

2017

# No Satisfaction? But We Try and We Try and We Try!

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## Repository Citation

Graves, Tonia, "No Satisfaction? But We Try and We Try and We Try!" (2017). *Libraries Faculty & Staff Publications*. 44.  
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**Serials Review**  
**No Satisfaction? But We Try and We Try and We Try!**  
--Manuscript Draft--

<b>Manuscript Number:</b>	SERREV-D-17-00021
<b>Article Type:</b>	Invited Article
<b>Keywords:</b>	
<b>Corresponding Author:</b>	Tonia Graves Old Dominion University Norfolk, Va UNITED STATES
<b>First Author:</b>	Tonia Graves
<b>Order of Authors:</b>	Tonia Graves
<b>Abstract:</b>	electronic resource management; LibQUAL+; user experience, electronic resource assessment

No Satisfaction? But We Try and We Try and We Try!

Tonia Graves

Old Dominion University Libraries

When Old Dominion University Libraries conducted the LibQUAL+ survey in 2015, results indicated a lack of satisfaction in effectively discovering and using our electronic resources. This article is based on a presentation from the 2017 North Carolina Serials Conference describing how Old Dominion University Libraries used data from the LibQUAL+ survey results to help our users connect more effectively with information resources, resulting in an improved user experience and an increased level of satisfaction.

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## Introduction

Located on the Elizabeth River in Norfolk, VA, Old Dominion University has seven academic colleges offering degrees from the bachelor's to the doctoral level. The University's academic and research initiatives contribute nearly \$2 billion annually to the local economy (University Facts and Figures, May 8, 2017). The University Libraries consist of The Patricia W. and J. Douglas Perry Library, the F. Ludwig Diehn Composers Room, and the Elise N. Hofheimer Art Library. Collections include print, media, and electronic materials to support the research needs of the students, faculty, and community at Old Dominion University. Over 1.2 million monograph volumes, 14,000+ journals, 300+ databases, and an institutional repository are available to support faculty and nearly 25,000 students.

LibQUAL+® was initiated in 2000 as an experimental project for benchmarking perceptions of library service quality. LibQUAL+ 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. There are 22 core survey questions that are grouped into three dimensions: Service, Information Control, and Library as Place. The survey measures library users' minimum, perceived, and desired service levels across these three dimensions. LibQUAL+ is a well-known service used for library quality surveys and has been used by more than 1,200 libraries worldwide (LibQUAL+, March 17, 2017).

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4 [insert Figure 1 here]  
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9 LibQUAL+ Survey Results

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11 The University Libraries launched the LibQUAL+ survey in September 2015. It ran for the  
12 recommended period of three weeks and closed in October. The survey was viewed 2,203 times.  
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15 Of those views, we received 910 complete surveys, 827 of which were valid, resulting in a  
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17 37.5% valid response rate. The majority of our respondents (n=508) were undergraduates,  
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19 skewing slightly in favor of third-year students. Graduate students were also well-represented  
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21 (n=179), with faculty (n=93) and staff (n=47) rounding out the remaining responses.  
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25 [insert Figure 2 here]  
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33 Analysis of LibQUAL+ Survey Results

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35 The largest group of LibQUAL+ survey respondents were undergraduate students.  
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37 Undergraduates were most concerned with Library as Place, giving it the highest ranking for  
38  
39 desired service level in all three dimensions. Graduate students and faculty ceded more weight to  
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41 Information Control than the other dimensions, focusing on electronic resources and a usable,  
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43 self-serve website as critical expectations. Graduate students had high expectations that the  
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45 library will provide them with the electronic information resources they need, and desire off-site  
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47 access to independently locate and use those resources. Faculty had the highest expectations that  
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49 the Libraries would provide the journal collections they require, and low expectations for  
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51 community spaces for group learning and study. Like graduate students, faculty's highest  
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4 expectations are that the library will provide off-site access to the journals and resources used in  
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6 their research and teaching.  
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11 The expectations of each user group did not come as a surprise to staff at the University  
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13 Libraries, but the lack of satisfaction expressed in how these expectations were being met was a  
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15 surprise. The lack of satisfaction expressed by graduate students and faculty can be mapped to  
16  
17 questions in the Information Control dimension (see Appendix). These populations want  
18  
19 improvements in Information Control regarding easy to use tools for independent searching and  
20  
21 the library website, more journals, and electronic resources accessible from home or office. As  
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23 reflected in their comments, faculty desire improvement in Information Control areas of the  
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25 library website, electronic resources and journals.  
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33 [insert Figure 3 here]  
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### 38 Enhancements Made Since the LibQUAL+ Survey Analysis

