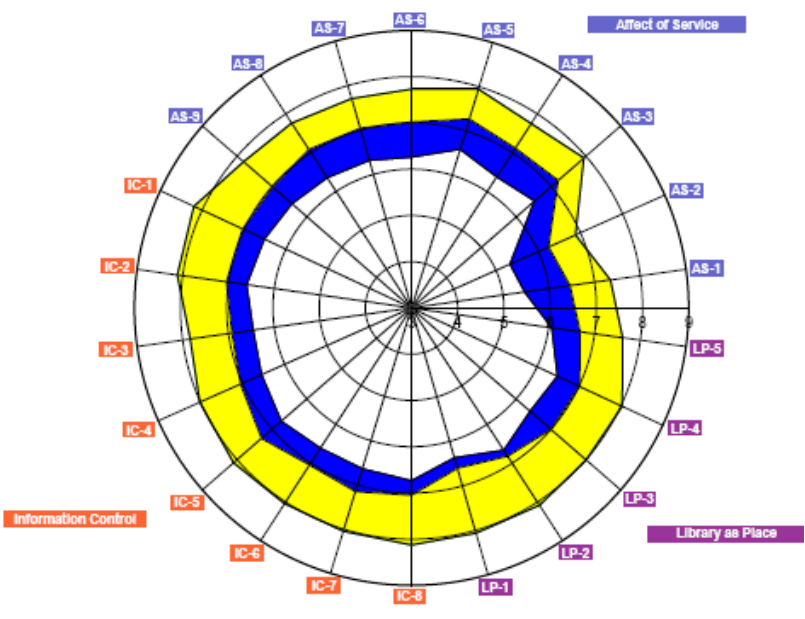
# LibQUAL+® at Texas A&M University

## Radar Chart 2007 - Undergraduate

- Perceived Less Than Minimum
- Perceived Greater Than Minimum
- Perceived Less Than Desired
- Perceived Greater Than Desired



Texas A&M University

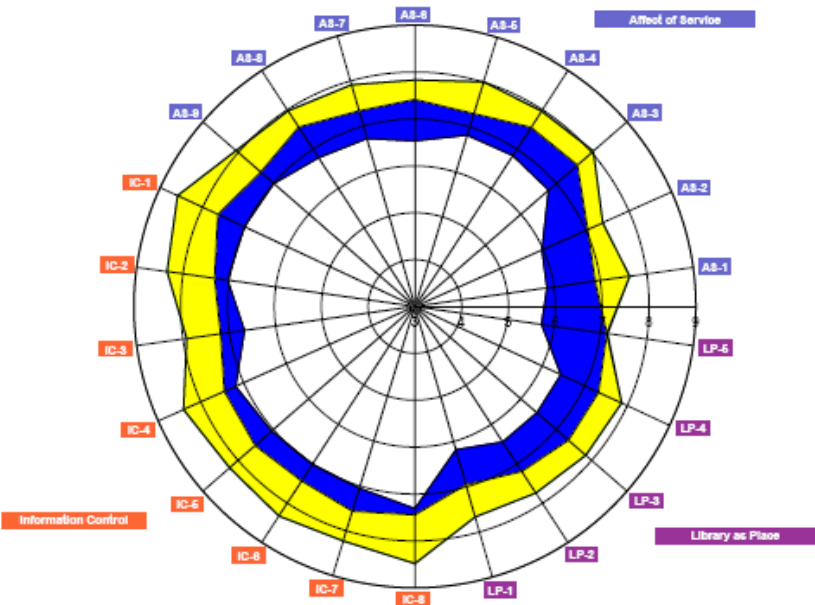


ARL

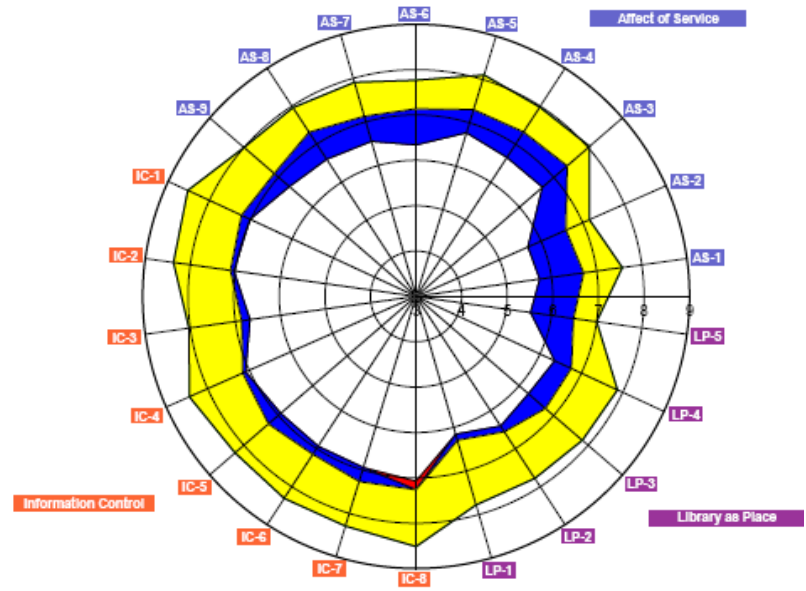
# LibQUAL+® at Texas A&M University

## Radar Chart 2007 - Graduate

- Perceived Less Than Minimum
- Perceived Greater Than Minimum
- Perceived Less Than Desired
- Perceived Greater Than Desired



