

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 at 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.

| Librarians | White | Black/AA | Asian | Hisp/Lat |
|------------|-------|----------|-------|----------|
| 2007 | 90.7% | 6% | 2% | 4.1% |
| 2017 | 86.3% | 6.5% | 5.2% | 10.4% |

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

Southern Alberta Inst. of Technology

- Publicly-funded, medium-size (15,000 FTE) polytechnic in Canada
- Primarily two-year diploma programs

American University

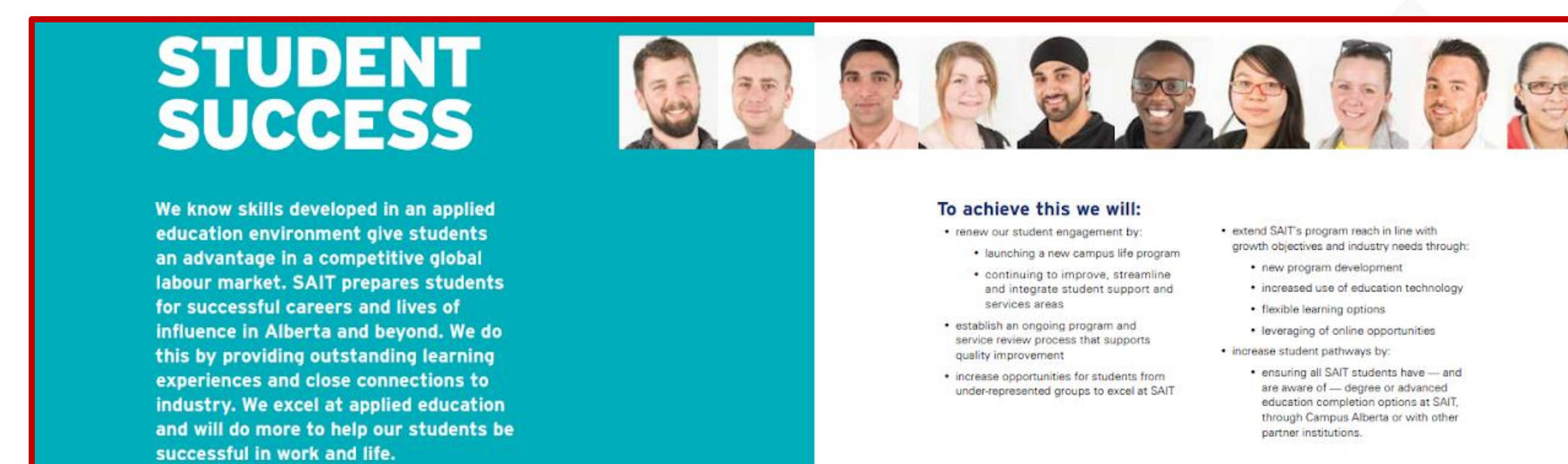
- Private, medium-size (13,000 FTE) university in Washington, DC
- R2 doctoral institution

Criteria:
Explicit mention in institutional documents of:

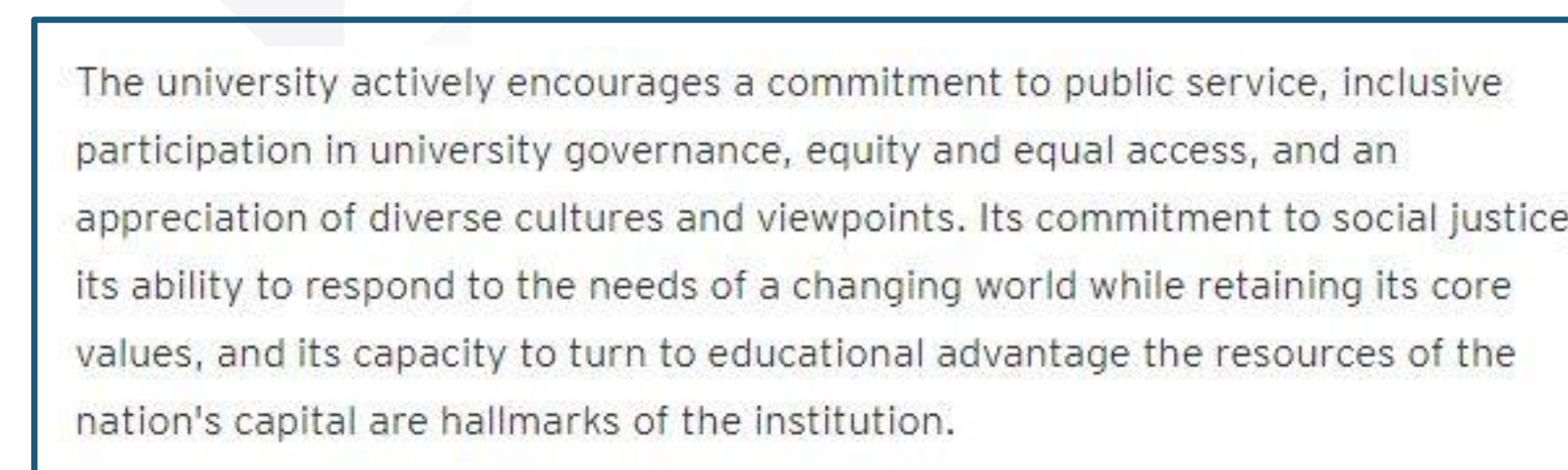
- Diversity
- Equity
- Inclusion

| Criteria | SAIT | Peers | AU | Peers |
|----------------|------|-------|----|-------|
| Mission/Vision | X | 3 | ✓ | 9 |
| Strategic Plan | ✓ | 8 | NA | 3 |
| Diversity Stmt | X | 2 | ✓ | 4 |
| Library Docs | ✓ | 3 | ✓ | 6 |