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40 Our initial analysis of the LibQUAL+ survey results indicated that the lowest rankings in  
41  
42 satisfaction occurred in the Information Control dimension. Our Electronic Resources & Serials  
43  
44 Services Unit, with support from staff in the library's Systems Development Department, saw  
45  
46 this as an opportunity to implement enhancements that would positively impact our graduate  
47  
48 student and faculty user experience and raise their level of satisfaction. A presentation at the 26<sup>th</sup>  
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50 Annual North Carolina Serials Conference, on March 31, 2017, focused on two enhancements  
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52 that illustrate how we used data from the LibQUAL+ survey results to try to improve our user's  
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54 experiences and increase their levels of satisfaction. One example is the enhancements we have  
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4 made to our EZ proxy error page that give users options for help instead of leaving them with a  
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6 screen of technical jargon with no clear indication of what to do next. The other example is how  
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8 we have enhanced our Journals A-Z web page by providing an option to search by subject using  
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10 BrowZine as a third party to our discovery layer.  
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15  
16 In order to improve our EZ proxy error page, or the page that users see when they cannot access  
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18 their desired resource because the “host” is not accounted for in our configuration file, we  
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20 implemented methods learned about in a workshop at the 2016 Electronic Resources & Libraries  
21  
22 (ER&L) Conference. Our systems specialist for Internet technologies utilized scripts, forms, and  
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24 a shared email account resulting in a workflow that gave users options for assistance and  
25  
26 decreased the problem resolution time. Criticisms of our former EZ Proxy Error page included  
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28 its sparseness, technical language, absence of our standard header or footer, absence of any links  
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30 for help, and the lack of a hot link for the e-mail address included.  
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38 [insert Figure 4 here]  
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43 Our enhanced EZ proxy error page that debuted in November 2016 is appreciated now for its  
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45 improved aesthetics, less technical language, the presence of our standard header or footer, and  
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47 links for help. If users do take the time to click on the “Submit” button, they are presented with a  
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49 screen thanking them for their time.  
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54 [insert Figure 5 here]  
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4 This enhancement crowdsourced our quality control efforts, decreased the time it takes to resolve  
5 access problems, and improved user experience by providing users with options for assistance.  
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9 In the first four months of its use the enhanced page received 75 submissions. Anecdotal  
10 evidence of the usefulness of the enhanced page can be seen in two instances. At the start of the  
11 spring 2017 semester, we received 16 reports on the same link in a brief period of time. We  
12 were able to use the referring URL to trace it to an outdated syllabus that had been given to  
13 students, and we contacted the professor about the broken link in the syllabus. Also in the spring  
14 2017 semester, the Systems Development Department staff performed server maintenance that  
15 resulted in a loss of access to a highly used database. This was detected and quickly resolved by  
16 the numerous submissions in a brief period of time to the EZ proxy error page. Other positive  
17 impacts we experienced emerging from this enhancement include:  
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- 31 • Identifying system wide outages
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- 33 • Recognizing that referring URLs are helpful analytics
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- 36 • Increasing staff understanding and participation in electronic resource management.
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41 Our second enhancement, adding a subject search option to our Journals Finder, resulted as a  
42 combination of responding to our LibQUAL+ survey result data analysis and improving the out  
43 of the box Journal Finder web page that came with our new discovery service that debuted July  
44 5, 2016. The Journals A-Z page we had since 2003 no longer offered an option to search for  
45 journals by subject after we migrated to a new discovery service in July 2016. Some of the first  
46 comments we received after the migration were negative reactions to the new Journals A-Z page.  
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48 The new page featured a simple search box and an option to browse for titles by alpha order.  
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58 The search box had just one search option-Find Journal by Title. There were no familiar search  
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4 options for ISSN, call number, title begins with, or subject that our users were used to. The new  
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6 Journals A-Z page generated such negative response, particularly from faculty and graduate  
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8 students, that we knew it had to be a priority for post implementation improvement.  
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14 [insert Figure 6 here]  
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19 In order to enhance our Journals Finder, we created a splash landing page, which was  
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21 implemented in February 2017 that provides a choice of search options for users. The first link  
22  
23 is to search for Journals A-Z and still goes to our discovery system out of the box page. A  
24  
25 second link now provides an option to search for Journals by subject. We responded to our user  
26  
27 demand for this option by using BrowZine, a third party subscription service that allows users to  
28  
29 browse, read, and follow scholarly journals. It provides the familiar options to search for  
30  
31 journals by subject, title, or ISSN that our users desired. We already subscribe to BrowZine, so  
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33 there were no additional costs, and now we are getting more value from our BrowZine  
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35 subscription. The splash page also links to other library help such as Chat and Research Guides.  
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43 [insert Figure 7 here]  
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48 There are some cons to this enhancement. Not all journals are in BrowZine. There are no print  
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50 journals in BrowZine. We crafted a disclaimer statement to address this gap that reads “(Note:  
51  
52 this list is not comprehensive. Notice a title missing? Let us know!).” The statement links to our  
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54 Ask-a-Librarian form. There is a lag time of one month for edits in our discovery system to  
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4 appear in BrowZine, although BrowZine says if we have an unusually large number of changes,  
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6 to contact them and they will expedite the update.  
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## 10 11 Looking Ahead

