Furman University 2012 TechQual Survey Analysis:
Student, faculty, and staff perceptions of technology service quality

Fred Miller
Information Technology Services
January 8, 2013
Furman University 2012 TechQual Survey Analysis

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This report summarizes results from the Furman University’s 2012 survey of students, faculty, and staff perceptions of information technology service quality. We are grateful to all who completed the survey, and to all who work to improve the quality of technology services for our campus. This is Furman’s fifth consecutive year using the TechQual survey. Over those five years we have seen the survey instrument improve, and we’ve measured improvements in perceptions of information technology quality.

The 2012 survey produced several key findings about the quality of information technology services at Furman University:

- We’ve made good progress improving service quality over time; yet there continue to be opportunities for improving quality, particularly around customer service.
- Our community’s perceptions of our new Office 365 service should improve with additional training, and better integration with other campus information services.
- Furman’s results compare well with other institutions using the TechQual survey.

The TechQual survey is one way we identify IT services needing improvement. The survey results inform our IT governance, and our IT strategic planning.

About the TechQual Survey
The TechQual survey is based on the ServQual methodology used by similar surveys such as LibQual. Over 260 institutions are involved with the TechQual project, including 22 outside the United States. The project provides the ability to compare survey results with broad classes of higher education institutions (e.g. Baccalaureate, Masters, etc.)

The 2012 survey asked respondents to rate 13 standard service areas (table 1.) We also added a custom service rating for Furman’s email and calendar service. Respondents were asked to rate each service area on a scale of 1 to 9 for:

- My minimum acceptable service level,
- My desired service level, and
- The service level delivered by Furman University.

Respondents are encouraged to provide comments, or suggestions, for each service. In addition we asked respondents to respond to three open ended questions:

- Could you identify three technology services at Furman that you find especially helpful?
- If you could suggest a single improvement for information technology at Furman University, what would it be?
- Is there anything else you'd like to tell us about Furman's information technology services?

List of participating institutions here: https://www.techqual.org/docs/participants.aspx
Response Rates
Furman’s survey was conducted in October using two instances of the survey instrument: one for students, and another for faculty and staff. All students, faculty, and staff with active email accounts were invited to participate. Students were offered a chance to win one of ten pairs of movie tickets. Faculty and staff were offered a chance to win one of five pairs of movie tickets. We received a 24% response from students; consistent with responses on our previous surveys, and very good for a web survey. We received a 54% response from faculty and staff; also consistent with previous surveys, and exceptional for a web survey.

Findings
The survey results show progress improving information technology service quality. We pay particular attention to “service adequacy” ratings: the difference between minimum and delivered service level. Almost all services had a positive adequacy rating in the aggregate. Service areas rated particularly strong were:

- Having a campus Internet service that is fast and that provides speedy access to Web sites and rapid downloads.
- Having campus technology services available that improve and enhance my collaboration with others.
- Having technology within classrooms or other meeting areas that enhances the presentation and sharing of information.
- Technology support staff who are consistently courteous and thoughtful.
- Receiving timely communications regarding campus technology services, explained in a relevant and easy-to-understand form.
- Getting access to training or other self-help information that can enable me to become more effective in my use of campus technology services.

The two service area not meeting minimum expectations for all constituencies were:

- Getting timely resolution to problems that I am experiencing with campus technology services.
- Having a system for email and calendaring that meets my needs

Improving problem resolution is a focus area of our IT strategic plan. The negative perception of the email and calendar service is particularly noteworthy since the survey was during our first full semester using Office 365.

Service rating suggestions are especially helpful for understanding faculty, staff, and students’ perceptions. The suggestions provide insights into why a service may need improvement. After reviewing the survey ratings, suggestions, and open responses, we are better able to discern how various segments of our community perceive the quality of Furman’s information technology services. Insights from the survey help us determine how best to improve information technology services.
Student Insights
The average student ratings were, for the most part, very positive. Student survey responses were different from faculty and staff responses in one notable way: they were very concerned about the Network Access Control service (a.k.a., “Bradford”, “NAC” or “remediation”). We use Network Access Control to ensure student computers have required security patches and anti-virus software. If a student computer fails a Network Access Control check, the computer is prevented from using the Internet until its software is updated. After the survey we learned that the anti-virus software we require on student computers was having trouble updating on Macintosh computers. We are now re-evaluating the anti-virus software we require for student Macintosh computers.

Like faculty and staff, students expressed concern about timely problem resolution. They also commented extensively on the Office 365 service. Interestingly, the students who had not used our previous email solution rated Office 365 very positively. Students also commented that they would like to see improved integration between Office 365, the MyFurman portal, and the OrgSync service for student organizations.

Faculty Insights
As on our previous surveys, the 2012 survey shows Furman faculty as hardest to please. Most surprising was the faculty response to the service area “Having technology within classrooms or other meeting areas that enhances the presentation and sharing of information.” Students rated this service area higher than any other, and staff also provided a high rating. Faculty suggestions indicate that their negative rating of this service was due to their perception that problems with classroom technology need to be fixed faster.

