THE STATUS OF CONTRABASS INSTRUCTION AT
SELECTED COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES IN THE UNITED
STATES OF AMERICA

D.M.A. DOCUMENT

Presented in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the
Degree Doctor of Musical Arts in the
Graduate School of The Ohio State University

By

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* * * * *

The Ohio State University
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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this document is to analyze current trends in contrabass pedagogy at colleges and universities in the United States of America.

Before this century, the contrabass was considered to be merely an accompanimental instrument. Except for an occasional solo line in some orchestral and chamber works, the melodic capability of this instrument was largely ignored by major composers. The voice of the solo contrabass emerged in various styles of music during the twentieth-century and many new approaches, methods, techniques, and sounds have been developed. Most college students of the contrabass are now required to give full solo recitals before they graduate. In order to better understand these expectations, a questionnaire was sent to contrabass instructors at selected colleges and universities in the United States of America.

Four-hundred-eighty-nine questionnaires were sent to contrabass instructors at colleges and universities in The United States of America at
the beginning of the 1996-97 academic year. One-hundred-twenty-nine final responses were received by June 30th, 1997. The questionnaire focused on contrabass pedagogy, student opportunities and program requirements.

The results show the Simandl and Rabbath methods to be most favored. While some instructors choose to teach exclusively the French or German bow, most are willing and able to teach both. More than half of the pedagogues teach the use of the thumb in the lower positions, extended fingerings, and pivot fingerings; less than half teach the use of the third finger separate from the fourth in the lower positions. While only 47% of students occasionally record their lessons, 60% of instructors believe their students record practice sessions. Over 90% of the teachers advise their students to practice in front of a mirror and with a metronome. Recital requirements average between one and two full recitals for BA, BM, MA, MM, and Ph.D. degrees; MFA and AD degrees averaged between two and three recitals while the DMA averaged 3.22 recitals. Eighty-seven percent of the respondents require a jury or orchestral board for their students.
Dedicated to Monica and Ariel Leavitt
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Grateful acknowledgment is made to my bass instructors who continued to encourage my abilities as a performer and a teacher. To Virginia Bodman for planting the seeds of my first three years of contrabass instruction. To Peter Dominguez who continued my technical training while opening my ears to jazz repertoire. To my mentor, Bert Turetzky, who gave me musicianship, confidence, and purpose. To Barry Green who made me aware of the inner approach to music. To Al Laszlo who focused on the fine detail work of sound production. To Paul Robinson, whose dedication and confidence in my abilities, helped guide me through the completion of the DMA degree. To François Rabbath whose love of music and people never ceases to amaze me.

I am thankful to Marshall Haddock who gave me sound advice and musical challenges that made me grow as an orchestral musician.

I wish to thank David Butler for his support, editorial assistance, and vast knowledge of doctoral documents and surveys.

Finally, I would like to thank David Dawes for his help with data processing.
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PUBLICATIONS


FIELDS OF STUDY

Major Field: Music

Minor Field: Music History and Theory

Cognate: Jazz Studies

Specialties: Music Performance and Education, The Inner Game of Music
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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

The twentieth-century has proved to be a period of significant change for the contrabass. It has evolved from mere accompanimental status to acknowledgment of its solo capabilities. One twentieth century contrabass performer, Bertram Turetzky, has inspired over 300 solo works for this instrument, which alone more than doubles the entire solo repertoire for the contrabass before this century. While there are few bassists who could be considered as soloists before 1900, there are now several who are solo artists.

In this century, the contrabass has taken on several names and continues to thrive in various genres of music. It is known as the string bass as opposed to the brass bass or tuba; the acoustic or upright bass as opposed to the electric bass; the double bass or contrabass (or kontrabass) viol in orchestral literature - an instrument playing lower than the bass viol (which has a range similar to that of the cello). It is analogous to the double (or contra-) bassoon; which of course does not usually “double” the bassoon line.

In the early part of this century the string bass took the role of the tuba and bass sax and has blossomed in jazz as both a solo and accompanying
instrument. The acoustic bass has regained favor in today’s popular music, particularly in acoustic or “unplugged” concerts and recordings.

**Statement of the Method, and Purpose**

During this period of significant change, there has emerged a large repertoire of methods and techniques for approaching bass pedagogy. There seems to be much controversy regarding how to hold, perform, and teach this instrument.

A questionnaire was sent to all college and university bass instructors in the USA who are listed in the 1995 issue of the *Directory of music faculties in colleges and universities, U.S. and Canada*, which included 585 persons listed as part-time or full-time instructors of contrabass. All recipients received the same questionnaire, accompanying letter, and a stamped return envelope.

