

International Trombone Festival 2018
University of Iowa
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9 AM – Recital Hall

Winning and Retaining a College Teaching Job

Panel:

Michael Smith – Luther College

Benjamin Yates – University of Louisiana at Lafayette

Joel Pugh – University of North Dakota

Robert Lindahl – Central Michigan University

Moderator - Nathaniel Brickens – University of Texas

Presentation Abstract

This panel will cover information related to winning and retaining a collegiate position in trombone/low brass. Topics will include preparing for the interview process, using technology, updating performance recordings, preparing for a possible secondary teaching area, inclusion of viable supporting documents, and search committee perspectives. Also shared will be information about maintaining an active career after a collegiate job is won, the promotion process, collegiality, diversity, and working with the administration on recruitment and retention. The presenters will provide personal experiences from a variety of institutions, including both private and public institutions of higher education.

I. Resume Building

Prepare now so that you can be the absolute best applicant, whether in college, or early in teaching career

A. Education

1. Diversity: Be more than simply a trombonist; More on this later!
2. Networking: Have more than simply a reference from the institution. Develop professional relationships with your mentors that will benefit you throughout your career
3. Succession of Degrees: Have a definite plan for how you would like to get your three degrees: Would you like to earn them back to back to back, to keep progressing as a player? Or would some teaching experience serve you better in the future?

B. Professional Teaching/Work Experience

Much of this information will be only on the first resume for the first position when you have limited experience to list on your resume. Once you have your first position, this will not be as important, but it is critical to getting that first position.

1. Private Teaching Studio: This is crucial to your development as a teacher, for this is when you first realize that simply because you are a great player, you may not be an equally great teacher. Its better that you make your “rookie mistakes” as an undergrad student
2. Band Camps: This may take the form of a high school marching band camp counselor at a music camp, or as an active teacher. This will provide wonderful experience, great networking with educators, professional musicians and other valuable resources.
3. Church musician: While there may not be many paid trombone positions in this area (understatement!), volunteering to assist in a chamber capacity may lead to other opportunities. You may also enlist your quartet/quintet as this may lead to future professional work.

(Resume building, cont.)

C. Honors/Awards/Scholarships

These could likely be listed only on the first resume, but will be very valuable when your experience is limited

D. Additional Items

These will include intangibles that could get you noticed by being able to ‘wear multiple hats’; some of these areas may include, but are not limited to, composition, arranging, grant writing, or leadership

E. Any special carrots? Grant Writing? Arranging/Composition? Publications?

F. Professional associations

Membership in none of these organizations will secure a position for you, but it does demonstrate a well-rounded professional side. It may also give you a commonality with members of the search committee. Some of these organizations would be ITA, ITEC, MAFME, Kappa Kappa Psi, Delta Omicron, Phi Mu Alpha, ASCAP

II. References

A. Required for all jobs

1. Double check due date for letters of reference
2. Have a reference list ready: at least three

B. Asking for letters of reference

1. Asking for letter of reference should not be initial contact
2. Provide references with all key points of information in the initial request:
 - a. Updated Curriculum Vitae (provide with every letter ask)
 - b. Job posting
 - i. Description
 - ii. School website
 - iii. Other specific info on the job
3. Where/How/When to submit the letter
 - a. Electronic or paper submission
 - b. Provide due date

C. Follow up with references

1. Thank your reference writers individually
2. Keep them informed of process

D. Curriculum Vitae tips:

1. Do not say “references available on request”.
2. No grammatical mistakes on app letter or resume (have someone, or multiple people proofread).
3. Be clear about work experience, if you were a TA or GA put that down. If you were full time put that down. Don’t make an adjunct position look like you were full time.
4. Make sure your letter and everything about your resume is tailored to that particular position.
5. Make sure your letter and everything about it makes teaching your number one goal.
6. List more than 3 references and ask more than 3 to fill out info for each job. Not every reference always follows through in a timely manner ☺

