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### Gender's Impact on Students' Public Presentation of Their Original Work in High School

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# Gender's Impact on Students' Public Presentation of Their Original Work in High School



CLARK UNIVERSITY

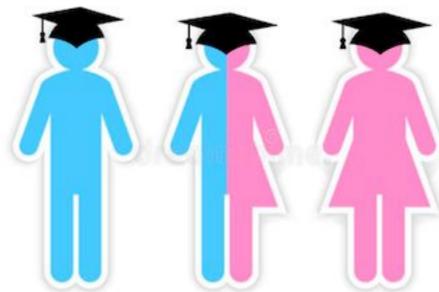
Kay Mickelson '21, Maddie Lesser '22, Vanessa Tischofer '22, Kaitlin Luccarelli '22 (Sponsor: Nancy Budwig)

## Introduction

This study examines if there are gender differences in the amount of people who participate in original work and thus present their findings prior to college.

A recent report (2021) of employers suggested that they are more likely to hire someone when they have engaged in capstone level work in college. At the same time, they note that presentation skills lag behind other skills that the Association of American Colleges and Universities has advocated students need to engage in (Finley, 2015).

We believe that results will show that it is more common for those that identify as male to have experience in presenting original work in high school. As evidenced by Combs' study, despite more women enrolling in higher education than men and being more likely to complete a bachelor's degree, "school-aged boys have outscored girls in several national measures of achievement." (Combs, 2010) This project will yield important results because it gives us insight as to how we can better prepare first year college students to be equally ready and able to do signature work and then present it.



## Methods

This study was conducted through an anonymous Qualtrics survey sent out to first year students at four colleges and universities working with AAC&U on the LEAP Challenge. The anonymous survey included 23 questions and roughly 271 participants were involved in answering the survey from the various schools. Out of the 271 participants 31% [83] identified as male, 68% [184] identified as female, 0.3% [1] identified as another gender, and 1% [3] preferred not to answer. The survey asked a range of questions relating to college readiness based on various factors such as gender, area of study, parental education level, and private vs public education. Surveys were left fully anonymous.

## Results

- Across all schools, 46% of students, regardless of gender, reported presenting original work outside of class before entering college.
- Across all schools, no students who identified with a gender other than male or female had presented original work in high school, though the numbers are small as seen in figure 1.
- All schools indicated that less students presented original work than those that did, except for school 2 which indicated that the majority (55%) had engaged in presenting original work.
- In Schools 2 and 3, there were more female students who had presented original work in high school than male students, however in Schools 1 and 4, the opposite was true.
- School 1 is the only school to have people identifying as another gender participate and students did not report presenting.
- A chi-square test of independence showed that there was no significant association between gender and public presentation of original work,  $\chi^2(1, n=267) = 0.0144, p = .904366$ .

## Discussion

### Limitations

- Across all four schools that participated in the study, only a total of 271 students responded to the survey; a relatively small sample size of the total population. In order to study the effect of gender on who presents original work before arriving at college a larger sample size would be required.
- The study as a whole was not gender-inclusive, as it presents gender in a binary nature, lumping anyone outside of that binary into "other." If the study represented gender more accurately, the results might look different, in that they might be distributed differently, and in that those who felt excluded might choose to participate.
- According to the chi-square results, there was not much of a correlation between gender and whether first year college students publicly presented original work, as the male to female ratios for "presented" and "none" varied from school to school.

### Implications

- Based on the data from these four schools, the majority of first year college students did not publicly present their original work in high school.
- By expanding the options for gender identity on the survey to include those who identify outside of the binary, we can make future studies more accessible to those who may not fit into the traditional male and female gender roles society assigns.