The purpose of this survey was to begin to understand where bass instruction in higher education was heading during the 1996-97 academic year. The following areas of bass pedagogy were questioned to determine what teaching methods, techniques, performance opportunities and student obligations were being implemented:

1. What experience does the instructor have as a performer and educator?
2. What ensembles are available for the student and will a bass be provided if needed?

3. What method books are being used and how does the instructor rate them?

4. Does the instructor limit the choice of bow?

5. What left hand techniques are taught?

6. What materials are suggested for use during student practice time?

7. How many solo obligations does the student need to meet to complete the major program?

**Definition of Terms**

The following terms are used in this discussion:

**Extended Fingering** - The movement of stretching at least one finger beyond the regular hand position while leaving at least one finger stationary.

**Fingerboard** - The ebony or rosewood piece attached to the neck of the bass. When moving "up" the fingerboard, the hand moves towards the floor. It is called "up" because the pitch is being raised.
**Finger Numbering** - The first finger is the index finger; the second finger is the middle finger; the third finger is the ring finger (not traditionally used by itself until the upper position); and the fourth finger is the little finger.

**French Bow** - A stick with a frog more closely resembling that of the cello bow and is held from above the stick.

**German Bow** - A stick which is shorter than the French bow and has a larger frog that is gripped from the side, which more closely resembles the gamba grip.

**Jury** - A semi-formal performance by the student for selected faculty members for the purpose of recognizing the progress of the student.

**Master Class** - An organized class of bassists who perform for, and learn from each other. This class is lead by the bass instructor.

**Mean** - The sum divided by the number of responses.

**Orchestral Board** - A selection of musical excerpts which are taken from orchestral works and performed unaccompanied by the student for selected faculty members.
**Partial** - One of the musical tones produced from the fundamental upwards through the entire overtone series. The first partial is the fundamental. The second partial is the first overtone or one-half of the vibrating string.

**Pivot Fingering** - The movement of all of the fingers in one direction while the thumb remains stationary.

**Regular Lower Hand Position** - Having the space of a minor second between the first and second fingers, and another minor second between the second and fourth fingers in the lower positions.

**Shifting** - The movement of the whole left hand up or down the fingerboard.

**Standard Deviation** - The absolute value of the square root of the variance.

**Upper and Lower Positions** - The upper positions are above the second partial (the first harmonic) and the lower positions are below the second partial.

**Variance** - The average of the sum of the difference between the values and the mean squared.
Limitation of the Study

This study was limited to bass instructors who teach at colleges and universities in the USA and who were listed in the 1996 Directory of music faculties in colleges and universities, U.S. and Canada.
CHAPTER 2

METHOD

2.1 Procedure

In June of 1996, the investigator examined the Dissertation Abstracts on line at the Cincinnati Public Library. The following data were ascertained from the database: “bass” had 1,094 records; “double bass” had 101 records; “string bass” had 79 records; “contrabass” had 36 records.

In July of 1997, the records were rechecked at the Cincinnati Public Library. At this point: “bass” had 1181 records from 1937-97; “double bass” had 109 records from 1962-96; “string bass” had 87 records from 1955-96; “contrabass” had 38 records from 1982-96.

None of these records contained information regarding questionnaires on bass instruction at colleges or universities. The lack of information in this area of bass pedagogy inspired the investigator to work on this project.

*The directory of music faculties in colleges and universities, U.S. and Canada,*
is published semi-annually by the College Music Society. The 1995 list includes 608 bass instructors; 355 taught only bass while 253 taught bass and another subject.

Of the 608 bass instructors in the 1995 listing, 585 of them were teaching in the U.S. Of those 585 instructors, 489 were sent a questionnaire (a copy can be found in Appendix A), an accompanying letter (a copy can be found in Appendix B), and a stamped return envelope; the other 96 were not sent one because they were either teaching at other institutions and received a questionnaire there (their name was listed more than once) or the institution had more than one listing for bass instructor (in which case the bass instructor not teaching at another institution was chosen).

2.2 The Questionnaire

A copy of the questionnaire can be found in Appendix A. Several questions asked for general information about the musical institution, including: the name; number of faculty; scholarship money; ensembles available; number of basses owned; and recital/jury requirements. Other questions emphasized the musical background and pedagogical practices of the bass instructor.