III. Securing a Position as a Low Brass Teacher

- A. First job reality
 - 1. Will probably not be a trombone only position, often will be low brass
 - 2. Realistically could be low brass and _____ (and _____)
- B. Preparing for Low Brass Position
 - 1. Be the best trombonist possible. The trombone will still be your “in”.
 - 2. Possess another “strong suit”
 - a. In an audition, a second area of performing excellence can make the difference
 - b. For trombonists, a logical secondary instrument could be euphonium
 - c. For bass trombonists, a logical secondary instrument could be tuba
 - d. Don’t overlook bass trombone as a tenor trombonist
 - 3. Be able to teach all four low brass instruments
 - a. Each instrument will have own specific pedagogy and repertoire
 - b. Know the extras for these instruments - Performers, chamber ensembles, etc.
 - 4. How to prepare while in college
 - a. Take lessons on a secondary instrument
 - b. Play in a second band on this instrument
 - c. Play in a chamber ensemble (tuba ensemble or quartet)
 - d. Take classes in low brass pedagogy and literature
 - e. Endear yourself to the tuba professor!
- C. What can you teach in the classroom?

It would be advantageous to have a minor/concentration in one of these areas, but do show that you have experience preferably in the classroom, but certainly on your transcript

 - 1. Theory
 - 2. Musicology
 - 3. Music Education
 - 4. Music Technology
- D. What can you conduct?

A minor in conducting is often beneficial, but at least take conducting lessons.

 - 1. Band
 - 2. Marching Band
 - 3. Chamber Ensembles
- E. How to get hired
 - 1. Your trombone recital should be good enough to get you hired, but...
 - 2. Performance in another low brass area

Your goal is to play this instrument as well as somebody of which this is their major instrument. This alone can separate you from the other finalists.
 - 3. Classroom teaching/conducting demonstration

Again, this should show you are an expert in this area
 - 4. Networking

Major teachers, colleagues

IV. Recruiting Plans

- A. Have a recruiting plan, even if it is not asked for
- B. Understand that recruiting is an expectation though it may not be part of your academic load
- C. How to recruit
 - 1. Read materials on recruiting
 - 2. Know what the school is already doing, have ideas on how to expand or make specific to your area
- D. Basic recruiting plan
 - 1. What pool do you recruit from?
 - a. Local, regional, national, international. All-state, district honors, band directors, more.
 - b. Samples available or ask a mentor
 - 2. Making recruiting connections
 - a. Who are the influencers?
 - b. What are contact points for you and prospective students?
 - 3. Having a personality that interests high school students
- E. Sample Lessons
 - 1. Group or one on one
 - 2. Take time for the student to feel comfortable
 - 3. Provide all the components a student is interested in
- F. Retaining Students
 - 1. Major part of developing your credentials
 - 2. Keeping a diverse, strong studio help students pass their graduation requirements

V. Application Process (Smith)

Read the full description and follow the exact directions!

- A. Letter of Application

This is a brief and concise introduction that summarizes your education, current activities, and position(s). Explain why you would be a good fit for the institution. You can include your academic and performance strengths (especially if you have secondary or tertiary instrumental abilities) as well as your ability/willingness to teach in other qualified areas.
- B. Curriculum vitae

A resume is generally a brief summarization of your professional activities (1 or 2 page). A Curriculum Vitae is a complete detailed listing of everything you want the committee to know about what you have done and are currently doing. You can include a recruiting report if you have been employed elsewhere. A good vitae includes the following information, but every item may not be relevant to those just starting their careers:

(Curriculum vitae, cont.)

