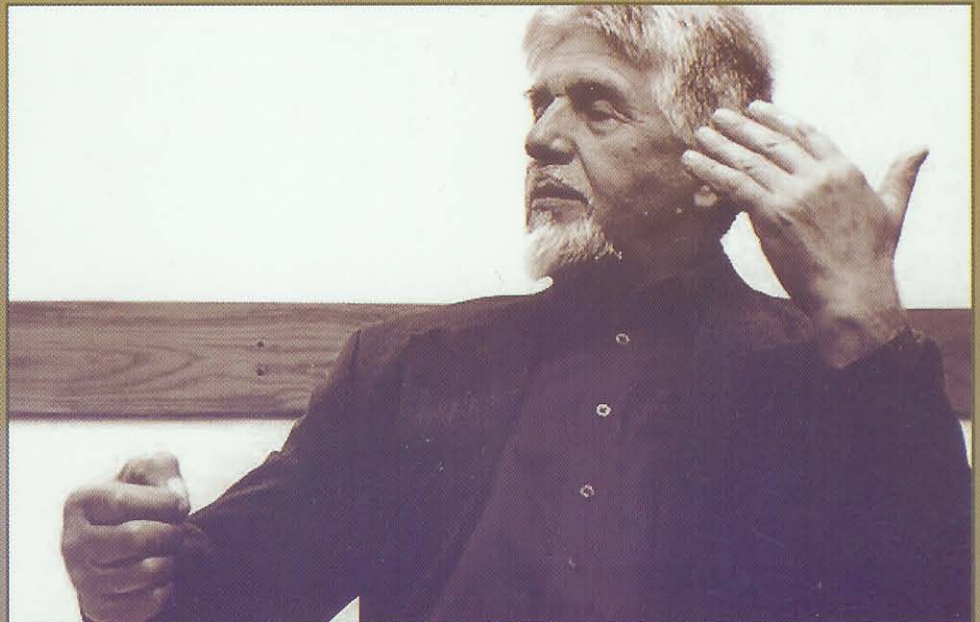


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By Andrei Strizek and Jerry Young

Duties of Low Brass Instructors Twenty-five Years Later

In 1979, while a graduate student at the University of Illinois, Jerry Young did a survey of selected college and university low brass teachers across the United States simply entitled "Duties of Low Brass Instructors." The purpose of the study was to determine what kinds of teaching duties outside of the applied studio we were pursuing at that point in time with the added benefit of giving the profession more accurate direction in advising students whose professional goals included university teaching. The survey was immensely successful (109 of 116 individuals included in the mailing returned their surveys), and the survey results were published in the *T.U.B.A. Journal* (Vol. IX, No.4, Spring, 1982).

During the fall semester of 2004, one of Dr. Young's students, Mr. Andrei Strizek, asked if any research had been done to guide the professional preparation of students aspiring to careers in low brass teaching in higher education in the United States. When Dr. Young shared his (now 25 year old) research with Mr. Strizek, the obvious question relative to "haven't times changed?" came up quickly, and he asked if the study could be replicated. You are holding the result of his inquiry in your hands.

As was the case with the first survey, the data was collected by means of a brief and simple survey form distributed by mail. At this juncture, we felt that the response would be stronger and more immediate via the mails rather than e-mail. (There's no "delete" button, menus, etc.) In addition to the information directly pertinent to duties outside applied music instruction, data was collected concerning highest degree received, major performance area of the instructor, and other data that could have tangential relevance/interest for those interested in pursuing a career in low brass instruction in higher education. Data gathered that was not included in the original survey

includes music degrees offered by each institution and student major performance areas. Responses to the student major performance areas were not uniform, so we are unable to provide an accurate representation of that data. The survey form was mailed to 296 institutions with all 50 states represented in the mailing. The original survey encompassed 42 states (8 states at that time had no institutions with a low brass instructor!) and 118 institutions. While the original survey enjoyed a 90% (106 institutions) response, the present survey had a 44% return, but in terms of raw numbers, 131 institutions responded. There may be a variety of viable reasons for the smaller percentage of returns, however, given the distribution of returns across school sizes and locations, we feel that the survey results provide a valid cross section of employment circumstances to enable the reader to make some reasonably accurate inferences from the data gathered.

We are reporting the combined data for all institutions, as well as the data for the various school populations. Small schools (student population of under 1,000) are not well represented in the return sample, while very large schools (student population of over 20,000) are heavily represented. However, the schools where most openings seem to occur these days (schools between 1,000 and 20,000) hold the majority, and the data from those institutions should be particularly instructive. We have also included the size of music departments/schools. Note that in each category we are reporting both the raw data numbers (before the slash mark) AND the percentages (after the slash mark), except for schools under 1,000 student population because of the extremely small number of respondents. In compiling data, percentages were rounded up, so in some instances totals may slightly exceed 100%.

NUMBER OF RESPONDENTS BY SCHOOL SIZE

0-1,000	3	.02
1,001-5,000	21	.16
5,001-10,000	21	.16
10,000-20,000	38	.29
20,001+	48	.37

Total: 131 (44% return rate)

SIZE OF MUSIC DEPARTMENT

	0-1,000	1,001-5,000	5,001-10,000	10,001-20,000	20,001+	Combined
0-50	1	2/.10	0	0	0	3/.02
51-100	1	9/.43	6/.29	3/.08	0	19/.15
101-200	0	5/.24	11/.52	14/.37	4/.08	34/.26
201-300	1	1/.05	1/.05	11/.29	6/.13	20/.15
301-500	0	0	1/.05	7/.18	20/.42	28/.21
501+	0	2/.10	2/.10	3/.08	18/.38	25/.19

DEGREES OFFERED BY COLLEGE/UNIVERSITY

		0-1,000	1,001-5000	5,001-10,000	10,001-20,000	20,001+	Combined
The primary undergraduate degrees offered by most institutions are (in order of frequency) the Bachelor of Music Education, Bachelor of Arts, and Bachelor of Music.	BME	1	21/1.0	20/95	38/1.0	45/94	125/95
	BA	2	21/1.0	17/81	33/87	40/83	113/86
	BM	2	14/67	13/62	38/1.0	45/94	112/85
	BMT	0	0	1/05	5/13	10/21	16/12
	BS	0	10/48	7/33	16/42	18/38	51/39
The Bachelor of Science degree is less common, and the Bachelor of Music Therapy is rarer yet. At the graduate level, the dominant degree is the Master of Music Education, with the Doctor of Musical Arts and Ph.D. degrees a distant second.	MME	1	7/33	14/67	27/71	36/75	85/65
	MA	0	0	0	1/05	0	1/01
	MM	1	4/19	6/29	25/66	41/85	77/26
	EdD	0	0	2/10	5/13	19/40	26/20
	DMA	0	0	2/10	7/18	24/50	33/25
	PhD	0	0	2/10	4/11	25/52	31/24
	Perf. Cert.	0	0	1/05	0	0	1/01
	Artist Dip.	0	0	0	0	1/02	1/01

HIGHEST DEGREE EARNED

As was determined by the first survey, a minimum of a master's degree is virtually essential for employment at the college level, as 86% of respondents hold a master's degree or higher. It is notable that half of the respondents hold the Doctor of Musical Arts degree and that, of those holding the Master's Degree as their terminal degree, 36% hold the Master of Music

degree. When one examines advertisements for college teaching positions in institutions with a student population under 20,000 (and some over 20,000), one often sees the phrases "master's degree required, doctorate preferred" or "completed doctorate or ABD (all but dissertation) required," and these results are indicative of the current situation in higher education.

	0-1,000	1,001-5000	5,001-10,000	10,001-20,000	20,001+	Combined
BME	0	0	0	0	0	0
BA	0	0	0	0	0	0
BM	1	1/05	0	0	4/08	6/05
BMT	0	0	0	0	0	0
BS	0	2/10	0	0	0	2/02
MS	0	0	0	1/05	1/05	2/02
MME	0	1/05	1/05	0	0	2/02
MA	0	1/05	0	0	0	1/01
MFA	0	0	0	1/05	0	1/01
MM	0	8/38	8/38	9/24	22/46	47/36
EdD	0	0	0	1/05	0	1/01
DMA	1	9/43	12/57	26/68	18/38	66/50
PhD	1	1/05	2/10	1/03	0	5/04
ABD	0	1/05	0	0	1/02	2/02
In Prog.	0	1/05	0	1/03	2/04	4/03

MAJOR PERFORMANCE AREA

In the first survey, the majority of low brass professors were trombone players, and that situation remained unchanged. Relatively significant changes are evident, however, in the euphonium and tuba area. A larger number of professors said that euphonium is their primary instrument, and several said that they perform on both euphonium and trombone. Both of these bits of information are significant for both trombonists and

especially euphoniumists. As Dr. Young stated in the initial survey, "The best direction for the euphonium player to take would appear to be that of developing as much skill on trombone as possible to enhance his/her employability." This would seem to be the best plan for the mean time, but perhaps the data also indicates a positive trend for euphonium specialists. The percentage of tubists is relatively unchanged.

	0-1,000	1,001-5000	5,001-10,000	10,001-20,000	20,001+	Combined
Trombone	3	12/57	12/57	18/47	20/42	65/50
Euphonium	0	3/14	1/05	1/03	4/08	9/07
Tuba	0	5/21	4/19	15/39	20/42	44/34
Trom/Euph	0	2/10	3/14	4/11	1/02	10/08
Euph/Tuba	0	0	0	1/03	2/04	3/02
T/E/T	0	1/05	1/05	0	1/02	3/02

NUMBER OF STUDENTS

Since the original 1979 survey, it is obvious that the number of students studying low brass instruments has grown considerably.

In the original survey, 40% of studios had 11–20 students, and in the present survey 60% of the studios had numbers in that range.

	0–1,000	1,001–5000	5,001–10,000	10,001–20,000	20,001+	Combined
1–10	2	14/.67	6/.29	11/.29	9/.19	42/.32
11–20	1	8/.38	14/.67	25/.66	30/.63	78/.60
21–30	0	2/.10	1/.05	3/.08	7/.15	13/.10

COURSE LOAD ABOVE APPLIED LESSONS (in credit hours)

As might be logically expected, professors who have larger studios (and who teach in the largest departments) have lighter course loads outside of applied lessons. Those students aspiring to teach in higher education settings should be aware that the

“large studio/large department” positions are generally not entry level positions, therefore it remains a wise move to prepare oneself to teach in some area of interest outside of applied music.

	0–1,000	1,001–5000	5,001–10,000	10,001–20,000	20,001+	Combined
0–3	2	7/.33	4/.19	9/.24	19/.40	41/.31
4–8	0	9/.43	13/.62	19/.50	17/.35	58/.44
9+	1	8/.38	4/.19	1/.29	12/.25	36/.27

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ADDITIONAL COURSES

From the data presented by our respondents, it seems that it would be particularly wise for persons interested in college low brass teaching to hone their skills as chamber musicians and conductors. Note that chamber ensemble coaching, euphonium/tuba ensemble, trombone ensemble, brass ensembles, and concert band work are leading "extra duties." Administrative skills, along with the ability to teach brass methods for music education majors are also valuable assets. Almost all the other courses can conceivably be grouped under music theory, music history, or music appreciation (for non-music majors) types of courses. Where possible, it would seem advisable to prospective job candidates to develop some skills in at least two of these areas in order to be marketable across a broad spectrum of job descriptions.

As both of the researchers for this survey hold degrees in music education and are primarily music education professionals, we feel it important to note that the single degree offered by the majority of the institutions responding to this survey is the Bachelor of Music Education degree. For many schools that offer this degree, particularly those with a student population of 10,000 or less, there may not be a tenure track line available for a low brass teacher, but there may be a position available for a music education professor. That expertise wedded to the ability to teach applied low brass might prove attractive for certain schools and might provide a unique opportunity for a person with performance ability and an entrepreneurial spirit.

	0-1,000	1,001-5000	5,001-10,000	10,001-20,000	20,001+	Combined
<i>Band</i>	1	8/38	6/29	9/24	5/10	29/22
<i>Jazz</i>	1	3/14	4/19	2/05	4/08	14/11
<i>Brass Ens.</i>	3	6/29	7/33	11/29	14/29	41/31
<i>Conducting</i>	2	6/29	4/19	3/08	2/04	17/13
<i>Brass Meth.</i>	2	13/62	11/52	14/37	0	40/31
<i>Bone Ens.</i>	2	7/33	9/43	13/34	18/38	49/37
<i>Cham. Ens. Coac</i>	0	4/19	7/33	16/42	29/60	56/43
<i>Admin.</i>	3	5/24	3/14	13/34	8/17	32/24
<i>Low Brass Ens.</i>	0	1/05	0	1/03	0	2/02
<i>Tuba Ens.</i>	0	5/24	4/19	17/45	25/52	51/39
<i>Mus. Hist.</i>	0	3/14	3/14	3/08	2/04	11/08
<i>Orch.</i>	0	1/05	0	0	0	1/01
<i>Jazz Improv</i>	0	4/19	2/10	1/03	0	7/05
<i>Theory</i>	0	4/19	8/38	4/11	2/04	18/14
<i>Arr/Orch/Comp</i>	0	1/05	0	1/03	2/04	4/03
<i>Combo Coach</i>	0	1/05	0	0	0	1/01
<i>MusEd Meth.</i>	0	3/14	3/14	6/16	0	12/09
<i>Mar Band Tech</i>	0	1/05	1/05	0	1/02	3/02
<i>Band Lit</i>	0	1/05	0	0	0	1/01
<i>Jazz Hist</i>	0	1/05	0	1/03	0	2/02
<i>Std Teach Ob</i>	0	3/14	5/24	10/26	2/04	20/15
<i>Mus App</i>	0	1/05	3/14	8/21	7/15	19/15
<i>Low Brass Ped</i>	0	2/10	0	0	0	2/02
<i>Inst. Lit</i>	0	1/05	0	0	0	1/01
<i>Jazz Apprec.</i>	0	0	0	0	0	0
<i>Interdisc Arts</i>	0	0	1/05	0	0	1/01
<i>Music Lit</i>	0	0	1/05	0	0	1/01
<i>Grad MuEd</i>	0	0	1/05	0	1/02	2/02
<i>Interp</i>	0	0	1/05	0	0	1/01
<i>Aud Prep</i>	0	0	1/05	0	0	1/01
<i>Mus Theat Cond</i>	0	0	0	1/03	0	1/01
<i>None</i>	0	0	0	1/03	3/06	4/03
<i>Music Tech</i>	0	0	0	3/08	0	3/02
<i>Honors College</i>	0	0	0	1/03	0	1/01
<i>Rock n Roll Hist</i>	0	0	0	1/03	1/02	2/02
<i>Orch Excerpts</i>	0	0	0	1/03	0	1/01
<i>Rec Engineer</i>	0	0	0	1/03	0	1/01
<i>WW Meth</i>	0	0	0	1/03	0	1/01
<i>Perc Meth</i>	0	0	0	1/03	0	1/01
<i>Perf Lit</i>	0	0	0	5/13	0	5/04
<i>Perf Ped</i>	0	0	0	5/13	0	5/04
<i>Grad Res Meth</i>	0	0	0	1/03	0	1/01
<i>Mus Thea</i>	0	0	0	0	1/02	1/01
<i>Brass Lit</i>	0	0	0	0	4/08	4/03
<i>Brass Ped</i>	0	0	0	0	6/13	6/05
<i>Fac. Brass 5-tet</i>	0	0	0	0	4/08	4/03
<i>Marching Band</i>	0	0	0	0	1/02	1/01

Conclusion

We have elected to paraphrase from the concluding remarks of the original survey to conclude this presentation. It is interesting that the remarks of 25 years ago remain relevant today.

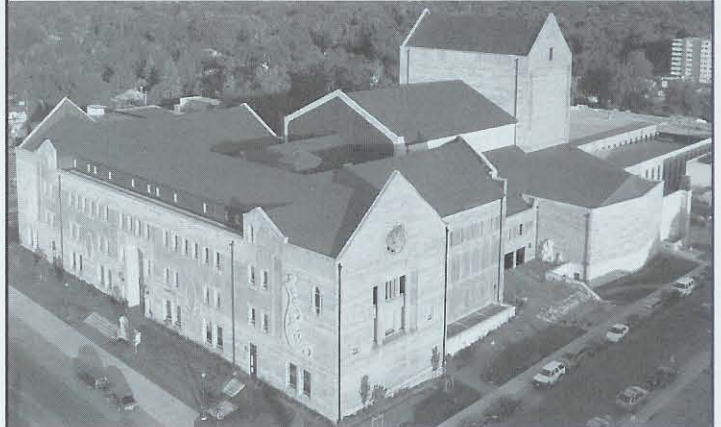
The results of this survey as briefly presented in this article might, at least for some people, paint a negative picture of the employment situation for the trombone, euphonium, or tuba player. The authors choose not to view the situation as bleak and discouraging. If the aspiring low brass teacher, instead of thinking of him/herself as a future *low brass* teacher, thinks of him/herself as a future *music* teacher, devoting him/herself to the art first and to the instrument second, one should not have worry about the chances of being employable. In applying oneself to learning about the art of music, one should gain the skills necessary to be attractive to prospective employers as a versatile and competent musician. This is not to say that anyone should "settle" for being a "second-rate" player! Anyone truly in love with music (which should be the case for all music teachers) will want to be the very best player/musician possible. Whether the prospective candidate eventually becomes a music teacher who teaches low brass or a music teacher who teaches general music to elementary students, by being the best teacher and musician possible, he/she is placed in a position to earn respect for their performance medium, as well. We noted in the current survey results that more people than ever are studying low brass instruments. In the conclusion to the original survey, it was noted that: "As more youngsters are exposed to good low brass playing by players who are musicians in the best sense of the word, more of them are going to want to be able to express their love for music through that medium, which could in turn create more employment opportunities for low brass teachers at all levels." Apparently, this is being realized to some extent. It will be interesting to see the results of yet another replication of this survey in another 25 years.

Andrei Strizek is a member of the instrumental music education faculty at Chippewa Falls High School in Wisconsin. Jerry Young is a member of the music faculty at the University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire. This project was supported with funding from the University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire Office of Research and Sponsored Programs and the Department of Music and Theatre Arts.

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