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14 The enhancements made to our EZ proxy error page and our Journals A-Z web page were  
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16 successfully implemented largely in part due to the following reasons:  
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- 18  
19 • Alignment with library priorities
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21 • Support from colleagues
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23 • Relatively little additional cost
- 24  
25 • Manageable workflows post implementation
- 26  
27 • No support outside of library required
- 28  
29 • Good third party vendor support and documentation.  
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34 Both enhancements have created additional work, but we believe the work is part of our mission  
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36 and being good stewards of our resources. Have we improved user satisfaction? It is too soon to  
37  
38 tell. These enhancements are new and challenging to measure so it is hard to assess at this point  
39  
40 what impact they are having. We know that both enhancements are being used, so we perceive  
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42 that as positive. If we do the LibQUAL+ survey again, we can compare results to see if  
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44 satisfaction has increased. In the meantime we will continue to try.  
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4 Appendix I – LibQUAL+ Question Index  
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7 Affect of Service -

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9 1: Employees who instill confidence in users  
10 2: Giving users individual attention  
11 3: Employees who are consistently courteous  
12 4: Readiness to respond to users' questions  
13 5: Employees who have knowledge to answer user questions  
14 6: Employees who deal with users in a caring fashion  
15 7: Employees who understand the needs of their users  
16 8: Willingness to help users  
17 9: Dependability in handling users' service problems  
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21 Information Control -

- 22 1: Making Electronic resources accessible from my home or office  
23 2: A library Web site enabling me to locate information on my own  
24 3: The printed library materials I need for my work  
25 4: The electronic information resources I need  
26 5: Modern equipment that lets me easily access needed information  
27 6: Easy-to-use access tools that allow me to find things on my own  
28 7: Making information easily accessible for independent use  
29 8: Print and/or electronic journal collections I require for my work  
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33 Library as Place -

- 34 1: Library space that inspires study and learning  
35 2: Quiet space for individual activities  
36 3: A comfortable and inviting location  
37 4: A getaway for study, learning, or research  
38 5: Community space for group learning and group study  
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## What is LibQUAL+?

A survey that's been used by over 1200 libraries worldwide.

A survey that assesses three dimensions:

- Library as Place
- Affect of Service
- Information Control

A survey that uses three measures of satisfaction with service quality:

- Minimum
- Desired
- Perceived

Figure 1. What is LibQUAL+?

## LibQUAL+ Survey Responses

2203 total views:

- Incomplete – 1293
- Complete – 910
- Valid – 827

827 valid views by population:

- Undergraduate – 508
- Graduate – 179
- Faculty – 93
- Staff – 47

Figure 2. Survey Responses

Comments from LibQUAL+ Survey
The library website is a little challenging to sort through to find necessary links.
I wish we were still able to find peer reviewed articles by subject.
Outstanding remote service is critical to me as an adjunct faculty member.
I find it cumbersome to find information through the library website.

Figure 3. Survey Comments



## ODU Libraries Access Error

To allow `https://login.proxy.lib.odu.edu/login?url=http://clmu.alexanderstreet.com` to work, your EZproxy administrator (xxxxxx@odu.edu) must first authorize this within the `ezproxy.cfg` file.

Within this database's section of the file, the following line must be added:

```
H clmu.alexanderstreet.com
```

Figure 4. Former EZ Proxy Error Page



Figure 5. Enhanced EZ Proxy Error Page

## Journal Finder— July 2016 - No option for subject search

**OLD DOMINION UNIVERSITY**  
1914 FOUNDED

**University Libraries**  
New Search A-Z Custom Linker Help

Guest | My Shelf | My Account | Sign in

Chat now

Find Journal by Title  Search

Back to Simple Search

18,257 Results 1:00

Sorted by: Title

- 1 **A & A case reports.**  
New York, NY : Wolters Kluwer Health | OutSP, 2013.  
Access it Details
- 2 **A contraceptivos.**  
Raleigh, NC : publisher not identified, 2003.  
Access it Details
- 3 **A. O. Smith Corporation SWOT Analysis**  
Dulles, VA.  
Access it Details

Figure 6. Out of the Box Journal Finder - July 2016

## Journal Finder February 2017 - Includes subject search

### Splash Landing Page

#### Find Journals and Articles

#### Journals A-Z

Search and browse journals by title

#### Journals by Subject

Search and browse journals by subject

(Note: this list is not comprehensive. Include a title keyword? [Get all titles](#))

#### Search by Citation

Find a specific article, citation or journal issue

#### Databases A-Z

Search and browse databases by subject and by title

#### Open Access Journals

Explore open access resources

#### Need help getting started?

Check out our [Research Guides](#) to learn about how to [find articles](#) or get help in your [subject area](#)

Still can't find what you need? [Get help](#)

### BrowZine Subject Search



Figure 7. Enhanced Journal Finder - February 2017