

Illinois Wesleyan TechQual+ Faculty and Staff Survey Analysis

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This report summarizes the results of the 2007 survey of Illinois Wesleyan University faculty and staff perceptions of Information Technology service quality. Where appropriate, we draw comparisons with the student survey conducted at the end of the Spring 2007 semester. The faculty and staff TechQual+ survey was conducted during the Fall 2007 semester, from September 26, to October 10, 2007, and used a web survey from the TechQual+ project¹. Illinois Wesleyan University is one of the early adopters of this survey instrument, which is based on the SERVQUAL methodology used for surveys such as the LibQual+ project.²

Invitations to participate were sent to 702 faculty and staff members. We had 112 responses from the 702 faculty and staff asked to complete the survey. That's better than a 15% response, which is acceptable for a web survey. This was better than the response rate from our student survey last spring. We had 63 people start the survey who did not finish. I attribute part of this to some usability problems with the survey. We have already begun discussing this usability problem with the TechQual+ project director.

Service Area ratings

Like our earlier student survey, we used 5 of the 6 available TechQual+ service areas for this survey. There were 5 "questions" for each service area. So for the 25 service questions, faculty and staff were asked to assign a number on a scale of 1 to 10 for:

- My minimum service level
- My desired service level
- Perceived service level

In addition to the 25 questions seeking the three numerical ratings, we added two open-ended questions. These open-ended questions were similar to the open-ended questions we asked in our 2005 assessment of Illinois Wesleyan's IT Help Desk. In addition, if a respondent indicated that the perceived service level was less than their minimum level, they were prompted to provide an open-ended response for a suggestion to improve that service.

As far as survey results, of the 25 questions, the faculty and staff results appear much more critical of IT than the student survey. Of the 25 questions we asked, 12 questions (almost half) did not meet minimum expectations. This is a significant increase from the four cited by students. The twelve questions where we didn't meet minimum expectations were:

- Classroom technology that enhances the presentation of information in my courses
- Having adequate capacity (speed, bandwidth) on the wireless network
- Having wireless network coverage that covers all the areas in which I teach, learn, or work
- Having a web presence that represents the entire institution

¹ See <http://www.techqual.org>

² See <http://www.libqual.org>

- Having access to web-based resources that provide up-to-date information that is helpful
- Access to tools, training, and support to help me (or my department) engage in web publishing
- Opportunity to provide feedback on the direction of the institution website
- Timely access to the information necessary to be successful in my role as a faculty, staff, or student
- Having a campus portal that is easy to use, easy to understand, and easy to navigate
- Having a campus portal that helps me in my role as a faculty, staff, or student
- Support for my use of campus-wide information systems for teaching, learning, research, or work
- The ease of use of campus-wide information systems

Of these 12, the only questions that matched where students were dissatisfied were the two questions about the campus wireless network. Not enough wireless network coverage was a big deficiency measured in the survey, and it matched the biggest deficiency on the student survey. We are continuing to add wireless coverage as budgets allow. Our current focus is adding wireless to classroom areas on campus.

A surprise was the second biggest deficiency on the survey: “opportunity to provide feedback on the direction of the institution’s web site”. While IT maintains the servers and systems supporting the website, the office of University Communications has responsibility for the overall direction of the website. We have informed University Communications that faculty and staff appear to want more opportunity to provide feedback on the direction of the website.

We did not exceed desired expectations in any area. However, the areas that the survey showed most exceeding minimum expectations were:

- Support staff who are willing to help and instill confidence in users
- Support staff who are consistently courteous and ready to respond to my request for assistance
- Getting adequate training and support for my use of classroom (or other AV) technology and/or equipment

The differences between this survey and the student survey are striking. For example, while the students rated our MyIWU portal as one of the best services on campus, it was rated as deficient by faculty and staff.

Open-ended questions and suggestions

In the open-ended responses, one theme clearly emerged: the need for *more IT staff*. After reading the responses to the open-ended questions and suggestions, we categorized each response. We used these categories to describe each response:

- Class/Office – regarding equipment or software for classrooms, labs, or offices
- Good – indicates a positive response to an open-ended question or suggestion
- HelpDesk – a comment regarding a need to improve help desk responses
- Library – indicates a comment directed towards a library service
- MyIWU – a suggestion or comment about the university portal

- Net – Any network issue other than wireless (e.g., bandwidth, email, file storage, etc.)
- Other – any service not categorized by the other service areas
- LMS – a comment or suggestion about our Learning Management System tools (or lack thereof)
- Staff – indicates a realization that the office of Information Technology is understaffed
- Training – response indicated the need for more training
- Website – a comment about the University website
- Wireless – requested increased wireless network coverage on campus

The largest category of comments on the open-ended questions was for adding more technology staff. The first question asked respondents to suggest a single improvement for information technology. The largest response was “adding more IT staff” with 45%. The second question was similar. It asked “what should most be improved in the next two years.” Faculty and Staff identified “adding more IT staff” in 37% of responses.

