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University of Montana Course Syllabi, 2021-2025

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Fall 9-1-2022

### MUSI 552.13: Major Performance Area - String Bass

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Schnackel, Joel S., "MUSI 552.13: Major Performance Area - String Bass" (2022). *University of Montana Course Syllabi, 2021-2025*. 545.

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# MUSI 195–495 and 551

## UMT Double Bass Studio

Dr. Joel Schnackel  
[joel.schnackel@umt.edu](mailto:joel.schnackel@umt.edu)  
901-552-7080

Class Location: 108  
Office Hours: By appointment.

**Scheduled weekly lessons are both online and in-person  
Bass Ensemble on selected Wednesdays at 1PM**

## Syllabus, Fall 2022

### Course Description:

Both online and in-person private lessons and group studio class. Lessons are devoted to the development of technique and the knowledge of musical styles appropriate to perform standard double bass repertoire. Students will become familiar with double bass solo, orchestral, chamber, and ensemble repertoire by technique building, solo and ensemble playing, interpretation, rehearsing, and excerpt study.

### Objectives:

1. To develop artistically and technically as a musician by studying double bass repertoire and solo literature.
2. Developing consistent and effective practice habits.
3. To learn ensemble and rehearsal techniques. Learn to listen and match sound, phrasing, dynamics, intonation, articulation, and interpretation.
4. To share ideas with your peers, to work together as a team and help one another grow.
5. To experience the joy of performing music.
6. to demonstrate appropriate technique and musical style to perform the music as outlined below and be prepared to successfully audition for graduate school or a professional orchestra position at the end of your undergraduate years.

### Text:

Undergraduate students are required to have a copy of the Simandl *New Method* and *30 Etudes*. I may also recommend other methods such as *Suzuki Bass School*; George Vance, *Progressive Repertoire*; and/or Barry Green, *The Popular Bass Method*. Solo repertoire is assigned based on the student's performance level. Finally, the music for bass ensemble will be distributed at the beginning of each semester.

### Requirements:

- 1) Microphone: Because of the nature of our instrument, the quality of low frequencies of the bass are difficult to authentically recreate digitally. Also, because some of our lessons will occur online, it is essential that each student use a good external mic. Below are a few basic and popular USB microphone choices that work well in a general setting.  
Samson GoMic; AKG Lyra; Mackie EM-USB; or Samson Q2U
- 2) A set of quality headphones or earbuds.
- 3) Laptop or Phone with Zoom.us: A laptop computer is an essential tool for every musician in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. It is strongly advised that students invest in a quality computer to complete the everyday tasks professionals encounter in our field. However, for the sake of online bass lessons, a quality smart phone may suffice as long there is compatibility for both an external mic and a set of headphones.
- 4) Three Ring Binders: Students are required to keep two separate three-ring-binders in addition to their orchestra folder: a bass ensemble/ solo music binder and a scales and technique binder (with material organized, not just thrown in).

- 5) Preparation: Students are expected to show up to all lessons and studio class every week with assigned material prepared to the best of their ability.
- 6) Juries: The final exams for this semester are string juries, which are held in person the last week of the semester. Each bass player is required to perform repertoire that meets their degree requirements.

**Grading Policy:**

Each week, you will be assigned a weekly preparation and improvement score. Students should attend, be prepared, and show significant improvement in each lesson. Five points is reserved for EXCELLENT work; good work is a 4; average work is a 3; and showing up unprepared is either a 1 or 2. Missed lessons will result in a 0 for the week. The final grade is weighted as follows: Weekly lessons 70%, and Jury Grade 30%.

## Schedule:

### August

31 – **In person:** Wednesday lessons and **Bass Ensemble meeting before orchestra from 1pm-2pm**

### September

10 – **Zoom:** Friday lessons after 12PM (we will schedule)

14 – **In person:** Wednesday lessons and **Bass Ensemble before orchestra from 1pm-2pm**

21 or 23 – **Zoom:** Lessons could be on either Wednesday or Friday of this week (we will schedule)

30 – **In person:** Friday lessons (we will schedule)

### October

05 – **In person:** Wednesday lessons and **Bass Ensemble before orchestra from 1pm-2pm**

12 – **In person:** Wednesday lessons and **Bass Ensemble before orchestra from 1pm-2pm**