1. Education
 2. Current Position - this can include committee work, advising, courses currently taught, courses taught in the past, conducting activities, etc.
 3. Previous positions
 4. Additional Teaching Experience (Summer camps, etc.)
 5. Primary teachers
 6. Performing Experience
 - a. Orchestras
 - b. Jazz
 - c. Solo Recitals, Solo and Collaborative Performances, Brass Ensemble Performances (Brass Quintet, etc.)
 7. Notable Ensemble Performances (I include major performances by my college ensembles)
 8. Conducting Experience
 9. Additional Professional Activities
 10. Research
 11. Presentations
 12. Publications (books, print music – including collaborative works)
 13. Professional Recordings
 14. College Service (the things you do but don't get paid for)
 15. Honors and Awards
- C. Letters of recommendation
Many references do not write generic letters of recommendation. You want someone who is passionate about your abilities writing letters for you.
- D. Graduate and Undergraduate transcripts (usually will specify official or unofficial)
- C. Web link or URL to video and/or audio recordings of performances
Make sure your links work from multiple devices. First impressions are **very important**. Use a high-quality recording device and play great literature with fantastic tone and expressiveness.

VI. Pre-interview/Conference Call/Skype

- A. Schedule – your schedule may not match the best window for the committee; do everything you can to be wide awake and ready to speak.
- B. Advance Homework – if you get an interview by phone it means you are at least in the top 5-10 candidates so prior to the conference call, research the school and the committee.
 1. It is okay to email the committee chair to ask further questions like who all will be on the conference call on that end; how long will the call last; etc.
 2. Look at the curriculum of the school – usually available on the web-site. You should know what music degrees they offer, and what courses are included in the basic degree as well as any degree your job could include.
 3. Be ready to ask questions when given the opportunity – “I noticed that your performance degree includes a requirement of 2 recitals. By what method do you jury or grade those recitals?” “Does the instrumental area work together in recruiting efforts?”

(Pre-interview, cont.)

- C. Actual call – It is nice to say hello and even a little something about their work if you know of them by reputation, but don't get greasy with BS compliments.
 - 1. Be yourself. Be calm. Dress nicely, but not like prom. A lot of these calls are via Skype so you can see each other; remember, often the committee is just as nervous.
 - 2. Be ready to answer questions about anything in the job description, i.e. recruitment, pedagogy, other areas of expertise.

VII. Actual Interview

- A. After your phone interview jot down notes about what you thought you did well on and what you think you would have liked to have said.
- B. Remember that you are interviewing the people and institution just as much as they are interviewing you.
- C. Things that will be scheduled in a one-day interview:
 - 1. Meeting with department chair (30 minutes to an hour)
 - 2. Meeting with Dean (usually about 30 minutes)
 - 3. Meeting with committee (usually an hour) – this is the most important meeting of the day!
 - 4. 30-minute recital (they will give you time to rehearse with an accompanist the night before or the morning of, or after lunch, but it may only be 30–45 minutes!)
 - 5. At least 30-minute master class with students
 - 6. Meals with search committee
- D. Things that might (very likely) be scheduled for the day
 - 1. Meeting with students (not just trombonists)
 - 2. Meeting with faculty in general
 - 3. Session where you would teach a secondary area, brass tech, or theory or history, or something from the job description
 - 4. Session where you play with faculty brass quintet, or jazz combo
- E. What to wear? Look professional, dress like you would if you were teaching a class.
- F. Meals – don't underestimate the importance of dining with committee members. They are unconsciously making judgements about how it would be to work with you.

VIII. Committee's Perspective

- A. It helps to understand from a devil's advocate situation what the members of the search committee are thinking. In general, they want the best teacher, colleague and player (in that order) that they can get for the position.
- B. The search committee is usually made up of 3-5 faculty members from the department. The larger the school the more likely the committee will have more brass faculty on it.
- C. The job description is written by either the Department Chair, or by the committee with input from the chair, then approved at the Dean's level, then approved at the University level. Then it is advertised for at least a month in various publications.

(Committee perspective, cont.)