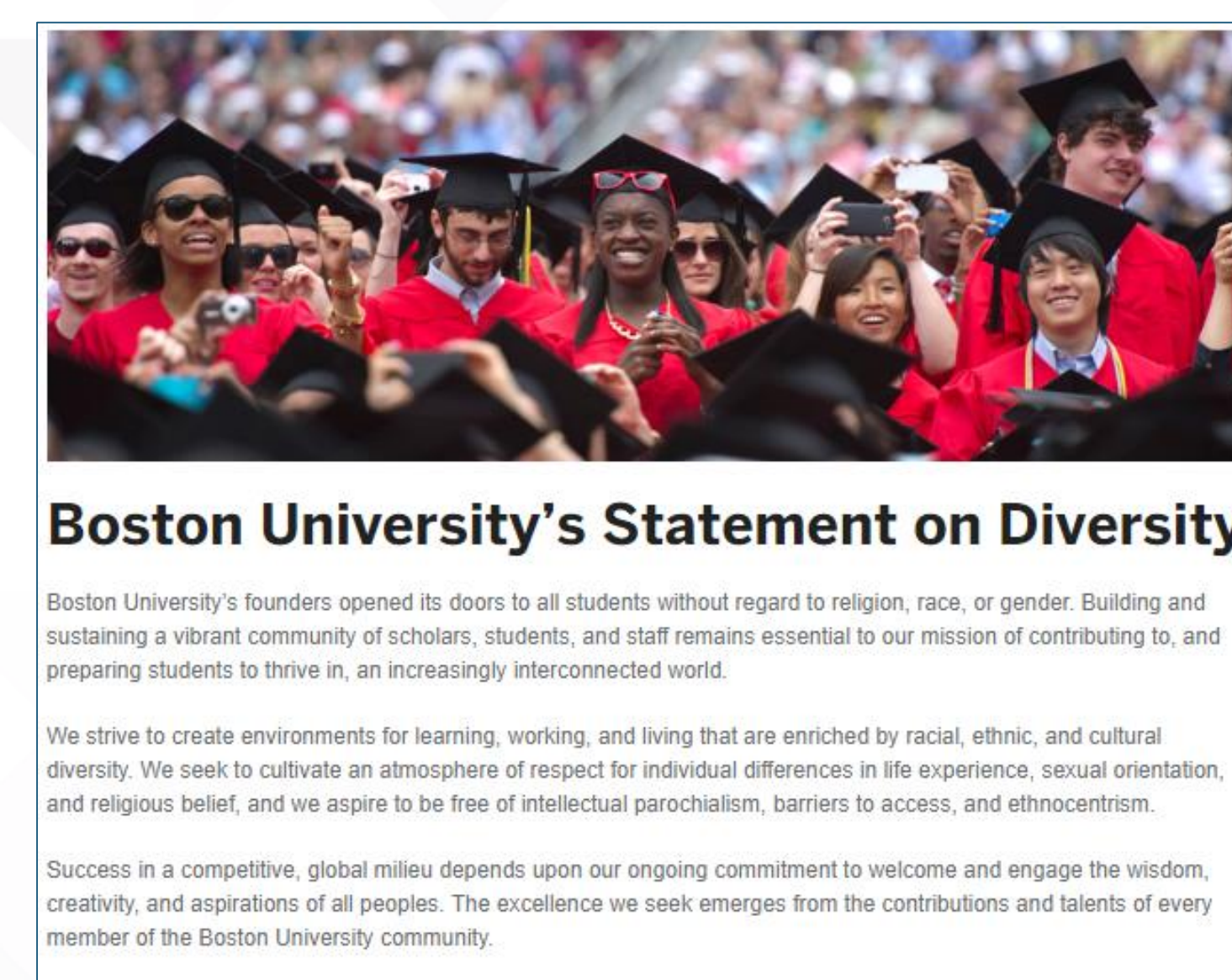
Examples



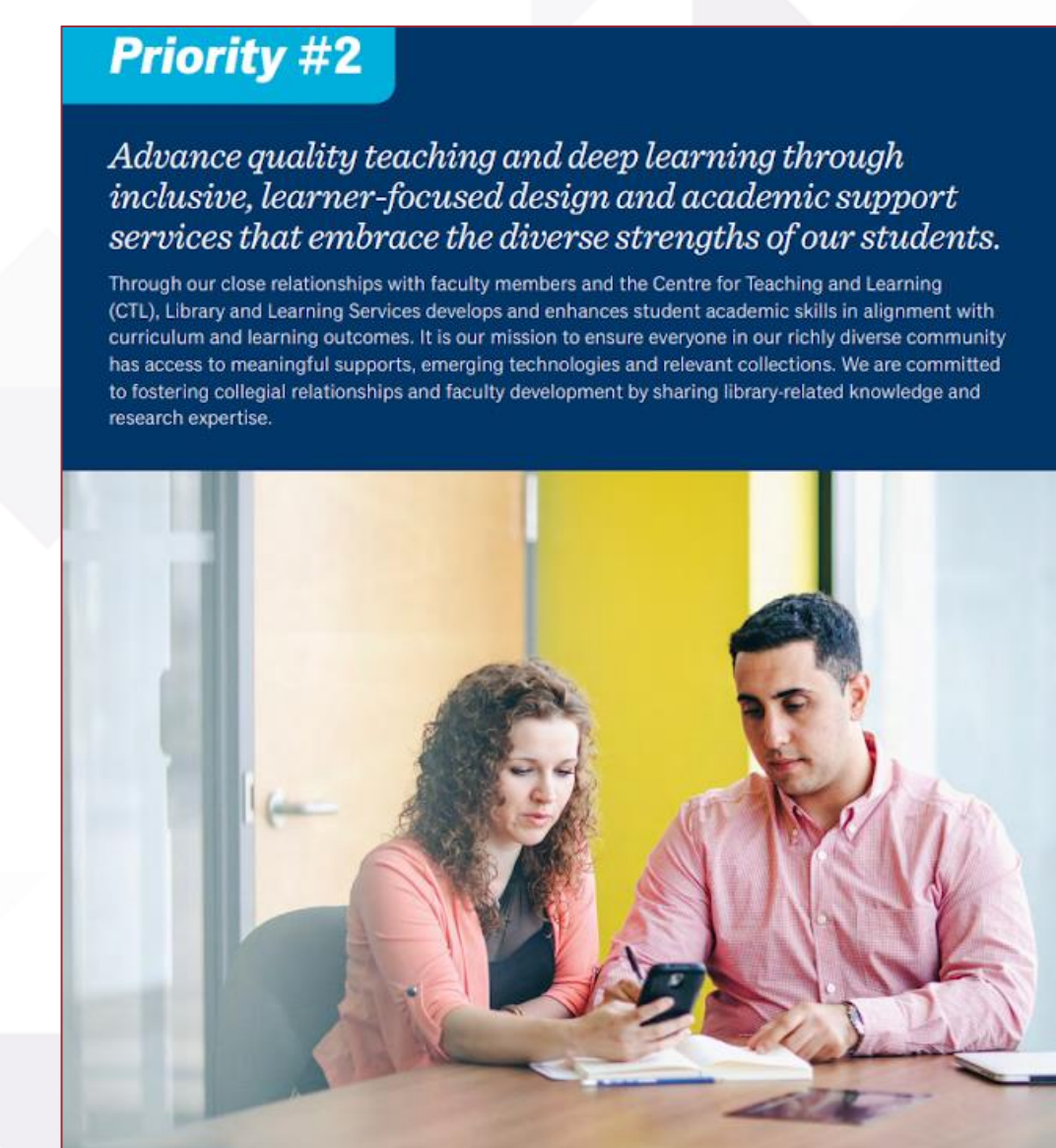
Strategic Plan, Southern Alberta Institute of Technology



