



AMERICAN UNIVERSITY

W A S H I N G T O N , D C

**Assessing IT Service Outcomes:
Analysis of Results for the Higher Education
TechQual+ Survey at AU**

December 2019

American University's Office of Information Technology (OIT) is pleased to share this summary report of the IT Customer Feedback Survey administered to campus between November 25, 2019 – December 6, 2019, as part of the Higher Education TechQual+ Project, to assess the quality and effectiveness of technology services provided to our community.

The comprehensive survey results are being thoroughly reviewed by the management teams within the OIT and the University Library, comparing our 2019 results with those from 2017 to measure progress made in areas of need in campus technology. Additionally, our results will be benchmarked against peer institutions to guide our continued planning and prioritization decisions. Following the analysis, action plans will be developed to address the perceived technology adequacy gaps on campus.

Normally, we would repeat the survey every two years; however, the TechQual+ Survey is being retired as of December 31, 2019.

Questions about the survey process should be directed to [Terry Fernandez](#), Senior Director of Customer Service and Support.

Overview of the TechQual+ Survey

The Higher Education TechQual+ Project provides IT leaders and administrators with the tools to assess, analyze, and report on the effectiveness of technology services at their institution. There are 13 core IT service outcomes that are standardized across every participating institution and grouped together into the following distinct core commitments:

- Connectivity and Access
- Technology and Collaboration Services
- Support and Training
- Other Important Information Technology Services

Respondents were asked to rate the service dimension in three ways, based on a rating scale with 1 being the lowest and 9 being the highest.

- Minimum Service Level Expectation – the number that represents the minimum level of service that the respondent finds acceptable.
- Desired Service Level Expectation – the number that represents the level of service that the respondent personally wants.
- Perceived Service Level Expectation – the number that represents the level of service that the respondent believes is currently provided.

Additional supplemental questions were added that were unique to AU. Respondents also had the opportunity to leave narrative comments for each question.

Distribution

On November 25, 2019, an email was sent to 6,423 individuals flagged as AU faculty, staff, and students inviting them to participate in the survey, using their personalized survey ID. The population sample was provided by the Office of Institutional Research and Assessment, representing 50% of the population, excluding online degree seeking students and faculty, staff, and students from the Washington College of Law.

On December 2, 2019, reminders were sent to those that had not yet responded. As an incentive to complete the survey, respondents could choose to enter the drawing to win an iPad Mini.

Key Findings

Customer expectations continue to grow, as inspection of the graphs on pages 4-6 reveal a noticeable shift upward for the zone of tolerance across almost every service category.

Desired Service Levels

- The highest desired service levels corresponded to the following services:
 - having reliable Internet service,
 - having adequate wireless coverage,
 - having fast Internet service,
 - having reliable cellular coverage, and
 - having knowledgeable IT support staff.
- All services fell below the desired service level, since mean ratings were extremely high. On a nine-point scale, desired service levels ranged from 7.99 – 8.8 with only a 0.81 spread across all service areas.
- For many individuals, Internet and Wi-Fi coverage are synonymous, so it is difficult for them to discern the cause of any connectivity issues. Even though Internet service has not been interrupted all year, ratings fell from the 2017 survey.

Perceived Service Levels

- On a nine-point scale, respondents rated their perception of current service levels with mean ratings ranging from 6.57 – 7.5, slightly lower than the 2017 survey results of 6.59 – 7.73.
- AU exceeded the minimum service levels for the following service areas:
 - having online services that enhance the teaching and learning experience (6.78),
 - having technology services that allow me to collaborate effectively with others (6.92),
 - getting timely resolution of technology problems (7.23),
 - having knowledgeable IT support staff (7.5),
 - receiving communications regarding technology services that I can understand (7.21),
 - access to training or other self-help information (6.80), and
 - having faculty who use technology in ways that enhance my learning experiences (6.59).

Below is a summary of the weaker and stronger areas by University role, based on the perceived service levels on a nine-point scale.

