

COURSE STUDY FOR STRING BASS

Bruce H. Johnston, DMA
Ouachita Baptist University

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FRESHMEN

Bass Reading and Technique

In the first few levels, method books will be a crucial foundation for creating good technical habits.

FALL - Level 1

Methods

Essential Elements, Book I

Simandl – New Method Book 1

Technique

- Open string sound production.
- Half and 1st position.
- Focus on hand shape.
- Proper sitting or standing posture.
- Basic rhythms of common time with simple rhythm.
- Open scales.

Repertoire (sample)

Bass Fiddle March

March of the Giants

SPRING - Level 1.5

Selected etudes will be used to boost the student's technical reserve, and one Baroque Sonata (Marcello, Eccles, etc.) should be a focus.

Methods and Etudes

All for Strings, Book 1 (continue and complete)

Essential Elements , Book 1(continue and complete)

Technique

- 1/2 position.
- 3rd position.
- Beginning shifting technique.
- Slurring, staccato bow strokes.
- F, Bb, D, A, E scales.
- rhythms – combining quarter notes and eighth notes

Repertoire (sample)

Mummers (Festival Performance Solos)

Blue Bells of Scotland or The Little Sailor from 35 Easy Solos (Yorke)

Melodic Improvisation

Analysis and application of blues tonality over blues progressions using minor pentatonic, blues, Dorian, and Mixolydian scales. Application of relative major/minor shifts for improvisation.

Improvisation

Aebersold

Various Volumes

Coker

Complete Method for Improvisation

Scales

Minor/Major Pentatonic; Blues Scales; Major/Minor Modal System

SOPHOMORE

Reading and Technique

Reading in half time, cut time, triple meter, syncopation, and multiple fingerboard positions. Chord and melodic studies up to 3rd position, octave transposition, and chart reading.

FALL - Level 2

Methods and Etudes

Simandl – New Method Book 1 (to include all positions through 3rd)

Eugene Levinson – School of Agility.

Essential Elements Book 2

Technique

- Slurring across strings.
- Scale patterns using closed strings
- Including 2nd position along with previously learned positions
- Single string ascending/descending major scales

Repertoire (sample)

Bach, J.S. – Minuet in G Major

Capuzzi - Concerto for Double Bass in F

The Real Book 1

Vivaldi - Sonata 5

Orchestral studies should now include one symphony by

Mozart

Beethoven

Brahms

SPRING - Level 2.5

Methods and Etudes

Simandl – New Method – position exercises to include up through 4th position

Eugene Levinson – School of Agility.

Essential Elements Book 2

Simandl – A Contemporary Concept of Bowing Technique for the Double Bass

Technique

- 4th position
- Begin scales in intervals, 3rds using Simandl book,
- Hooked bowings
- Single string scales ascending/descending with chromatic modulation
- one octave minor scales

Repertoire (sample)

Marcello – Sonata in e minor

Hartley – Orchestral Solos Book 1

The Real Book 1

Vivaldi - Sonata 5

Harmonic and Rhythmic Concepts

Topics include II-V-I progressions, triplet rhythms, double-stops, and accompaniment techniques.

Additional focus on the art of chart-writing.

Recommended Reading

Berklee

Harmony 2

Melodic Improvisation

Scale applications in major and minor tonalities, including modal key-center improvisation. Stylistic licks and sequencing will be explored as viable improvisation solutions.

Improvisation

Aebersold

II-V7-I Progression (Vol. 3); 'I got Rhythm' (Vol. 47)

Scales

Major Scale Modes

Minor Scales

JUNIOR

Reading and Technique

Students will continue to build on reading skills learned over the study of various musical styles.

Extended techniques of thumb position will be covered.

FALL - Level 3

Methods and Etudes

Simandl – New Method – working through the octave harmonic

Simandl – A Contemporary Concept of Bowing Technique for the Double Bass

Technique

- Finish learning positions through octave harmonics
- Continue scales in intervals, 4ths and 5ths
- Bow variations – using Simandl p. 69 as applied to scales
- 2 octaves scales in closed position

Repertoire (sample)

Bach – Gavotte (Solotime for Strings book 4)

Eccles - Sonata in G minor

Faure - Apres Un Reve

Hartley – Orchestral Solos

The Real Book 1

SPRING - Level 3.5

Methods and Etudes

Simandl – Thirty Etudes (1-8)

Technique

- Bow control, varying speed and weight.
- Fingering concepts with dotted rhythm, applying to scales.
- Elementary thumb positions.
- Connecting the neck and thumb positions
- Scales in 2 octaves

Repertoire (sample)

Beethoven – Sonatina (Zimmerman, Solos for the Double Bass Player)

Eccles - Sonata in G minor

Faure - Apres Un Reve

Hartley – Orchestral Solos

The Real Book 1

Harmonic and Rhythmic Concepts

Creating and performing bass parts in a variety of styles. Concepts include line clichés and the use of sixteenth-note and triplet syncopation. The Nashville Number system will also be employed.