In addition to faster fixes for classroom equipment, faculty see the campus website and portal needing improvement. They want better support for Macintosh computers, and want to see better follow-up on their service requests. Faculty are least satisfied with the Office 365 service, and suggestions indicate that faculty need more Office 365 training.

Staff Insights
Average staff ratings for technology service areas were generally positive. Survey responses show staff are concerned about slow response to service requests, and want more follow-up to work in process. They also look forward to improvements to the campus web services. Staff gave higher ratings to the Office 365 service, but indicated that they would like more training.
Changes over time
The 2012 TechQual survey is a substantial revision from the 2011 survey. The survey was revised to improve usability and encourage more responses. The thirteen standard service questions on the 2012 survey are down from the eighteen measured in 2011. Of the fourteen services we measured, three were new in 2012:

- Support for accessing the campus Internet service using my tablet or other mobile device.
- Having campus technology services available that improve and enhance my collaboration with others.
- Receiving timely communications regarding campus technology services, explained in a relevant and easy-to-understand form.

For the eleven service areas used on previous TechQual surveys we see much improvement from our earliest surveys. However, we note that service adequacy ratings on the 2011 survey were higher than those measured in 2012 (see Chart 4.) We attribute this dip to the extraordinary efforts ITS staff made to accommodate our transition to Office 365. With our transition to Office 365 complete, and as we accomplish the other goals of our 2011 IT strategic plan, we expect future ratings will improve.

Peer comparisons
Furman does well in the TechQual peer comparisons (see Chart 5.) In particular, Furman’s ratings leads all groups in these service areas:

- Having a campus Internet service that is fast and that provides speedy access to Web sites and rapid downloads.
- Having campus technology services available that improve and enhance my collaboration with others.
- Having technology within classrooms or other meeting areas that enhances the presentation and sharing of information.

Conclusions
The Furman community’s responses to the 2012 TechQual survey reflect the challenging year for information technology at Furman University. The switch to Office 365 was an extraordinary service challenge, and many faculty and staff responses acknowledged the efforts by ITS staff to help smooth the transition. We’ve made great progress improving service quality, and we have more work ahead. The 2012 survey helped highlight needs for

- More Office 365 training and outreach;
- More timely responses and follow-ups to service requests;
- Website, portal, and mobile application improvements; and
- Improved student experience with “remediation” for Network Access Control.

The survey also shows that Furman does well in comparisons with other institutions technology service quality. We are confident our service improvements will continue.

We are grateful for all who helped with this survey, our campus community’s support, and the daily efforts of Furman’s Information Technology Services staff and student workers.
Appendices

Table 1: Service areas measured by the 2012 TechQual survey

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Connective &amp; Access</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1) Having a campus Internet service that is reliable and that operates consistently</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2) Having a campus Internet service that is fast and that provides speedy access to</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3) Having wireless Internet coverage in all of the places that are important to me</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4) Support for accessing the campus Internet service using my tablet or other mobile</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Technology &amp; Collaboration Services</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5) Having campus Web sites and online services that are easy to use.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6) Accessing important campus Web sites and online services from my tablet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7) Having campus technology services available that improve and enhance my</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8) Having technology within classrooms or other meeting areas that enhances</td>
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<table>
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<tr>
<th>Support and Training</th>
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<tr>
<td>9) Technology support staff who are consistently courteous and thoughtful.</td>
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<tr>
<td>10) Technology support staff who are knowledgeable and can help me resolve</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11) Getting timely resolution to problems that I am experiencing with campus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12) Receiving timely communications regarding campus technology services,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13) Getting access to training or other self-help information that can enable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14) Having a system for email and calendaring that meets my needs</td>
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</table>

Custom service rating added for Furman University
About the Zone of Tolerance Charts

The Techqual survey charts data in several formats. The “Zone of Tolerance” charts show average ratings for all 14 surveyed services. The high part of the gray bar shows the average “desired service level”. Low part of each gray bar shows the minimum acceptable service level. The orange bar represents the “adequacy gap”: the difference between minimum and perceived service level.

Chart 1: 2012 Student Survey Ratings

The 2012 student survey shows positive service ratings for most measured services (top of orange bar within the gray zone of tolerance.)

Services most needing improvement for students (negative adequacy gap) are shown as:
1) Having a campus Internet service that is reliable and that operates consistently across campus.
14) Having a system for email and calendaring that meets my needs

The student comments indicate that much of students’ perceptions Internet service is affected by our Network Access Control system (a.k.a., “Bradford” and “remediation vlan”).) Network Access Control checks for required security patches and anti-virus software. If a student computer fails a check the student’s computer is prevented from using the Internet until the student updates the required software.