	Students	Faculty	Staff
	Knowledgeable IT Staff (7.24)	Reliable Internet (7.78)	Reliable Internet (7.92)
Stronger Areas	Easy to Understand Communications (7.03)	Knowledgeable IT Staff (7.77)	Fast Internet (7.90)
	Adequate Cellular Coverage (7.02)	Fast Internet (7.75)	Knowledgeable IT Staff (7.76)
	Reliable Internet (6.11)	Available Classrooms/Meeting Spaces (6.38)	Data to Inform Decisions (6.53)
Weaker Areas	Adequate Wi-Fi Coverage (6.29)	Easy to Use Web Sites (6.54)	Easy to Use Web Sites (6.67)
	Fast Internet (6.31)	Collaborate Effectively (6.57)	Access to Training or Self Help (6.76)

Services with a negative adequacy gap include (in order from the greatest to least adequacy gap):

- Having an Internet service that provides adequate Wi-Fi coverage. (-0.63 gap overall with 6.84/9 mean for perceived service level)
- Having an Internet service that operates reliably. (-0.35 gap overall with 7.00/9 mean for perceived service level)
- Having systems that provide timely access to data that informs decision-making. (-0.33 gap overall with 6.66/9 mean for perceived service level)
- The availability of classrooms or meeting spaces with technology that enhances the teaching and learning experience. (-0.31 gap overall with 6.57/9 mean for perceived service level)
- Having Web sites and online services that are easy to use. (-0.29 gap overall with 6.66/9 mean for perceived service level)

In conjunction with the AU Strategic Plan and OIT Road Map, individual long-term action plans are already being implemented to improve our service delivery in these areas.

Survey Results – Zones of Tolerance

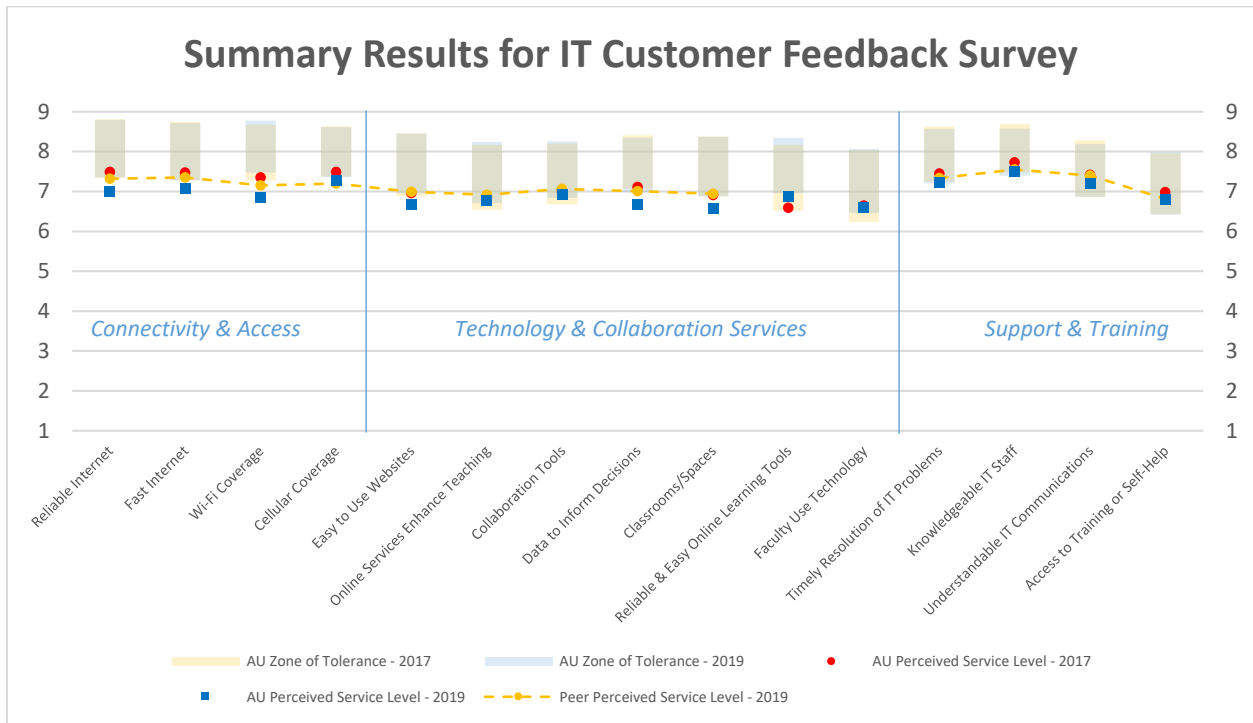







Figure 1 American University Results

 - The light yellow bar indicates the zone of tolerance from 2017 with the bottom representing the minimum service level expectation and the top representing the desired service level expectation.