We received 314 suggestions from people who rated a service below minimum expectations. With 112 faculty and staff responding, this is a higher rate of suggestions than we saw in the student survey, and another indication that faculty and staff are less satisfied with IT service quality than students. Of those suggestions, improving the University’s website received 20% of responses. Like the student survey, suggestions related to a need for more training also was a popular response with 14% of responses. The need for more training may be related to the need more information technology staff.

Additional detail

Unfortunately, our data did not specify whether the survey respondents were faculty or staff. We did track whether the respondents were “exempt” (salaried) or “non-exempt” (hourly) employees. We can also classify respondents based on years of service to IWU as follows:

- * Less than 3 years
- * 3 to 10 years of service
- * More than 10 years of service

The data suggests that non-exempt employees were more critical of IT service quality than exempt. Non-exempt employees that have worked at Illinois Wesleyan from 3 to 10 years were most critical. Exempt employees that have worked at Illinois Wesleyan University for more than 10 years had the most favorable opinions of technology service quality.

Conclusions

This was our second use of the TechQual+ survey, and we learned quite a bit. Certainly adding more IT staff needs to be a consideration, and fits with the Human Resources goal of the University’s strategic plan. We also saw strong support for more wireless networking in the faculty and staff survey. Combined with the strong demand we also saw in the student survey, increasing access to the wireless network has to be a priority in technology planning. There certainly is room for considerable technology service level improvement in the perceptions of faculty and staff; even more so than we saw in the earlier student survey.

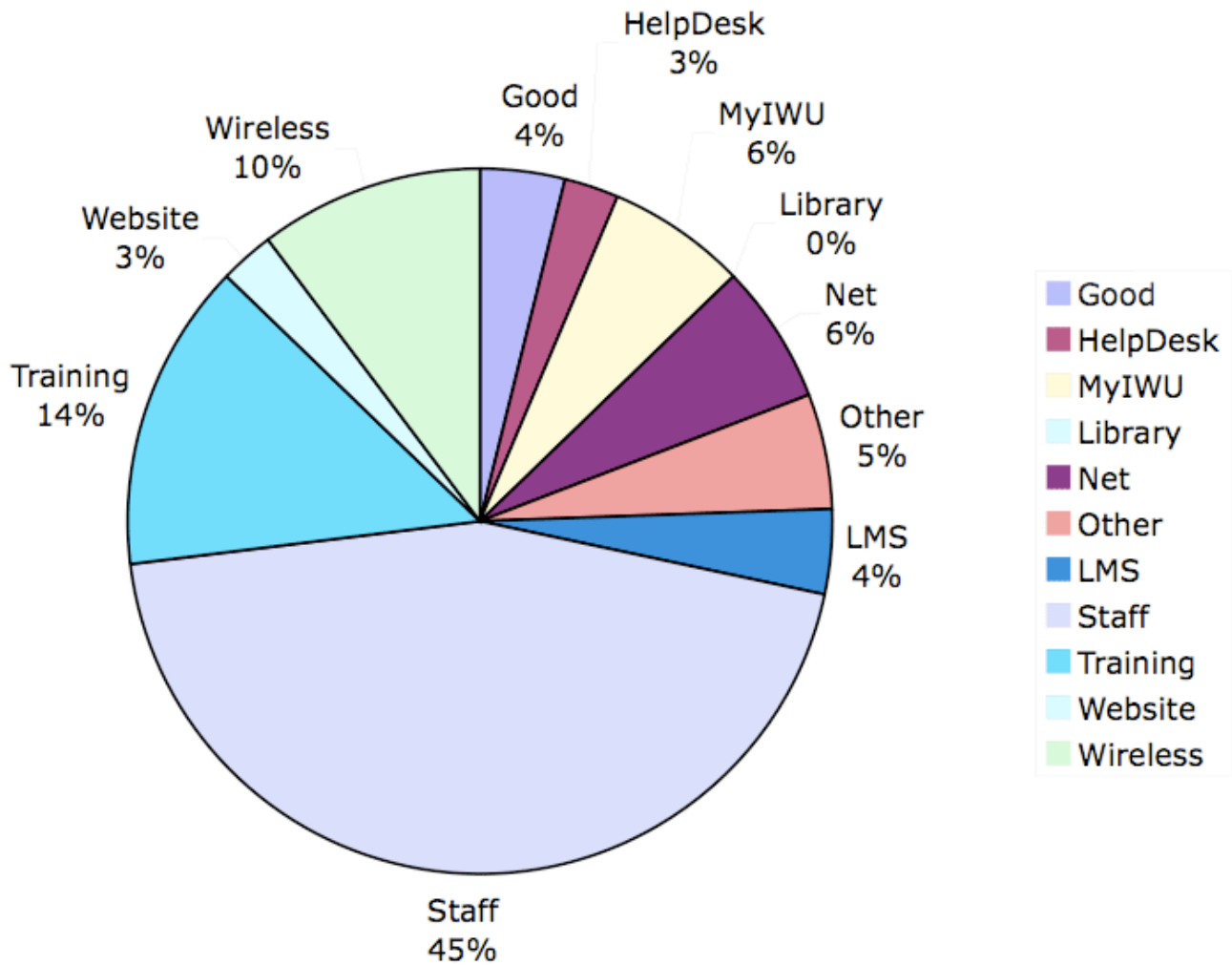
This spring we plan to work with the TechQual+ principals to further develop the survey instrument. This may involve a visit to the Illinois Wesleyan University campus by the project directors to conduct focus group interviews of students, faculty and staff. As one of the few undergraduate liberal arts institutions involved in the survey, the project would benefit from hearing directly from our campus community. Such feedback will help future versions of the survey tool.