Texas A&M University

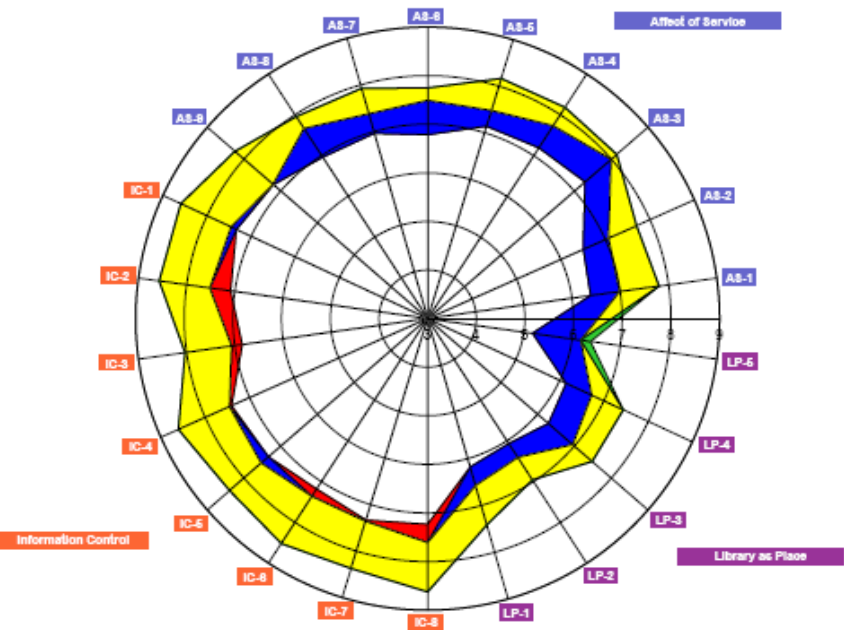


ARL

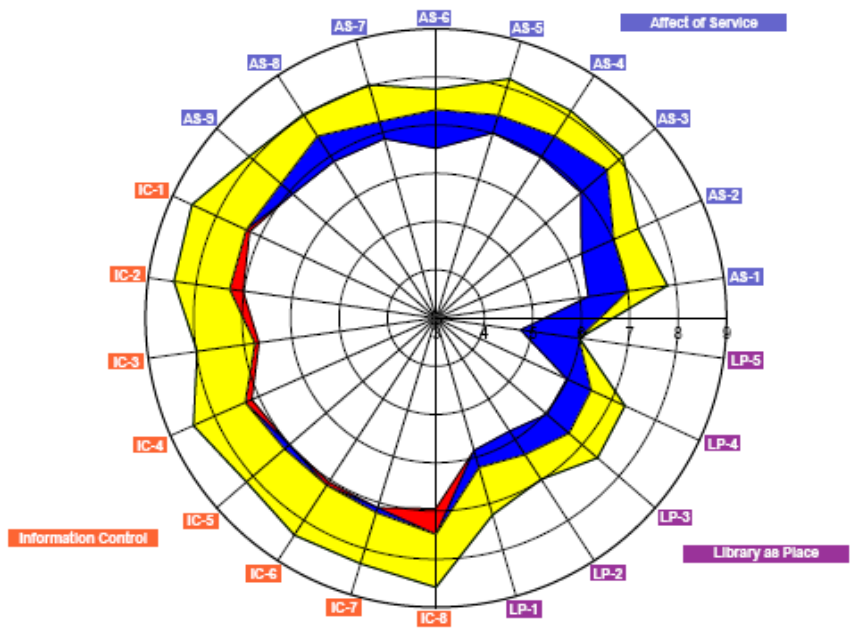
# LibQUAL+® at Texas A&M University

## Radar Chart 2007 - Faculty

- Perceived Less Than Minimum
- Perceived Greater Than Minimum
- Perceived Less Than Desired
- Perceived Greater Than Desired



Texas A&M University



ARL

# *LibQUAL+<sup>®</sup> at Texas A&M University*

## **Comments Analysis**

### **Undergraduates**

#### **Affect of Service**

- Staff friendly & provided useful information
- Concern expressed that more expeditious service needed

#### **Information Control**

- Users prefer to do research online at home
- Website not user friendly
- Difficulty finding books in the library

#### **Library as Place**

- Evans found to offer quiet place to study
- WCL found to be noisy
- Extended hours needed for Evans/Annex

# *LibQUAL+<sup>®</sup> at Texas A&M University*

## **Comments Analysis**

### **Graduates**

#### **Affect of Service**

- Staff was helpful and polite
- Staff needed better knowledge of technology

#### **Information Control**

- Numerous comments to increase both print and electronic resources; many acknowledged improvement but called for more nonetheless
- Difficulty using Libraries' website