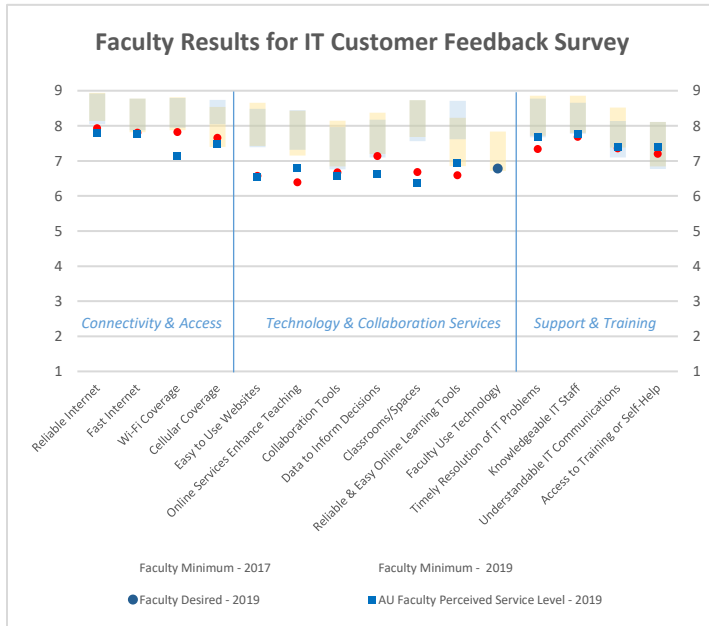
 - The light blue bar indicates the zone of tolerance from 2019 with the bottom representing the minimum service level expectation and the top representing the desired service level expectation.

 - The red circle indicates the perceived service level expectation indicated by AU faculty, staff, and students in 2017.

 - The blue square indicates the perceived service level expectation indicated by AU faculty, staff, and students in 2019.

 - The golden dashed line with round markers indicates the average perceived service level expectation for faculty, staff, and students from the peer research universities listed on page 6.

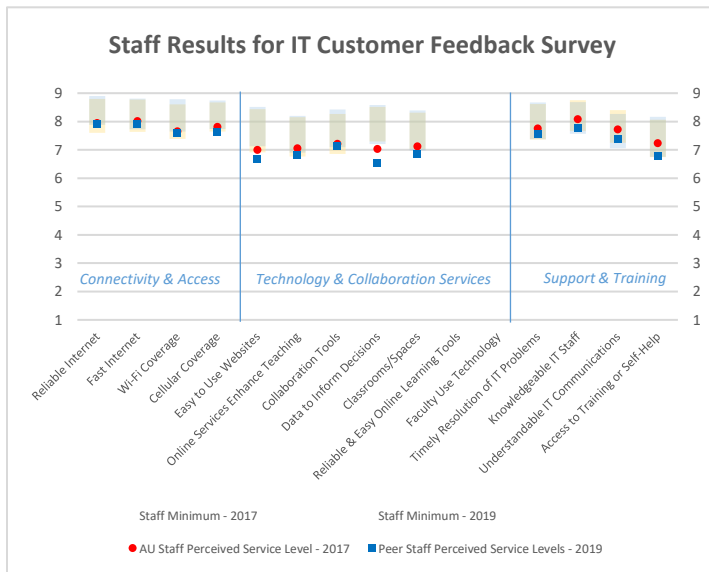
Areas of focus become clearer when examining the ratings with a negative adequacy gap by each role.



Services with the greatest adequacy gap for Faculty:

- The availability of classrooms or meeting spaces with technology that enhances the teaching and learning experience. (-1.18 gap with 6.38/9 mean)
- Having Web sites and online services that are easy to use. (-0.85 gap with 6.54/9 mean)
- Having an Internet service that provides adequate Wi-Fi coverage. (-0.82 gap with 7.13/9 mean)
- Having a learning management system that is reliable, easy-to-use, and sufficient for my needs. (-0.69 gap with 6.93/9 mean)
- Having adequate cellular or (mobile) coverage throughout campus. (-0.59 gap with 7.47/9 mean)

Figure 2 Self-Reported Faculty Responses (Scale 1-9)



Services with the greatest adequacy gap for Staff:

- Having systems that provide timely access to data that informs decision-making. (-0.68 gap with 6.53/9 mean)
- Having Web sites and online services that are easy to use. (-0.46 gap with 6.67/9 mean)
- The availability of classrooms or meeting spaces with technology that enhances the teaching and learning experience. (-0.15 gap with 6.83/9 mean)
- Having adequate cellular or (mobile) coverage throughout campus. (-0.13 gap with 7.61/9 mean)
- Having online services that enhance the teaching and learning experience. (-0.09 gap with 6.82/9 mean)

Figure 3 Self-Reported Staff Responses (Scale 1-9)