- D. On or about the application deadline the committee starts perusing the files. Most on the committee will start by reading your letter of application and skimming through resumes. Depending on size of the school there will be somewhere between 20 and 150 applicants for the job. If the description says Doctorate required and you don't have one you will likely be eliminated at this stage unless you are ABD and expect to finish the DMA within the year.
- E. A few faculty listen to the recordings first, but some wait until the pool is shortened and then just listen to the highest graded candidates to come up with their short list.
- F. The committee meets and agrees to come up with some sort of grading system. Some schools have everything on-line and it is easy to add comments to each application, and then filter some into a different pile.
- G. Each member of the committee comes to a meeting with their top candidates. They compare the lists and agree on a mutual pool of 8-12. At this point they call references. Some schools allow them to call only the references you have put down on your resume, but remember it is also legal for them to 'run into' a colleague at a conference and bring up the subject of the candidate's qualifications.
- H. After calling references the committee meets again and usually picks a top five to eight and will often at this point conduct phone or Skype interviews.
- I. The committee then decides which 3 candidates to bring to campus and sends their preference through the dept. chair/dean/provost/equal opportunity, etc. for approval. Sometimes the Dean will ask about other candidates in the pool, especially if they were very qualified on paper and are minorities. The committee chair then has to respond and tell the Dean that that person was eliminated because of references or performing ability, or something else that came up. The committee up to the point of the Skype interview may not really know if candidates are minorities and sometimes can't tell the gender from the application.
- J. Dean/Provost grant approval to bring in 3 candidates (or sometimes tells you that one of the candidates has to be so and so and you can bring in 2 others)
- K. Chair of Committee contacts the candidates and asks them if they can come to campus for an interview. Some schools help the candidates schedule flights so the school can pay for this directly. The candidates will be reimbursed for all travel, lodging, and food costs at the end of the interview whether they are the 'chosen one' or not.
- L. Post interviews the committee meets (usually right away) and recommends one of the candidates to the Chair/Director/Dean. Sometimes there is a 24-hour turnaround, sometimes it can be longer, especially if the Dean or Chair disagrees with the committee's decision. They also have to do a salary range assessment.
- M. The Chair makes the offer. Do not be afraid to ask for a little more – or moving expenses, it will not take you off the table! In many cases candidates are so thrilled to get the job they don't negotiate. You decide. Also, rank is sometimes negotiable. First time college teachers are usually hired at the Instructor level, but if they have a doctorate they are started at Assistant Professor.

IX. Retaining your position

Job retention and student retention are different sides of the same coin. Student retention is not only how one engages with students, but also how the studio runs from day to day.

A. Mike's Top 10 List for Keeping Your Job

1. Make yourself marketable while in college so you can make yourself indispensable to your institution. Take your theory, piano, musicology, technology, and conducting classes very seriously.
2. Be passionate about your work and never pass up an opportunity to learn.
3. Do not be complacent.
4. Lead by example and don't pretend to know everything.
5. Treat colleagues and students with respect.
6. Practice and perform all of the time.
7. Always write, compose, arrange, and/or conduct.
8. Be a great problem solver and multitasker.
9. Say "yes" more often than "no".
10. Do not tell students to do things that you are not willing to do yourself.

X. Additional Thoughts

- A. Your first job is not likely to be your last job. Be willing to work your way up in steps to your goal.
- B. Your goal should fit what you are really good at, and what you really like to do.
- C. First get a job wherever you can go to get a job, then stay there for at least 2 years before you apply elsewhere so you can build a work resume of success.
- D. After you have a good track record you can start applying for jobs that are more ideal situations for you, and maybe in a better geographical area for your needs.
- E. Never underestimate yourself throughout any of this process.
- F. Stay active in your field at all times. Sometimes people apply for jobs and you can glance at their resume and see lots of activity for a period of time, and then little or no activity during the past 2-3 years. What does this mean to the committee?

Good luck!!

Panel Biographies

Michael K. Smith is currently Associate Professor of Music (Low Brass) at Luther College in Decorah, Iowa, where he teaches applied low brass and low brass methods, coaches small brass ensembles, and directs the Luther College Brass Choir, Trombone Choir and Tuba/Euphonium Ensemble. He holds a Bachelor of Music from Stephen F. Austin State University in Nacogdoches, Texas, a Master of Music Education from McNeese State University in Lake Charles, Louisiana, and a doctorate in Trombone Performance and Literature from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. His awards from the University of Illinois include the Robert Gray Trombone Award, the Albert A. Harding Award, and the Mark H. Hindsley Award. He is a member of Pi Kappa Lambda, Alpha Chi, and Phi Kappa Phi.