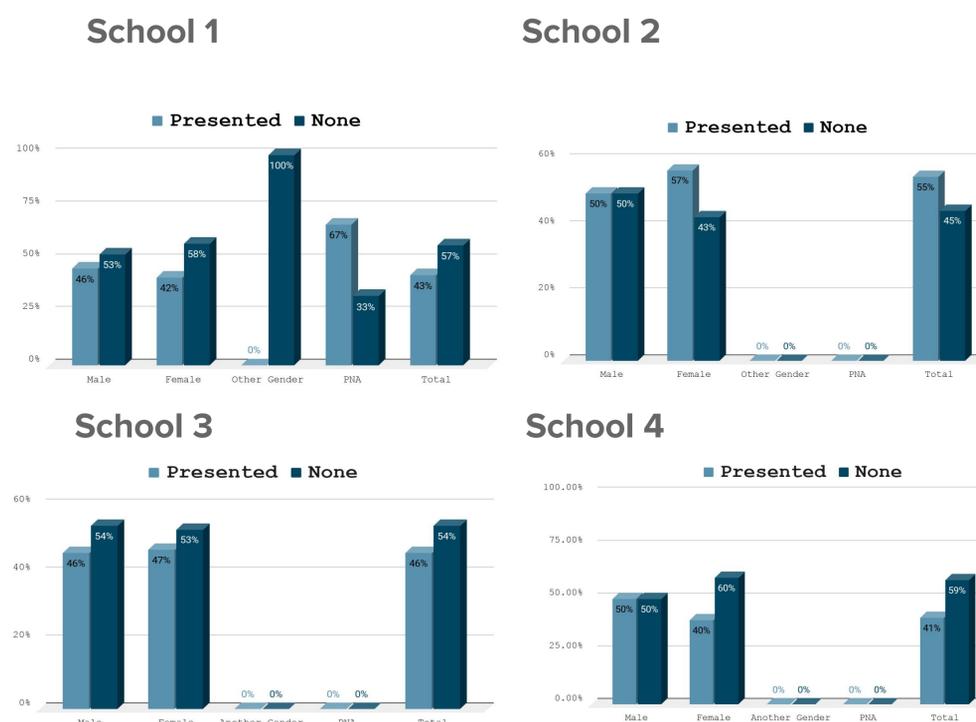
### Further Questions

- Is our sample size diverse and large enough, and if not, how can we get more samples to diversify our findings?
- Will including schools outside of the LEAP Challenge present a change in results?