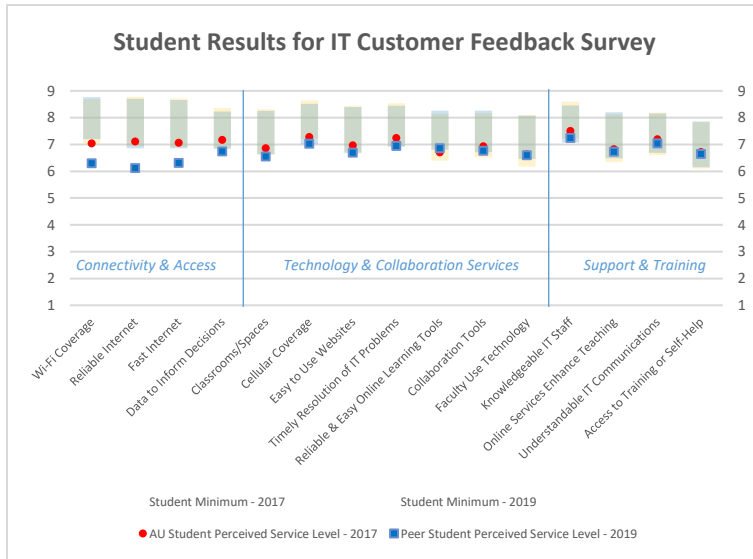


Figure 4 Self-Reported Student Responses (Scale 1-9)

Services with the greatest adequacy gap for Students:

- Having an Internet service that provides adequate Wi-Fi coverage. (-0.91 gap with 6.29/9 mean)
- Having an Internet service that operates reliably. (-0.75 gap with 6.11/9)
- Having an Internet service that provides adequate capacity or speed. (-0.55 gap with 6.31/9)
- Having systems that provide timely access to data that informs decision-making. (-0.11 gap with 6.73/9 mean)
- The availability of classrooms or meeting spaces with technology that enhances the teaching and learning experience. (-0.10 gap with 6.54/9 mean)

Peer Benchmarks

Participating research universities for 2018-2019 included: Clark University, Illinois College, Illinois State University, Miami University – Oxford, Northern Arizona University, Pepperdine University, Saint Louis University, Texas State University, University of Arkansas, University of Georgia, University of Memphis, University of South Carolina – Beaufort, University of Tennessee – Chattanooga, University of Tennessee – Knoxville, University of West Georgia, and Washington State University – Vancouver.

The radar graphs below show the perceived to desired service level expectation and the perceived to the minimum service level ratios.

With regard to benchmarking against our peers, AU perceived service ratings were almost all below those of peer institutions, with only the exception of cellular coverage. The difference between AU and peers ranged from -0.37 to 0.08.

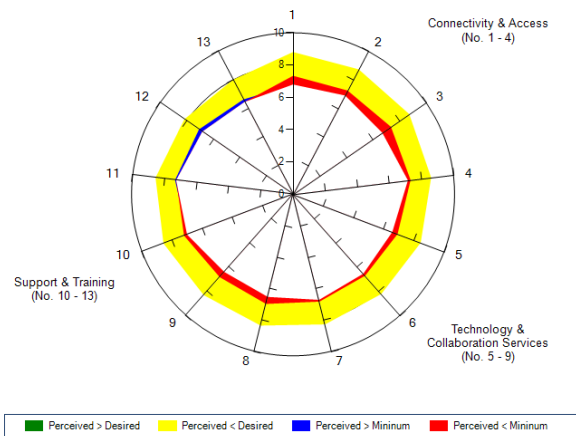


Figure 5 American University Results in Radar Graph

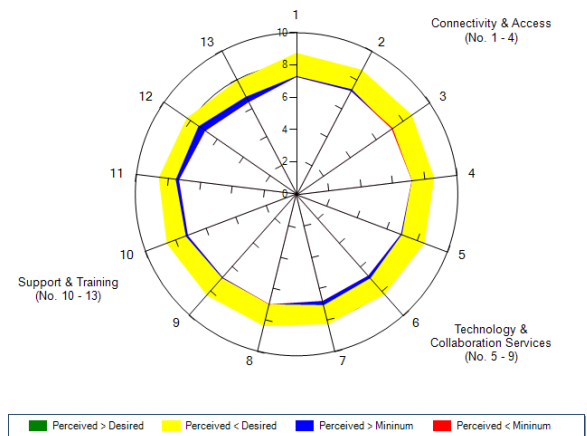


Figure 6 Peer Group Radar Graph

Responses to Open-Ended Questions

Respondents were asked three open-ended questions at the end of the survey.

- (1) Could you identify 1-3 technology services at AU that you find especially helpful? Please describe.
- (2) Could you identify 1-3 technology services at AU that often perform poorly? What steps should be taken to strengthen these services?
- (3) Do you have any additional comments regarding Information Technology?