Analyzing student ratings for the email and calendar system show that entering students (freshmen) have a positive perception of the Office 365 system.
The 2012 faculty/staff survey shows positive service ratings for most measured services.

Services most needing improvement for faculty and staff are shown as:
5) Having campus Web sites and online services that are easy to use.
11) Getting timely resolution to problems that I am experiencing with campus technology services.
14) Having a system for email and calendaring that meets my needs
Chart 3: Service Adequacy Ratings by Constituency

Showing service ratings either below or above minimum expectations.
Chart 4: Furman Technology Service Adequacy Scores Over Time
Chart 5: 2012 Peer Comparisons
Chart 6: Selected Student Service Suggestions Categorized

**Students: Network Reliability (82)**

- Wireless reliability: 31%
- Connection trouble: 13%
- FU-Diagnostic: 2%
- Good: 1%
- Important: 6%
- NAC/Antivirus: 21%
- Slow connecting: 9%
- Outside wireless: 4%
- Other: 13%

**Students: email/calendar (84)**

- Prefers FirstClass: 20%
- Prefers Google: 10%
- Dislikes OrgSync: 5%
- Lack of integration: 19%
- Login difficulty: 9%
- Mac problems: 2%
- Needs training: 11%
- Office365 Bad: 5%
- Office365 Good: 4%
- Office365 Slow: 2%
- Other: 13%
Chart 7: Selected Staff Service Suggestions categorized

**Staff: Timely Fixes (37)**
- Students need improving: 5%
- Followup lacking: 11%
- Good: 14%
- NAC/antivirus: 3%
- Other: 8%
- Service level inaccurate: 8%
- Slow service: 51%

**Staff: email/calendar (33)**
- Prefers FirstClass: 12%
- Prefers Google: 3%
- Lack of integration: 9%
- Mac problems: 6%
- Needs training: 40%
- Other: 15%
- Office365 Slow: 6%
- Office365 Bad: 3%
- Office365 Good: 6%

Chart 8: Selected Faculty Service Suggestions categorized

**Faculty: Classroom Tech (24)**
- Better equipment: 12%
- Class setup poor: 13%
- Good: 4%
- iPad support: 17%
- No computer in station: 13%
- CTL software not in lab: 4%
- Setup differences: 8%
- Reliability/slow fixes: 29%

**Faculty: email/calendar (36)**
- Preferences FirstClass: 11%
- Prefers Google: 14%
- Furman Calendar: 5%
- Login difficulty: 8%
- Mac problems: 6%
- Needs training: 11%
- Office365 Good: 6%
- Office365 Bad: 25%
- Other: 14%
- Office365 Slow: 6%
Chart 9: Open responses categorized: “...technology services you find especially helpful”

**Students: Especially Helpful Tech Services (218)**

- Class/Lab: 11%
- OrgSync: 3%
- Office 365: 8%
- Studio Lab: 2%
- Library: 7%
- Internet Speed: 2%
- No: 5%
- Other: 7%
- Printing: 3%
- Service Center: 28%
- Web services: 12%
- Wireless: 12%

**Faculty/Staff: Especially Helpful Tech Services (217)**

- Service Center: 24%
- Office 365: 13%
- ITS individual: 12%
- Library: 2%
- Internet Speed: 5%
- No: 3%
- Other: 10%
- Training: 7%
- Web services: 9%
- Wireless: 7%
- Class/Office: 6%
- CTL: 2%
Chart 10: “...suggest a single improvement for information technology”

**Students: One Thing to Improve IT (273)**

- Wireless: 18%
- Communication: 7%
- Email: 16%
- NAC/anti-virus: 22%
- ITS-staff: 6%
- Library: 1%
- OrgSync: 3%
- Net-Speed: 4%
- Other: 8%
- Print Wireless: 1%
- Web services: 10%
- Good: 4%
- Other: 8%

**Faculty and Staff: One Thing to Improve IT (226)**

- Wireless: 17%
- Communication: 3%
- Email/calendar: 6%
- Good: 9%
- Guest Access: 4%
- ITS-staff: 23%
- Training: 7%
- Mobile: 4%
- Class/Office: 5%
- Other: 17%
- Web services: 5%
- Other: 17%
- Mobile: 4%
- ITS-staff: 23%
Chart 11: “...anything else you'd like to tell us?”

**Students: What Else About Tech Services? (91)**

- Good: 39%
- ITS-staff: 7%
- Net-Speed: 4%
- OrgSync: 2%
- Web services: 3%
- Other: 11%
- email: 10%
- Communication: 4%
- NAC/anti-virus: 10%
- Wireless: 10%
- Other: 9%
- Guest Access: 1%
- Training: 6%
- Class/Office: 1%
- email/calendar: 4%

**Faculty and Staff: What Else About Tech Services? (106)**

- Good: 65%
- ITS-staff: 11%
- Web services: 3%
- Other: 9%
- Training: 6%
- Class/Office: 1%
- email/calendar: 4%
- Guest Access: 1%