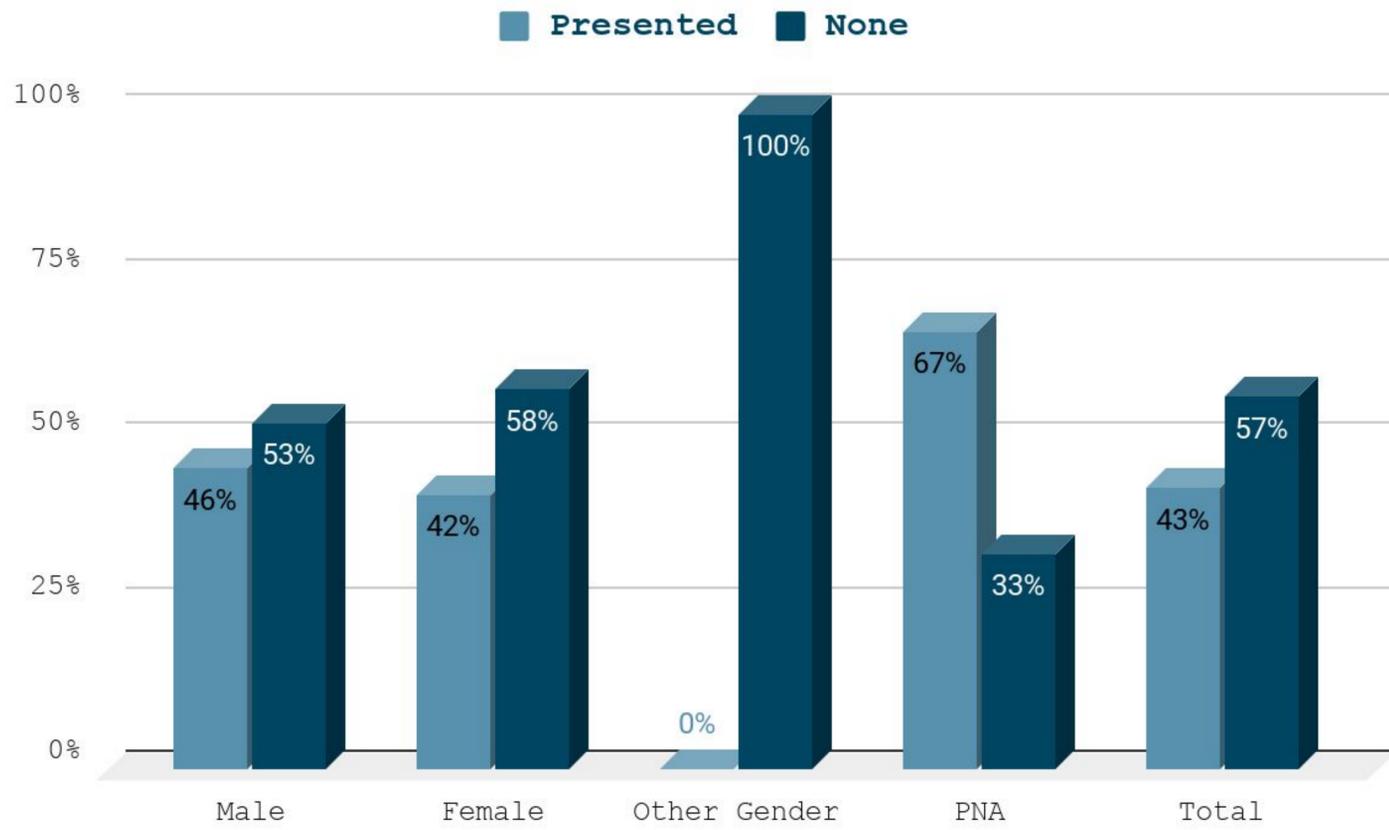
## References

- Combs, J., Slate, J., Moore, G., Bustamante, R., Onwuegbuzie, A., & Edmonson, S. (2010). Gender Differences in College Preparedness: A Statewide Study. *Urban Review, 42*(5), 441–457.
- Finley, A. (2021). *How College Contributes to Workforce Success: Employer Views on What Matters Most*. AAC&U.

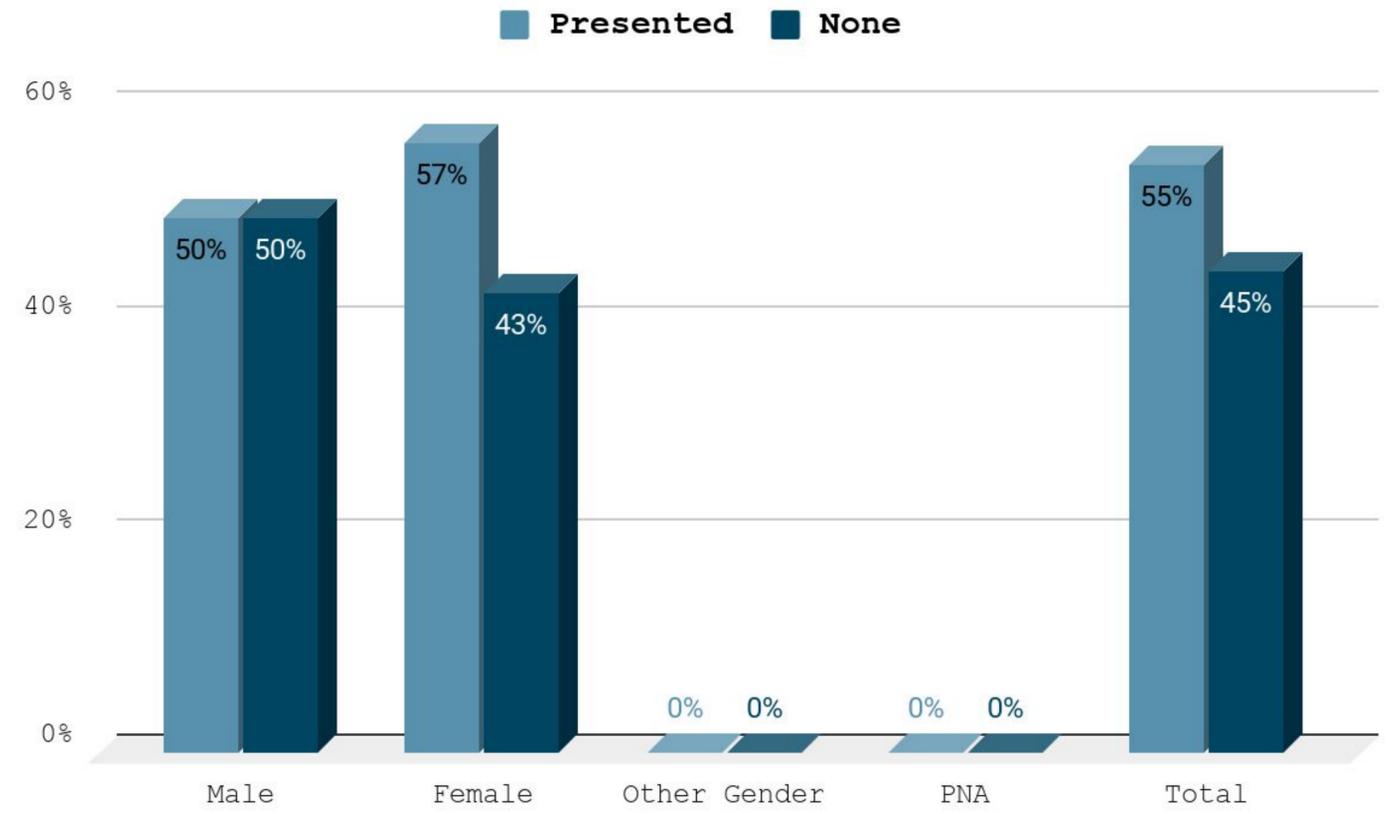
Figure 1.