21 – **Zoom:** Friday lessons (we will schedule)

28 – **Zoom:** Friday lessons (we will schedule)

### November

02 – **In person:** Wednesday lessons and **Bass Ensemble before orchestra from 1pm-2pm**

09 – **In person:** Wednesday lessons and **Bass Ensemble before orchestra from 1pm-2pm**

18 – **In person:** Friday lessons (we will schedule)

### **Thanksgiving Break**

### December

02—**Zoom:** Friday lessons (we will schedule)

07— **In person:** Wednesday lessons and **Bass Ensemble (TBD Concert?)**

### **Juries**

## Course of Study

### Freshman Year:

Study material - Franz Simandl, New Method for the Double Bass, Book 1, part 1, The Suzuki Bass Method; George Vance Progressive Rep

Supplemental - Finger Aerobics, Bornoff Finger Patterns

Solo Repertoire – Benedetto Marcello, Sonatas; David Walter, Frederick Zimmerman, Bach for the Young Bass Player;

Orchestral Literature - Excerpts from the standard repertoire utilizing techniques being studied

Technique Exercises - Scales and Arpeggios using John Chiego's method of Uniform Fingering Applications

Basic bowing techniques such as detache, slurred, string crossings, marcato, etc.

Emphasize correct body and hand positions

Proper technique of tone production

Emphasis during the first year is on learning the performance techniques of the instrument correctly and expressing oneself musically.

### Sophomore Year:

Study material - Franz Simandl, New Method for the Double Bass, Book 1, part 2

Supplemental - George Bornoff, Patterns in Position, Samuel Applebaum, Orchestral Bowing Etudes

Solo Repertoire – Antonio Vivaldi, Sonatas; David Walter, The Melodious Bass (continued); Saint Saens, The Elephant; Milton Weinstein, Contemporary Modal Solos; Antonio Capuzzi, Concerto in F Major for Double Bass; Orchestral Literature - Oscar Zimmerman (editor), Complete Bass Parts of Selected Works of J.S. Bach, emphasis is on the Baroque Style

Technique exercises - Scales and Arpeggios - 2 octaves, minor modes

Shifting exercises

Bowing exercises such as spiccato, staccato, etc.

**Student Recital Performance is desired if student is sufficiently advanced.**

### Junior Year:

Study material - Franz Simandl, New Method for the Double Bass, Book 1, part 3 (bowing studies); Barry Green, Fundamentals of Double Bass Playing

Supplemental studies - Franz Simandl, 30 Studies for String Bass; Frederick Zimmerman, A Contemporary Concept of Bowing Techniques for the Double Bass

Solo Repertoire – Henry Eccles, Sonata in g minor; Paul Hindemith, Sonata for Double Bass and Piano; Karl Ditters von Dittersdorf, Concerto in E (D) Major; Domenico Dragonetti, Concerto in A (G) Major

Orchestral Literature - Oscar Zimmerman (editor) The Complete Bass Parts of Mozart, Haydn and Weber. Emphasis is on the Classical Style

Technique exercises - Scales and arpeggios 2 octaves, major and minor using alternative fingerings and extensions

Bowing using basic techniques refined and applied to more demanding orchestral and solo literature

Thumb position - introductory exercises

**Junior Recital**

**Senior Year:**

Study Materials - Franz Simandl, New Method for the Double Bass, Book 1, part 4; New Method for the Double Bass, Book II (thumb position exercises); Barry Green Fundamentals of Double Bass Playing

Supplemental studies - J. Hrabě, 86 Etudes for String Bass; W. Sturm 110 Studies, Vol. 1; Frederick Zimmerman, A Contemporary Concept of Bowing Techniques for the Double Bass

Solo Repertoire - Oscar Zimmerman, Solos for the Double Bass Player; Serge Koussevitsky, Concerto for Double Bass; Giovanni Bottesini, Elegy and Tarantella; Bottesini, Concerto #2 in b (a) minor; Johann Sebastian Bach, Suites for Solo Cello #1 & #3

Orchestral Literature - Oscar Zimmerman (editor) The Complete Bass Parts of 36 Overtures

Chamber Music – As needed

**Senior Recital**

**Graduate Curriculum:** Determined on a case-by-case basis