Prior to his appointment at Luther College, Dr. Smith taught at Millikin University, Knox College, and at the University of Illinois as the head teaching assistant in the trombone studio. He has taught for 17 years at the Luther College Summer Dorian Band Camps and at the Illinois Summer Youth Music Trombone Camps at the University of Illinois. He has been a guest clinician, soloist, and conductor at the Georgia Honors Low Brass Choir at Valdosta State University in Valdosta, Ga., the Illinois Honors Trombone Choir in Chicago, the Illinois Honors Trombone Choir held at the University of Illinois, the Illinois Junior Trombone Symposium in Chicago, and was the co-founder and conductor of the University of Illinois High School Laboratory Trombone Choir. In 2017, Dr. Smith served as an adjudicator for the euphonium artist division at the Great Plains Regional Tuba/Euphonium Conference at Iowa State University in Ames, IA.

The Luther College Trombone Choir and Trombone Ensembles have performed at the Iowa Music Educators Association Conference, the Western Wisconsin Trombone Day and for the Closing Ceremony of the 25th Nobel Peace Prize Forum at Augsburg College in Minneapolis, MN. In 2017, the Luther College Tuba/Euphonium Ensemble performed at the Great Plains Regional Tuba/Euphonium Conference at Iowa State University in Ames, IA.

Dr. Smith has published more than 40 works including original pieces for solo bass trombone, trombone choir, and brass choir, and arrangements for trombone choir, tuba/euphonium ensemble, low brass ensemble and brass choir. His works are published exclusively by TAP Music and are available at Hickey's Music Center.

Dr. Smith has performed with more than 15 orchestras from Louisiana, Texas, Illinois, Iowa and Minnesota. He is currently the bass trombonist of the Rochester (MN) Symphony Orchestra, a position he has held since 2007. His teachers include Elliot Chasanov, William Rose, J. Mark Thompson and Nathaniel Brickens.

Trombonist and music educator **Dr. Benjamin Yates** is Assistant Professor of Trombone and Low Brass at the University of Louisiana at Lafayette. His duties include teaching trombone, euphonium, and tuba applied lessons; coaching brass chamber music; conducting the trombone choir and tubaeuph ensemble; coordinating the School of Music Recital Hour Seminar, and performing with the Louisiana Brass Quintet.

As an active soloist, Yates performs and presents master classes and recitals at high schools, colleges and universities around the United States. As a trombone clinician, Yates has presented master classes throughout the United States, Austria, Brazil and Japan. Previously, he taught applied low brass lessons at Luther College (IA) and Silver Lake College (WI).

Yates performs regularly with Louisiana area symphonies, bands and chamber ensembles including the Acadiana Symphony Orchestra (LA), La Crosse Symphony Orchestra (WI), Quad Cities Symphony (IL), and the Waterloo-Cedar Falls Symphony (IA).

Students of Benjamin Yates have continued education in trombone, euphonium, and tuba performance, becoming successful professional musicians and music educators throughout the United States and the world.

Yates' teachers include David Gier, Jonathan Allen, Elliot Chasanov, Michael Smith, Bard Mackey, and Roger Rocco.

Joel Pugh teaches low brass at the University of North Dakota and performs in the Dakota Brass, International Brass Quintet and the Grand Forks Symphony Orchestra. In addition to teaching trombone, euphonium and tuba, he directs the North Dakota Trombone Choir and coaches the UND Trombone Quartet and Tuba Ensembles. The UND Trombone Ensembles have recently hosted trombone events featuring Scott Hartman and Eric Ewazen and participated in trombone festivals in Winnipeg and Brandon, Manitoba, while the UND Trombone Quartet has completed residencies at several universities in Shanghai, China.