#### **Library as Place**

- Difficult to find a quiet place to study
- Extended hours needed for Evans/Annex

# *LibQUAL+<sup>®</sup> at Texas A&M University*

## Comments Analysis

### Faculty

#### Affect of Service

- Deliver eDocs service highly praised
- Difficulty placing materials on Reserves

#### Information Control

- Noted improved purchasing power of Libraries
- Website difficult to use
- More shelf reading required

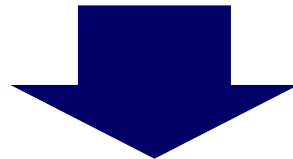
#### Library as Place

- ILL hours should be extended
- Would like to see printed materials delivered through Campus mail

# *LibQUAL+<sup>®</sup> at Texas A&M University*

## **Observations**

1. Over time undergraduates have become less inclined to consult librarians
2. Providing access capabilities that allow users to find information on their own continues to rate high for all users



1. Virtual reference
2. Web design enhancements
3. Acquisition of digital resources
4. More intense face-to-face user interaction



## *LibQUAL+<sup>®</sup> at Texas A&M University*

### **General Observations**

1. Library spaces important to undergraduate students, especially group study facilities
2. Insatiable demand of high end users for content, particularly journal literature
3. Users want to navigate the information world on their own terms - users really don't want to ask librarians questions
4. Academic institutions seek to understand the role that libraries play in higher education missions of teaching, learning & research

## *Improvements that began with LibQUAL+®*

### **Affect of Service**

Customer Service Culture at Service Desks

Improved online reference support



AskNow – online reference

Subject Portals

RSS feeds

Reserves reorganized

Self-serve reserves

3 day turnaround on placing reserves

ResDesk – online resource enabling users  
to track items placed on reserve

## *Improvements that began with LibQUAL+®*

### **Affect of Service**

Consolidation of Evans reference desks into one facility

Creation of a single Customer service point at the MSL

Reference area redesigned at the WCL

## *Improvements that began with LibQUAL+®*

### **Information Control**

**Increase in resources**

**4% increase in Total Volumes Held**

**12% increase in eBooks**

**6% increase in online serials**

**2007 Evans Collection Shelf Reading Project Completed**

**Deliver eDocs & Rapid electronic delivery of ILL materials within a 24 hour period - 94% fill rate**



## *Improvements that began with LibQUAL+<sup>®</sup>*

### **Information Control**

Digitizing of maps and microforms

2007 Evans Collection Shelf Reading Project  
Completed

Talent hired to re-organize and re-design  
Libraries' websites

Purchase of new content management system for  
Libraries websites

# Improvements that began with LibQUAL+®

## Information Control

Purchase of major databases from:

- Alexander Street Press
- ASM International
- Elsevier
- Gale
- Proquest
- SPIE
- Wiley
- Wilson



## *Improvements that began with LibQUAL+<sup>®</sup>*

### **Information Control**

Purchase of special research collections:

Senator Phil Graham papers

Cervantes project collection

Dawson French history/literature collection

Mexican Colonial imprint collection

Mexican Revolution collection

Entomology collection

## *Improvements that began with LibQUAL+<sup>®</sup>*

### **Library as Place**

Campus re-design of retain library parking

Group Study Rooms

Additional rooms added in

Evans, WCL & MSL

On-demand check out system with

restaurant like pagers

Computers in group study rooms

Creation of individual study rooms

Creation of dedicated quiet areas at the

PSEL and WCL



## *Improvements that began with LibQUAL+<sup>®</sup>*

### **Library as Place**

Purchase of additional laptops  
with on-demand check out system

In-building wireless system upgrade

Hours of Operation increased:

Library Annex - 24 hours; 5 days/week

WCL - 24 hours; 5 days/week

MSL - Open until 1 AM Sunday - Thursday

Cushing - Open until 7 PM Monday - Friday

## *Improvements that began with LibQUAL+<sup>®</sup>*

### **Library as Place**

Study tables and carrels balanced at Evans

Installation of new microform  
readers/scanners for Evans microtext  
collection

Upgraded education center at the MSL

Bookshelves reorganized to provide more soft  
seating and a quiet area at the PSEL

Patent & Trademark Office relocated to WCL

# Improvements that began with LibQUAL+®

## Library as Place

Future Projects  
Information Commons



## *Improvements that began with LibQUAL+<sup>®</sup>*

### **Conclusions**

1. Satisfaction is highly related to service delivery
2. Outcomes are highly associated with content
3. Expectations differ by user group
4. Users want to navigate the information universe on their own terms
5. LibQUAL+<sup>™</sup> is but one glimpse how users assess value added by libraries for outcomes of teaching, learning & research

# Thank you

Woof



Contact:  
Dr. Colleen Cook  
Texas A&M University Libraries  
5000 TAMU  
College Station, TX USA  
Telephone: 979-845-8111  
eMail: ccook@tamu.edu