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Research/Teaching Statement
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I have been fortunate throughout my career to engage in research, creative activity, teaching, and mentoring. These experiences have guided me from understanding how to produce quality research, collaborating to create new musical works, and teaching my students and mentees. I believe the culmination of these experiences contribute to my knowledge as an educator and a leader. With these skills, I am positioned to positively impact my colleagues and students.

As a scholar with an interest in music education, especially the euphonium and tuba, I have led the project “Low Brass, High Standards.” The aim of this project is to identify the difference in self-reported confidence levels of band directors to teach the euphonium and tuba by their primary instrument. The long-term goal being to identify how teachers who lack confidence in their abilities to instruct these instruments can be supported to ensure their students reach their full potential. The project required developing a survey and disseminating it to band directors across the country. This survey collected data pertaining to the teachers’ professional responsibilities, confidence levels in teaching, educational experiences, and numerous other aspects. Nearly 700 responses were collected from 48 states. These findings have been presented at numerous conferences and has had one manuscript recommended for publication in the International Tuba-Euphonium Association journal. This article analyzes the open-ended questions collected from the survey. I am in the process of producing an additional manuscript targeted for a music research journal that uses advanced statistical analyses to present the results of this research. The project has also started its second phase, which will involve conducting focus groups of band directors and collecting information about their teacher preparation experiences, their approaches to teaching these instruments, and what resources they need to improve their abilities as instructors.

Performing with the Four Horsemen Quartet has led to performance and conference presentation opportunities. The group usually (pre pandemic) meets in person once a semester to perform several recitals and rehearse new works. One of the highlights was being selected as a showcase ensemble for the 2019 Texas Music Educators Association conference. I also secured this group a small grant through the Indiana Arts Council. With this grant we were able to commission two new works for the quartet, present a conference session at the Indiana Music Education Association professional development conference, and perform a recital in a distillery and interact with an atypical audience.

The most important goal as a teacher is ensuring my students understand and can apply course content to solve real-life problems. Having a background in assessment, I value writing clear course learning objectives (CLOs) and crafting session learning objectives that are mapped to these CLOs. Assessments are a vital source of feedback for students. Homework assignments, quizzes, and tests should use the appropriate methodology to measure student learning. These results should be returned in a timely manner so students can incorporate this feedback and improve their learning.

When working with students or faculty, the goal as a mentor is to help the mentee develop new skills and confidence in the work they are pursuing. For every collaboration it is important to understand what the mentee hopes to gain from the experience and then develop a plan. As a mentor, it is my responsibility to empower my mentee to perform the necessary tasks on their own but feel reassured that I will prevent them from going off course. The role of a mentor should be similar to what Vygotsky refers to as the “More Knowledgeable Other” in the educational theory Constructivism. A trusted expert who guides the mentee until they can demonstrate competency on their own.