Recommended Reading

Berklee

Harmony 3

Melodic Improvisation

Expanding improvisational techniques and concepts to include octaves and other double-stops, chord scales, modal mixture, and secondary dominants. Other topics include applications of bebop language and the melodic minor scale.

Improvisation

Aebersold

Duke Ellington (vol. 12); Wes Montgomery (vol. 62)

Coker

Elements of the Jazz Language

Scales

Bebop Scales

Melodic Minor Modes

Modal Mixture

SENIOR

Reading and Technique

Advanced score interpretation and sight-reading techniques are developed using notable musical excerpts. Emphasis on implementing these sight-reading techniques to real-world scenarios.

FALL - Level 4

Methods and Etudes

Simandl – Thirty Etudes (etudes 8-15)

Robinson – Strokin’

Technique

- Phrasing
- Ensemble skills (Classic and Modern Duets) and performing with piano
- Advanced bowing patterns (Sevcik)
- Varying bow speeds; Galamian scale patterns

Repertoire (sample)

Bach – Minuets from Suite No. 1 (in C, such as Sterling edition)

Bach - Cello Suites

Corelli - Sonata in C minor

Dragonetti - Concerto in A Major

Marais – Five French Dances

The Real Book 1

Vivaldi – Sonata in A Minor

Verdi – Solo from Rigoletto (from Simandl book 1)

SPRING - Level 4.5

Etudes

Simandl – Thirty Etudes (etudes 5-22)

Storch-Hrabe – 57 Etudes, vol 1

Technique

- Continue technique from previous level.

Repertoire (sample)

Bottesini no. 2

Bottesini – Grand Duo

Capuzzi – Concerto

Faure – Apres Un Reve

Paganini Variations

Harmonic and Rhythmic Concepts

Emphasis on creating and applying stylistically appropriate rhythm parts through regular performance, as well as analysis of notable recordings of rhythm guitar.

Recommended Reading

Berklee Press

Harmony 4

Boling

Jazz Theory Workbook

Melodic Improvisation

Employing chromaticism over modal scale patterns, expanding improvisation to include diminished, whole-tone, and other advanced approaches.

Improvisation

Aebersold

Bird (vol. 6); Monk (vol. 56)

Scales

Diminished Scales

Synthetic Scales

GRADING PROCEDURES

String Bass Principal Residency

All String Bass Principal Music Majors have requirements listed which correspond with their particular major. The typical track will be 12 to 16 credit hours of participation in private lessons and successful completion of juries for each semester on a principal instrument.

Absence

A documented medical excuse or a family emergency constitutes an excused absence. Otherwise, it is at the teacher's discretion whether an absence is recorded as excused or unexcused. Faculty keep accurate records of student absences, but ultimately it is the student's responsibility to withdraw from a class.

Incomplete

An Incomplete grade is granted in private lessons only in extreme circumstances. These circumstances include a documented medical excuse or family emergency. To receive an Incomplete grade, the student must be passing the course and have satisfactory attendance. An Incomplete must be made up the next semester, provided the student is enrolled at the college.

Listed below are the criteria with which students will be graded:

GRADE - A (90-100)

- Shows up to lessons on time, tuned up and ready to play
- Makes the private lesson a priority and keeps the teacher well informed as to musical and academic activities
- Focuses on weaknesses as well as strengths, takes suggestions, and has own inner direction
- Works above and beyond teacher's expectations, prepares assigned materials, performs at a high level
- Shows improvement of instrumental skills and musicianship
- Is an active student player/performer, seeks playing (as well as listening) opportunities around the college, and is self-motivated

GRADE - B (80 - 89)

- Shows up to lessons on time, but is not always prepared
- Makes the private lesson a priority, but not his/her top priority
- Focuses on weaknesses and makes progress
- Prepares assignments most of the time, but sometimes makes excuses for not preparing lesson, because other work gets in the way
- Shows improvement of instrumental skills and musicianship
- Is an active student player/performer and is self-motivated

GRADE - C (70 - 79)

- May show up to lessons on time, but not always prepared
- Private lesson is not a priority
- Avoids weaknesses and rarely makes progress
- Occasionally prepares assignments, has frequent excuses, and lacks self-motivation
- Shows little improvement of instrumental skills and musicianship

- This student is inconsistent
- This student may or may not be an active student player/performer

GRADE - D (60 - 69)

- Rarely shows up to lessons on time and is rarely prepared
- Shows little interest in improving instrumental skills and/or musicianship
- Rarely takes suggestions
- This student is probably not an active student player/performer
- This student barely performs at the level, however, there is some evidence of musical ability that warrants a passing grade
- This student receives a grade of 60 or higher on the final exam

GRADE - F (Below 60)

- Rarely shows up to lessons on time and is rarely prepared
- Shows little interest in improving instrumental skills and/or musicianship
- Rarely takes suggestions
- This student is probably not an active student player/performer
- This student does not perform at level and/or fails the final exam