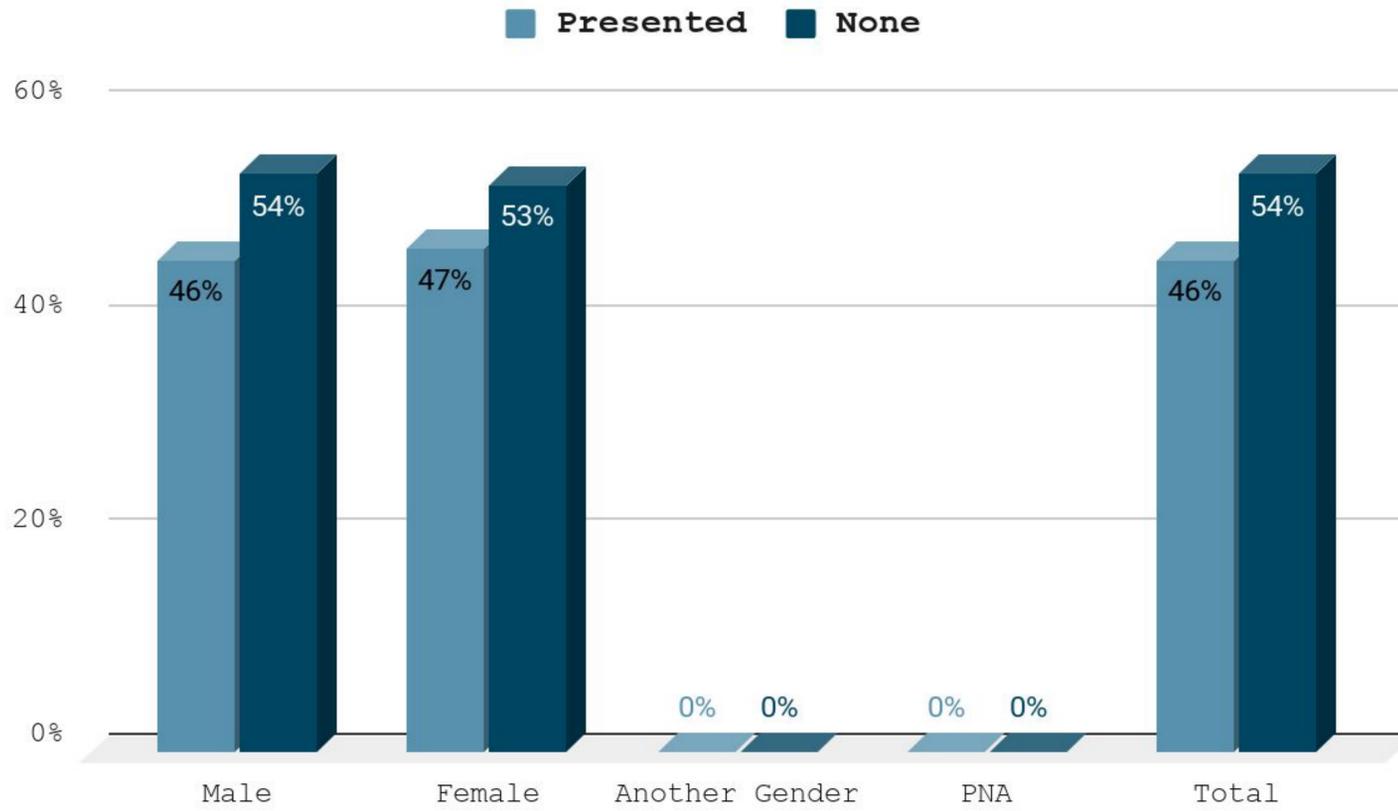
School 1



School 2



School 3



School 4

