Research Question
What can we learn from coding for the presence of themes of diversity, equity, and inclusion in institutional documentation?

Background & Motivation
Although there’s a considerable focus on recruitment of people of color in academic librarianship, less is known about retention within the profession. Quantitative measures collected by professional organizations and governments show increased representation (see below), but these metrics stop short of providing an explanation of the immeasurable factors that contribute to an employee’s decision to stay or leave an organization. With this in mind, we set out to identify “retention markers” – themes outlined in the literature on employee retention – and code for these markers in institutional documentation. Our approach was limited and exploratory – essentially to provide insight on the experiences of librarians of colour at our institutions and their peers.

Methodology
We employed documentary analysis - “the process of using documents as a means of social investigation and involves exploring the records that individuals and organizations produce” (Gibson & Brown, 2009) - to examine corporate communication documents and code for the presence of “retention markers”.

The specific types of institutional documents were chosen because of the common understanding that “in the best of all worlds, [mission statements] are written to mirror an institution’s overall vision and purpose, to distinguish them from other institutions, and to serve as a guide for everyday practice” (Creamer & Ghoston, p110).

We examined documentation from our own institutions and 10 peer institutions for each. This sample was chosen, in part, for convenience and out of an interest to see how our institutions measure up against peers.

Rating Retention:
A qualitative assessment of institutional commitment to diversity and inclusion

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criteria:</th>
<th>SAIT Peers</th>
<th>AU Peers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mission/Vision</td>
<td>X 3</td>
<td>✔ 9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strategic Plan</td>
<td>✔ 8</td>
<td>NA 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diversity Stmt</td>
<td>X 2</td>
<td>✔ 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Library Docs</td>
<td>✔ 3</td>
<td>✔ 6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Examples

The university actively encourages a commitment to public service. Inclusive participation in university governance, equity and equal access, and an appreciation of diverse cultures and viewpoints, its commitment to social justice, its ability to respond to the needs of a changing world while retaining its core values, and its capacity to turn to educational advantage the resources of the nation’s capital are hallmarks of the institution.

Diversity Statement, Boston U.
Library Strategic Plan, Sheridan College
Library Strategic Plan, NYU

Discussion

Challenges
- Some institutions do not have relevant documents or they were not findable
- Themes – or “retention markers” – we identified in a lit review were difficult to articulate and identify, especially in terms of their appearance in institutional docs which are often brief or vague in nature.
- Coding for diversity, equity, and inclusion was not as simple as just the presence or absence of those words. Even when present, the context of the words are often vague and unclear about/to whom the institution is being intentionally inclusive.

Next Steps
- Look for correlations between qualitative findings and quantitative data (student & faculty/staff demographics, etc.)
- Code photographs used in institutional documents and on homepage to determine if use of images of PoC aligns with text of documents. Or if images are being strategically utilized
- Interview/survey staff/faculty from peer institutions to see if observations hold true.

Sources: