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Boland Undergraduate Research Symposium

2022 Boland Symposium Schedule

Apr 6th, 11:30 AM - 11:45 AM

Female Trombonists' Experiences of Gender Bias

Em I. Poff

East Tennessee State University

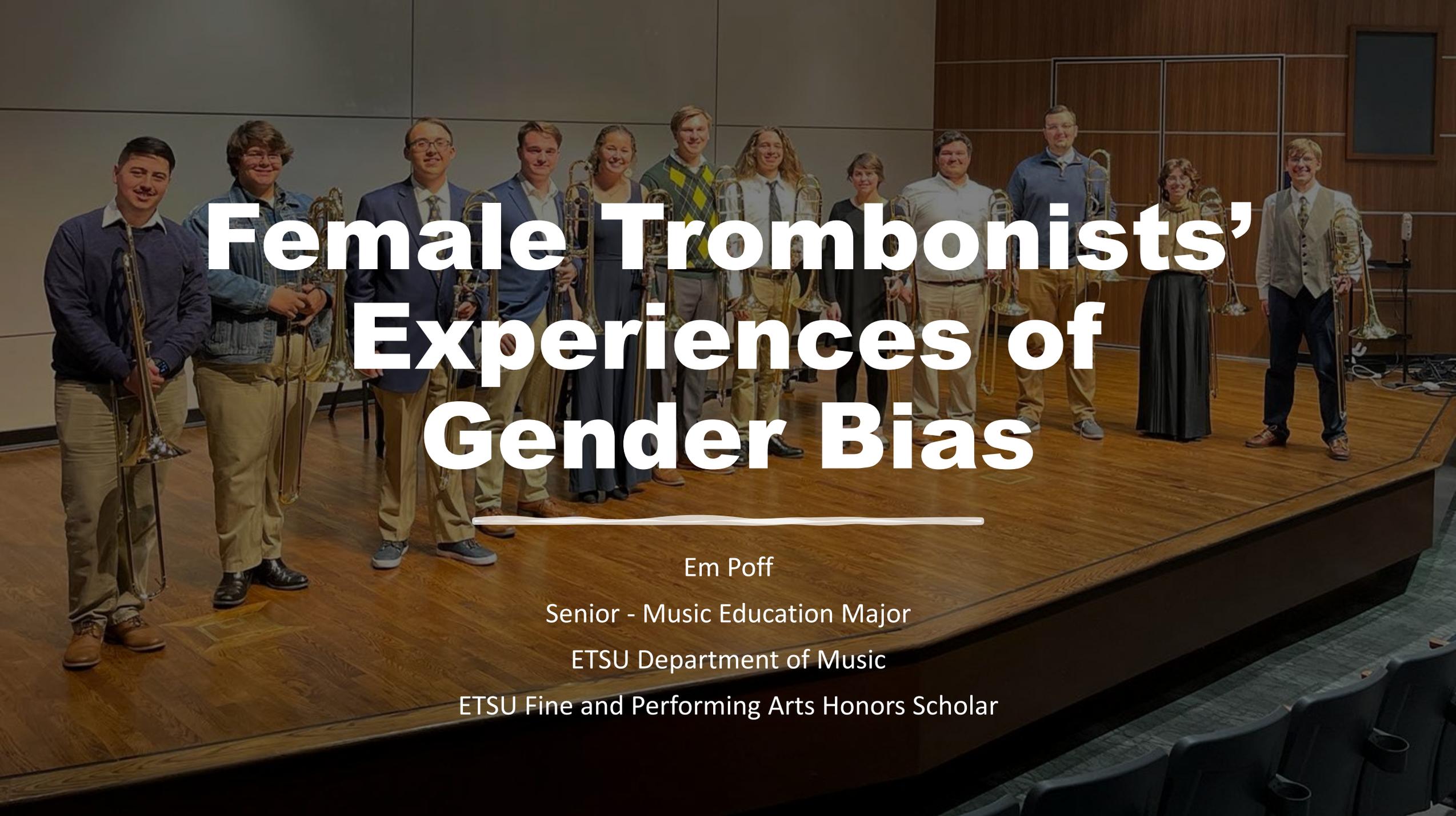
Alison P. Deadman

East Tennessee State University

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Poff, Em I. and Deadman, Alison P., "Female Trombonists' Experiences of Gender Bias" (2022).
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<https://dc.etsu.edu/asrf/2022-boland/schedule/46>

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A group of approximately 12 trombonists are standing on a wooden stage in a music rehearsal room. They are holding their instruments. The group is diverse in age and appearance. One woman, wearing a dark, long-sleeved dress, stands on the right side of the group, slightly apart from the others. The background features wood-paneled walls and a large window.

Female Trombonists' Experiences of Gender Bias

Em Poff

Senior - Music Education Major

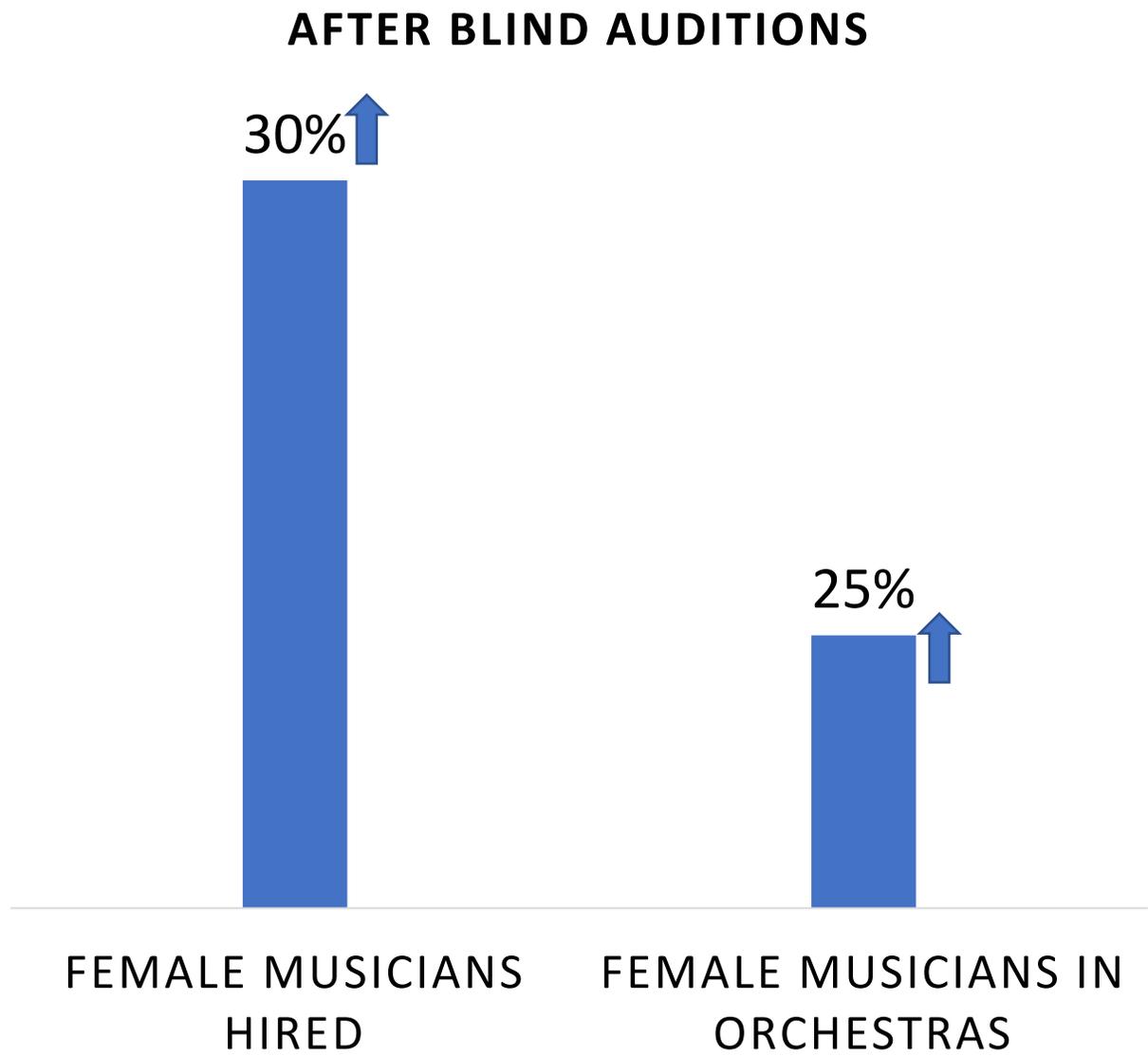
ETSU Department of Music

ETSU Fine and Performing Arts Honors Scholar



Why?

- Middle School
- High School
- Encouragement
- College



History of Female Musicians

- **1800's**
 - No professional opportunities
 - Socially acceptable instruments
 - Sax Experiment
 - Changed only gradually
- **1950's**
 - Limited professional opportunities
- **1970**
 - Blind auditions

Air Force Band Trombone Section

New York Philharmonic Orchestra Low Brass Section





The Survey

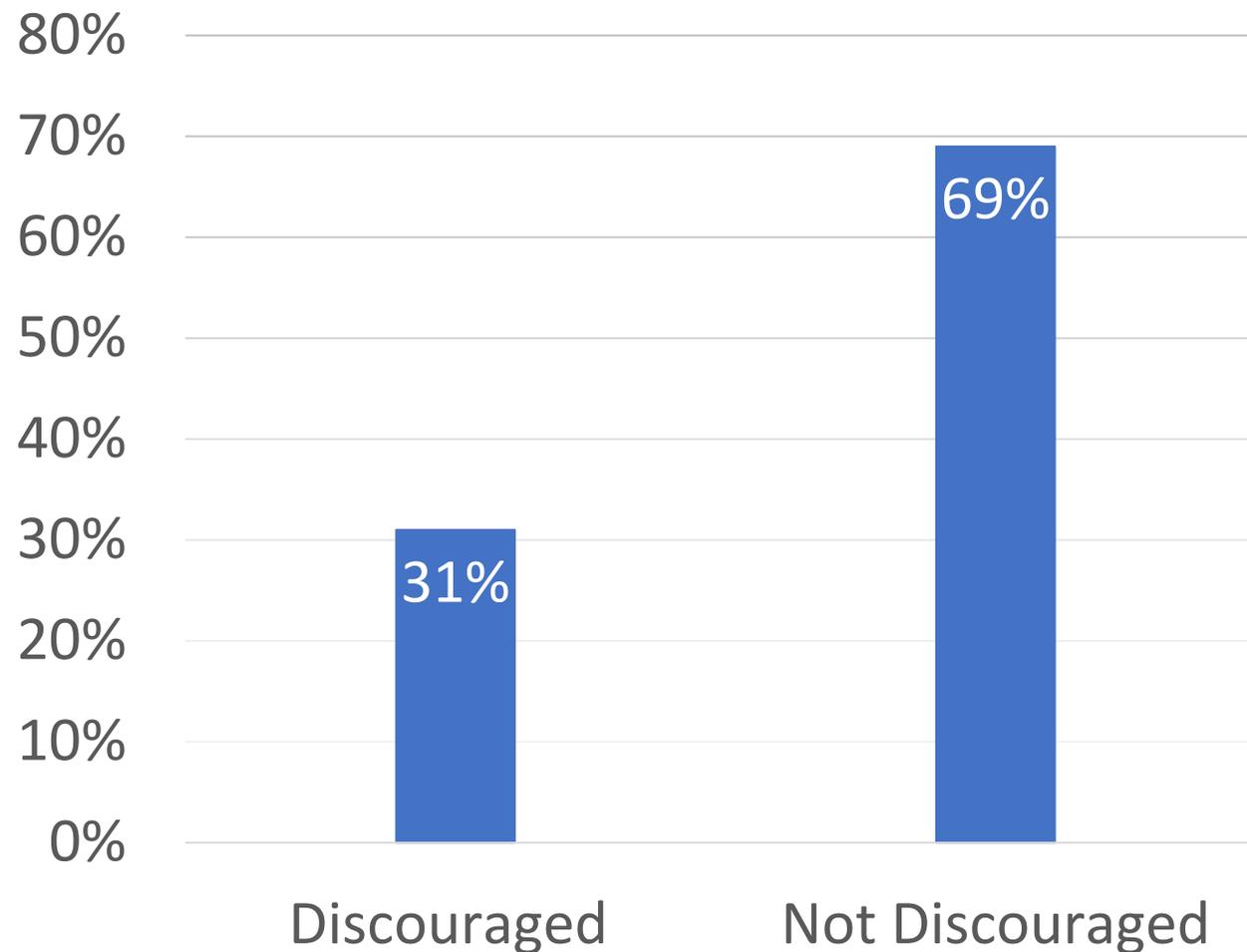
- 98 faculty participants
- 52 female student participants
- Question topics
- Studio gender ratios

Students Experiences

Discouragement

- Too small
- Trombones aren't pretty
- Boys play trombone
- Ugly girls play brass instruments

ARE FEMALE STUDENTS DISCOURAGED TO PLAY THE TROMBONE?

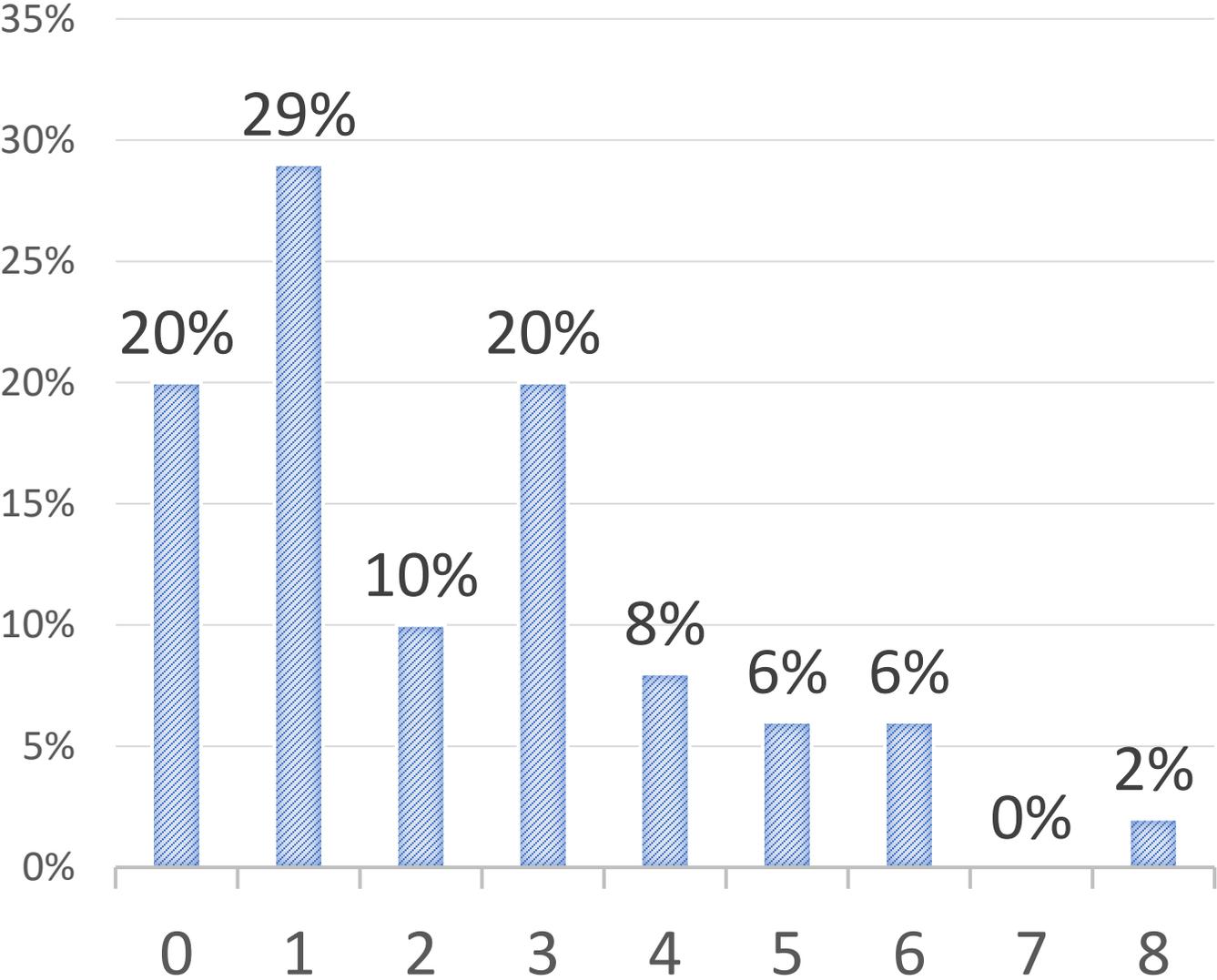




Students Experiences

Female Role Models

STUDENTS FEMALE ROLE MODELS

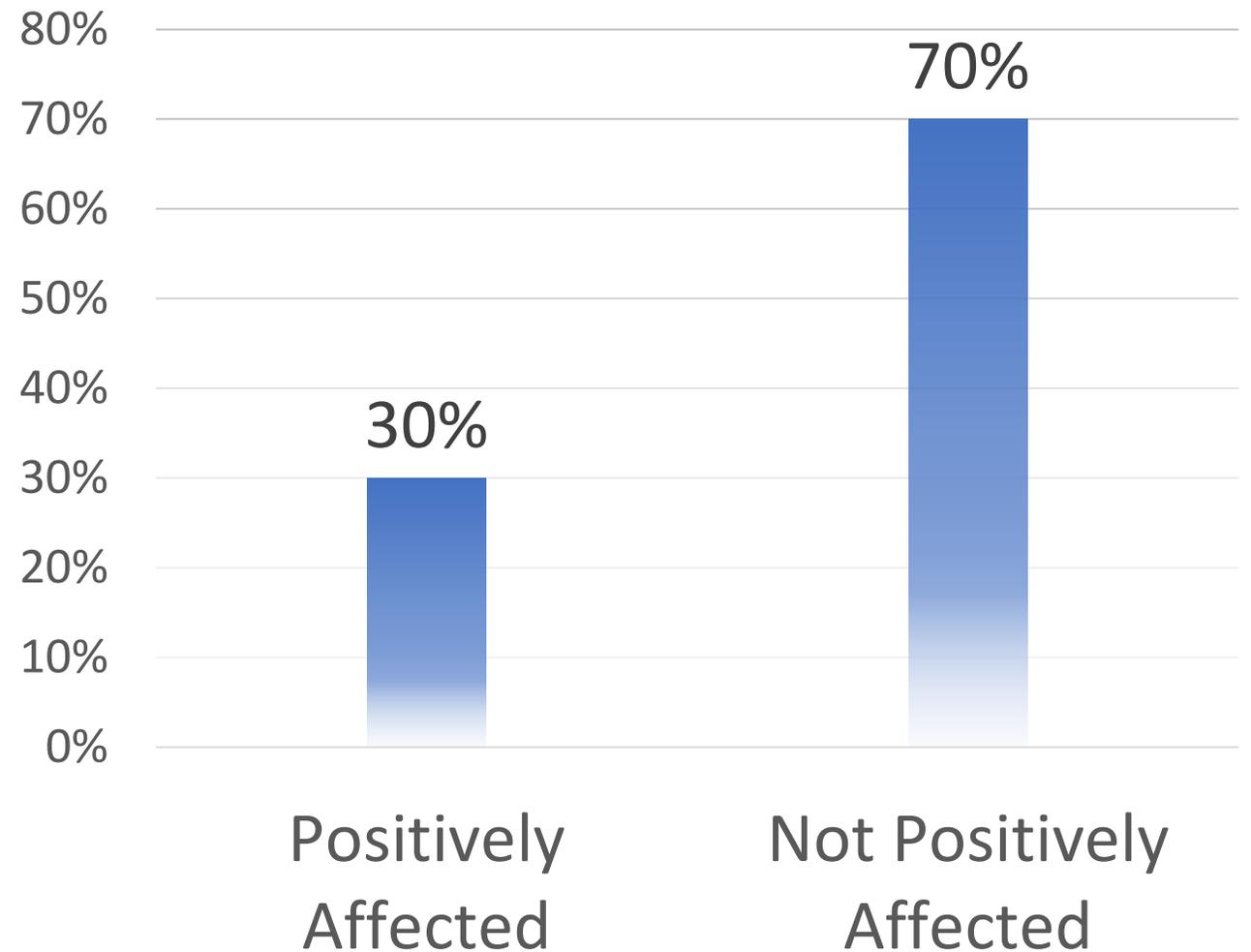


Students Experiences

Positive Affects

- Female colleagues
- International Women's Brass Conference (IWBC)

MUSICAL OPPORTUNITIES AFFECT BASED ON GENDER

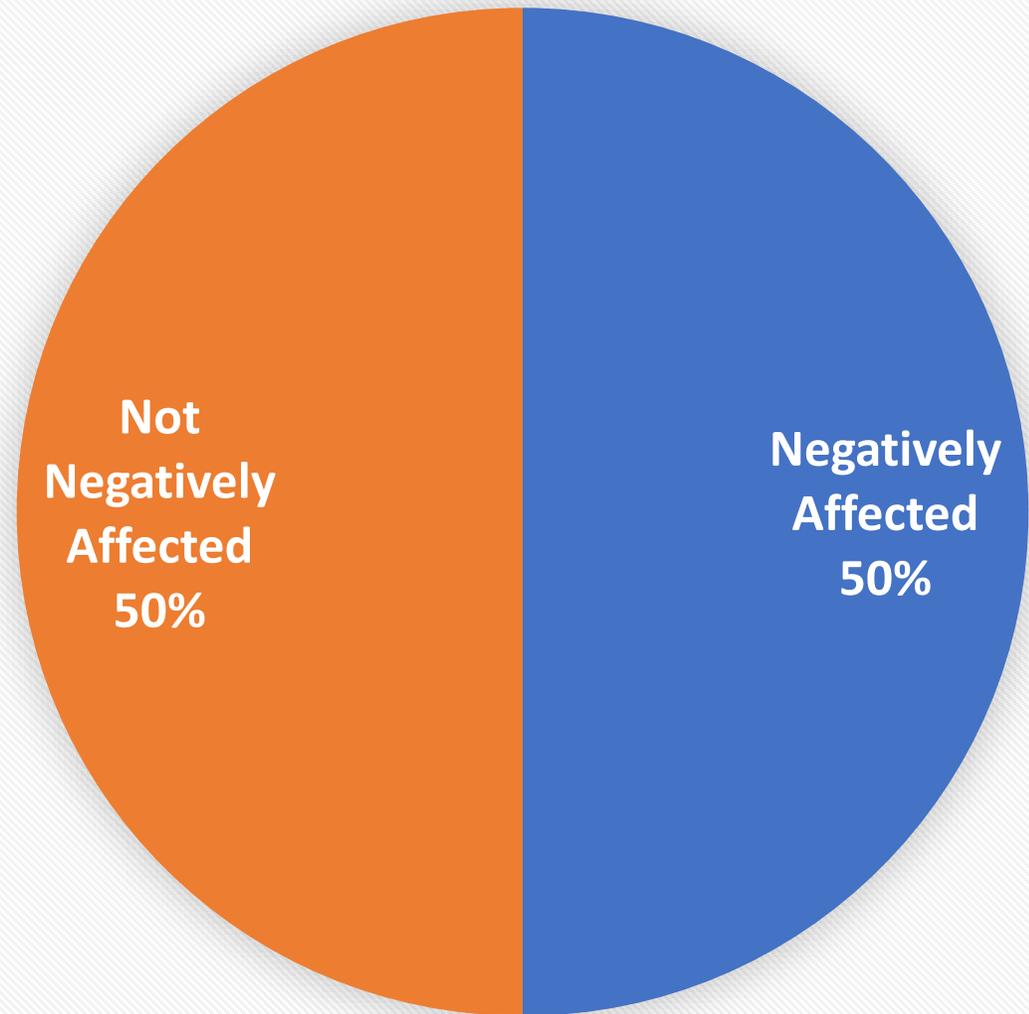


Students Experiences

Negative Affects

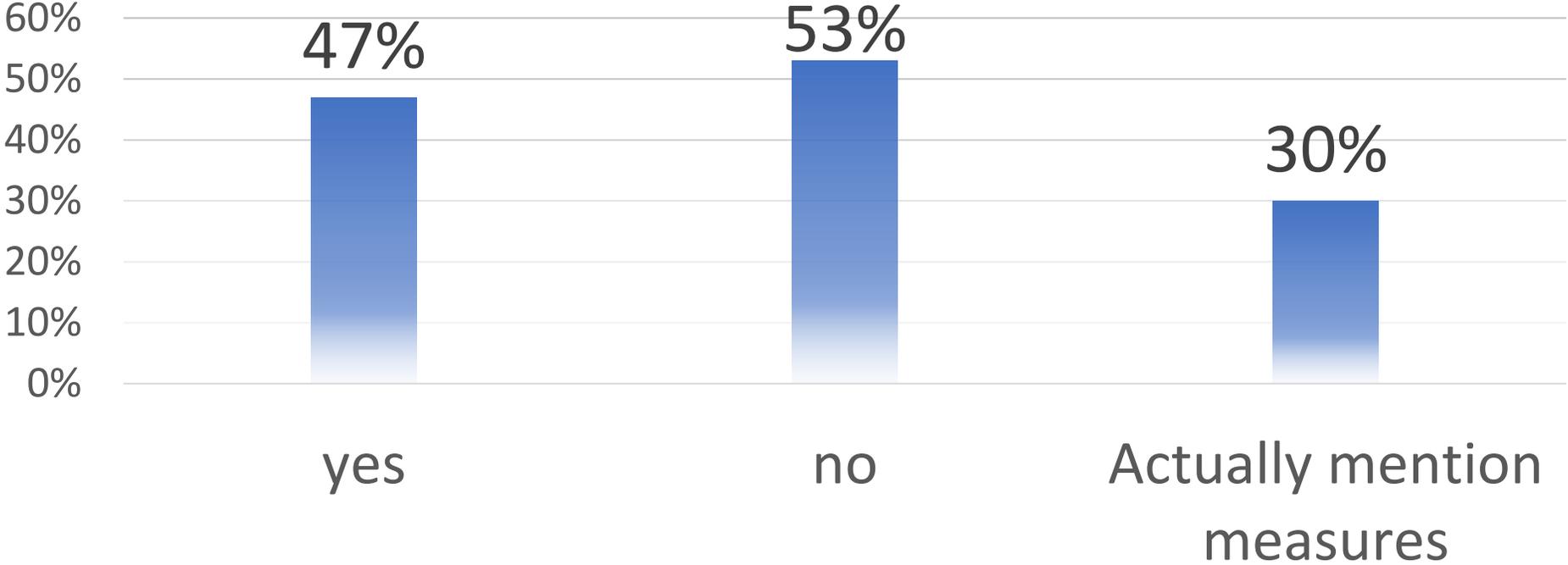
- Underestimated and excluded
- Professor comments
- Male students automatic win
- Refused a job for being female

Has Identifying as Female Negatively Affected Students Musical Opportunities?





Do professors have measures in place to provide equal opportunities for all students?





Are students experiencing gender bias and stereotyping today?

- Average of 18% females in trombone studios
- International Women's Brass Conference (IWBC)
- Female ensembles (Seraph Brass & Wonder Horns)
- Professors' motivations and support
- The future

References

Goldin, Claudia, and Cecelia Rouse. "Orchestrating Impartiality: The Impact of "Blind" Auditions on Female Musicians." *The American Economic Review* 90, no. 4 (2000): 715-741.-
<https://gap.hks.harvard.edu/orchestrating-impartiality-impact-%E2%80%9Cblind%E2%80%9D-auditions-female-musicians>

Photos:

Air Force Band Trombone Section photo - <https://www.music.af.mil/Multimedia/News/Article-Display/Article/1825156/remembering-the-glenn-miller-army-air-force-band-legacy/>

The New York Philharmonic Orchestra low brass section photo -
<https://trombonefestival.net/2021/03/16/georgia-2021-artist-new-york-philharmonic-low-brass/>