Illinois Wesleyan University is among the early adopters of the TechQual+ survey. As this project progresses over time, it will be interesting to compare not only our internal results, but also benchmark our results with other similar institution using the TechQual+ survey. This is an important project for improving information technology services at Illinois Wesleyan. We're grateful for all the faculty and staff who responded to the survey, and for the people and institutions making the TechQual+ project possible.

Open-ended Questions

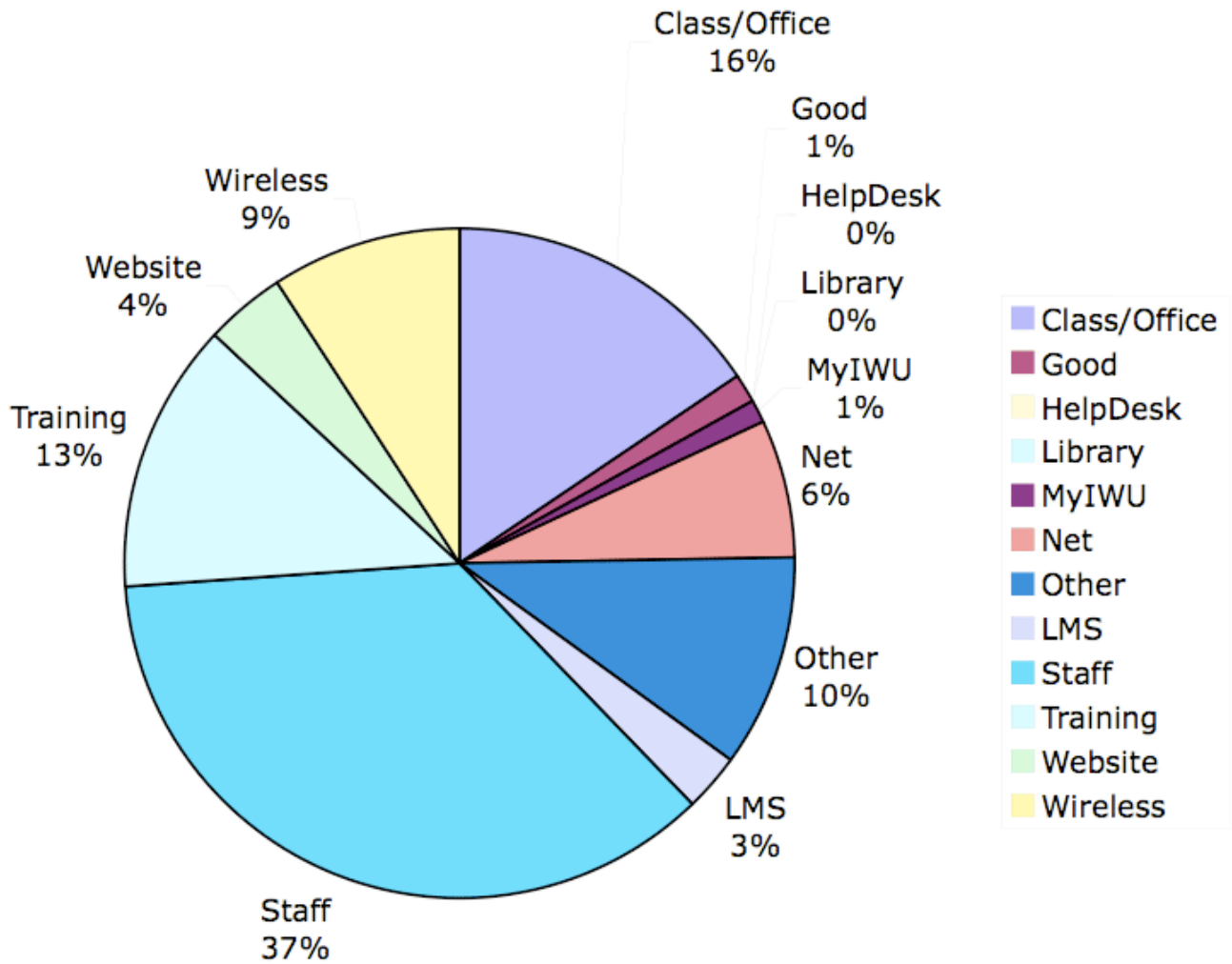
1. *If you could suggest a single improvement for information technology at Illinois Wesleyan University, what would it be?*

One Thing to Improve IT



2. In your opinion, how would you most like to see technology services improve at Illinois Wesleyan University in the next two years?

Improve In the Next 2 Years for IT



Summary of respondent suggestions for areas perceived as below minimum expectations

All Open Responses by Category