Excerpt from Mission Statement, American University



Diversity Statement, Boston U.



Library Strat Plan, Sheridan College



Library Strategic Plan, NYU

Rose L. Chou, Budget & Personnel Manager, American University, Washington DC
 Ebony C. Magnus, Library Manager, SAIT Polytechnic, Calgary Canada
 Mark A. Puente, Director, Diversity & Leadership, Association of Research Libraries, Washington DC

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

Discussion

- SAIT peers most often saw themes included in Strategic Plans, while AU peers saw the highest rate of themes in Mission/Vision statements
- No institutions in either peer group demonstrated themes across all 4 types of documents; conversely, one SAIT peer didn't include the themes in any documents, and 5 institutions only saw one document type with DEI themes
- Saying it doesn't make it so & doing it isn't always reflected in generic documents
- Lack of specificity about the target populations for inclusion removes the responsibility of institutions to take specific action on becoming more diverse, equitable, and 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:
 ALA Office for Research and Statistics and Office for Diversity. *Diversity Counts*. <http://www.ala.org/aboutala/offices/diversity/diversitycounts/divcounts>
 Bowen, G.A. (2009). Document analysis as a qualitative research method. *Qualitative Research Journal*, 9(2), 27-40. doi:10.3316/QRJ0902027
 Creamer, E.G. & Ghoston, M. (2012). Using a mixed methods content analysis to analyze mission statements from colleges of Engineering. *Journal of Mixed Methods Research*, 7(2), 110-120. doi:10.1177/1558689812458976
 U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. *Labor Force Statistics from the Current Population Survey: Household Data Annual Averages*. Last modified January 19, 2018 <https://www.bls.gov/cps/cpsaat11.htm>
 U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, September 2008. *Labor Force Characteristics by Race and Ethnicity, 2007 Report 1005* <https://www.bls.gov/cps/demographics.htm#race>
 Vinopal, Jennifer. The Quest for Diversity in Library Staffing: From Awareness to Action. *In the Library With The Lead Pipe*. January 13, 2016. <http://www.inthelibrarywiththeleadpipe.org/2016/quest-for-diversity/>