Dr. Pugh has performed extensively throughout the United States on trombone and euphonium, playing in the solo, chamber, wind band, orchestral, and brass band settings. As a soloist, he has performed on many college campuses throughout the United States, Canada and China. Additionally, as the solo euphonium in the Brass Band of Columbus and Cuyahoga Valley Brass Band, he has performed in many different settings and has recorded numerous solos on their CDs.

He has given presentations at the International Tuba Euphonium Conference, the Midwest Band and Orchestra Clinic and numerous state Music Educator's conferences. He has been published in the International Tuba Euphonium Association and Brass Band Bridge journals.

He currently teaches at the International Music Camp and holds degrees from Michigan State University, Bowling Green State University and Ithaca College. His teachers include Scott Hartman, Paul Hunt and Curtis Olson.

Joel Pugh is a Courtois and Besson performing artist.

Dr. Robert Lindahl has been Professor of Trombone, Brass pedagogy, and Jazz studies for Central Michigan University since 1992. He has developed writing intensive courses for the general studies program, jazz history graduate courses, and on-line jazz appreciation courses during his career. He also directs the Central Michigan University Trombone Choir, the CMU jazz trombone ensemble, and coaches brass quintets and trombone quartets. He is an artist and educational consultant for Selmer Bach Musical Instruments and has served as guest clinician and performer throughout the United States. Lindahl has written grants that have supported chamber music in the public schools, 2 CD recordings with the CMU Faculty Jazz, and the

creation and performance of David Gillingham's "Vital Signs of Planet Earth" for George Curran and the CMU Wind Ensemble.

Lindahl has played regularly with the Central Michigan University Faculty Jazz Combo, the Jimmy Dorsey Orchestra, the Central Michigan Faculty Brass Quintet, Central Michigan University Graduate Trombone Quartet, and the Michigan Jazz Trails Big Band. He served as principal trombonist with the Midland Symphony Orchestra from 1993-2003. Lindahl performs regularly with the River Raisin Ragtime Revue and has appeared on 3 CD recordings with this group. He has also performed with the Detroit Symphony Orchestra, Grand Rapids Symphony Orchestra, Bay City Bijou Orchestra, Saginaw Bay Symphony, Traverse City Symphony Orchestra, Bay Area Big Band and the Lansing Symphony Big Band.. Dr. Lindahl served as the National Music Advisor for Delta Omicron Professional Music Fraternity from 2006-2009 and was Chapter Adviser for the Delta Iota Chapter from 1995-2014. He served as the Chair of the National Finance Committee for Delta Omicron from 2009-2017. He remains an active member of the International Trombone Association and the American Federation of Musicians. He adjudicates regularly for the Michigan School Band and Orchestra Association and his chief interests include research in early jazz history and trombone pedagogy. In 1999 he received the "Excellence in Teaching" award from Central Michigan University.

He holds degrees from Clarion University of Pennsylvania, Youngstown State University, and Arizona State University. His trombone teachers have included Gail E. Wilson, Mike Crist, Vern Kagarice, Dean Farnham, and Frank Bolte.

In addition to his duties at Central Michigan University, Dr. Lindahl serves as faculty sponsor for the Delta Iota Chapter of Delta Omicron. He was a member of the board of directors of Art Reach of Mid-Michigan from 1993-1998. He received the Michigan Campus Compact Faculty/Staff Award for Service Learning in 1995 for his work with academic related service learning. In 1996, Dr. Lindahl was a finalist for the Governor's Community Service Award and in 1999 was named "Volunteer of the Year" by Art Reach of Mid-Michigan for his work with community music programs. In 1997, the Central Michigan University Activities Board presented him with an outstanding advisor award for service to Delta Omicron Professional Music Fraternity. The International Professional Music Fraternity Delta Omicron named Dr. Lindahl as "Advisor of the Year" on six occasions. The Professional Fraternity Association named him as their "University Advisor of the Year" in 2001. Prior to employment at Central Michigan University, Dr. Lindahl served as band director for the Titusville, PA Area Schools from 1980-85, and Director of Bands at Eastern New Mexico University from 1987-92, where he also served as assistant director of the School of Music from 1989-92.