Narrative responses will take some time to code, so they will be summarized at a later time.

The following Wordle tag cloud captures and ranks the top 25 keywords from these responses:



Figure 7 Most Helpful Services

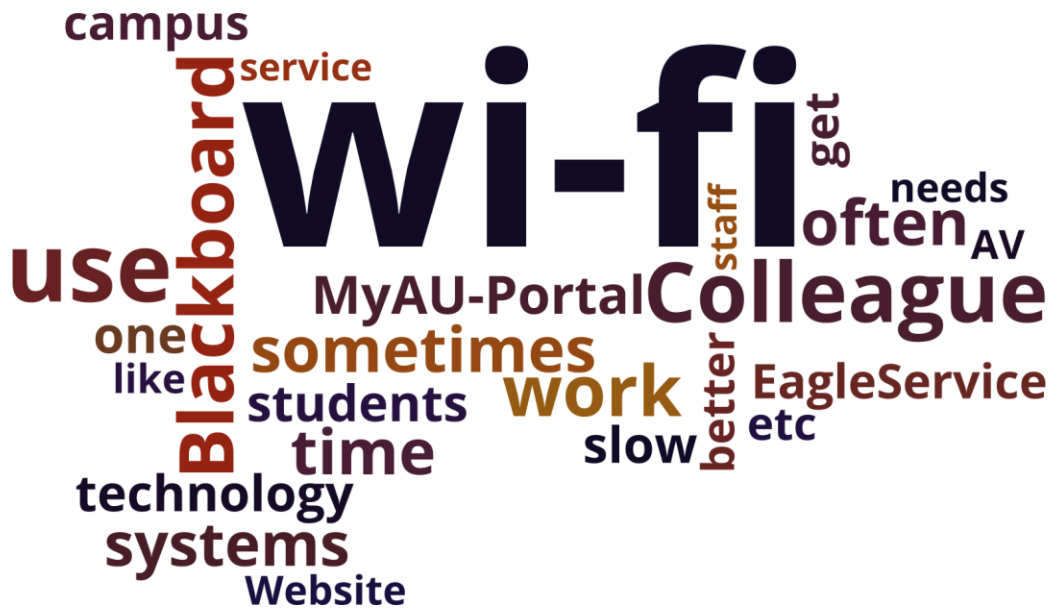


Figure 8 Poorly Performing Services



Figure 9 Additional Comments

Respondent Analysis

606 individuals answered one or more of the survey questions, which represented a 9% response rate; while 451 completed the entire survey, representing an 7% response rate for the entire campus community. 74% of the individuals who attempted the survey completed it, which represents a decrease of 4% from the 2017 survey. It should be noted that the survey completion timeframe allowed by OIRA was significantly shorter than that of 2017.

Since various sub-populations within the University community are distinct and likely have differing needs and expectations, as they pertain to IT services, we will analyze the results by major sub-population. The AU survey included the following additional demographic questions:

University Role	# Attempted	# Completed
Faculty	75	59
Staff	198	158
Student	333	234
Totals	606	451

Self-Reported Gender Attribute	# Attempted	# Completed
Not Declared	39	23
Female	373	285
Male	194	143
Totals	606	451

Self-Reported Age Group	# Attempted	# Completed
Not Declared	76	44
0-24	252	178
25-34	125	104
35-44	65	56
45-54	43	36
55 & Above	45	33
Totals	606	451

Program Level (Students Only)	# of Completed Student Respondents	Percentage of Completed Student Respondents
Graduate	84	36%
Undergraduate	150	64%

School or College (Students Only)	# of Completed Student Respondents	Percentage of Completed Student Respondents
College of Arts & Sciences	99	29%
Kogod School of Business	49	14%
School of Communication	28	8%
School of Education	2	1%
School of International Service	85	25%
School of Professional & Extended Studies	6	2%
School of Public Affairs	70	21%

Division (Faculty and Staff Only)	# of Completed Faculty/Staff Respondents	Percentage of Completed Faculty/Staff Respondents
Academic Affairs	143	66%
Campus Life	13	6%
Chief of Staff	11	5%
Development and Alumni Relations	6	3%
Finance and Treasurer	19	9%
General Counsel	2	1%
Office of Information Technology	10	5%
President	6	3%
University Communications and Marketing	7	3%

Faculty Status (Faculty Only)	# of Completed Faculty Respondents	Percentage of Completed Faculty Respondents
Full-Time	46	78%
Part-Time	13	22%