One-hundred-twenty-nine questionnaires were filled out and returned to the investigator during the 1996-97 academic year. The data was then entered into a database during the summer of 1997.
CHAPTER 3

ANALYSIS OF THE DATA

3.1 Description of Participating Institutions

Of 489 possible respondents, 129 completed, or mostly completed, questionnaires and returned them to the investigator.

The following statistics were based on responses to the questions. Not all questionnaires were fully filled out. Therefore, sums of responses do not necessarily add up to the total number of questionnaires received.

3.2 Music Faculty and Scholarship Statistics

The total number of full-time music faculty teaching at the 109 responding institutions was 2,591. The mean was 23.77 and the standard deviation was 21.01. The total number of part-time music faculty teaching at the 100 responding institutions was 1,566. The mean was 15.66 and the standard deviation was 13.06. Figure 1 shows a graph of the total numbers of full-time and part-time faculty. Figure 2 shows the average numbers of full-time and
part-time faculty.

Figure 1: Total numbers of full-time and part-time faculty.

Figure 2: Average numbers of full-time and part-time faculty.

Of the 128 respondents, 77% of institutions (a total of 99) gave scholarship money to at least some of their bass students during the 1996-97 school year.
Figure 3 shows the total numbers of institutions that offer and do not offer scholarship money.

Figure 3: Total numbers of institutions that offer and do not offer music scholarships.

3.3 Bass Faculty Background

Of the 129 respondents, 84% of bass instructors (a total of 108) had a major emphasis in bass performance/education. Respondents giving a negative response to this question were either cello instructors or had a general music education background. Figure 4 shows a graph of the total numbers of bass instructors with and without bass performance as their major field.
Figure 4: Total numbers of bass instructors with and without bass performance as their major field.
The numbers of bass instructors, of the 129 respondents, with specific degrees and performance emphasis is shown in Table 1 and Figure 5.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Degree Type</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total number BA</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total number BM</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total number MA</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total number MM</td>
<td>66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total number MFA</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total number AD</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total number DMA</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total number Ph.D.</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total number Soloist</td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total number Orchestral performers</td>
<td>94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total number Jazz performers</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1: Numbers of bass instructors with specific degrees and performance emphasis.
Figure 5: Numbers of bass instructors with specific degrees and performance emphasis.

The total number of bass students taught per week at the 124 responding institutions was 1,013. The mean was 8.17 and the standard deviation was 5.87.

From the 64 respondents, a total of 948 students were taught to either sit, stand, or do either while performing. The total number of students who are taught to play while sitting is 190 or 20% (with a standard deviation of 4.36); the total number taught to play while standing is 354 or 37% (with a standard deviation of 3.67); and 404 or 43% are taught to play while either sitting or standing (with a standard deviation of 5.70). While standing only appears
nearly two-times as often as sitting, only having the flexibility of teaching students in both positions seems to be considered the best option. Some respondents included unsolicited comments:

1) “If they stand I make them sit and if they sit I make them stand.”
2) “All of my students do both.” (2 listings)
3) “All of my students sit.”

Figure 6 shows the total numbers of students who are taught per week and who sit, stand, or are able to do both while playing the contrabass.

![Graph showing total students taught per week, students who sit while playing, students who stand while playing, and students who do both.]

Figure 6: Total numbers of students taught per week and who play while sitting, standing, or can do either.

Of the 129 respondents, 69% of bass instructors (a total of 89) kept written records of the students’ progress. Some comments regarding not keeping written records cited knowledge of the students’ progress. Figure 7 shows the numbers of written records kept or not.
Figure 7: Numbers of physical records kept or not.

Of the 129 respondents, 44% of bass instructors (a total of 57) either play, teach, or play and teach the electric bass. This number reflects not only jazz and popular instruction, but also contemporary music that includes the electric bass. Figure 8 shows the numbers of instructors who do or do not play/teach electric bass.
Figure 8: Numbers of instructors who do or do not play/teach electric bass.

Of the 127 respondents, the total years of teaching experience at a particular institution was 1,307.5. Instructors possessed, on average, 10.3 years of experience at their institution. The standard deviation was 9.25. Future studies might also include number of years as a bassist and as a teacher in general.

3.4 Ensembles

Of the 129 institutions represented in this study, 94% offer a student orchestra. There are traditionally eight bassists in an orchestral section. Many of those institutions with too many bassists for the demand use a rotation system so that all of their students will have the opportunity to play in an orchestra.
Of the 129 institutions represented in this study, 92% offer a jazz ensemble. Both big band and small combo jazz ensembles are essential for any jazz program. Jazz ensembles typically include one bassist.

Of the 129 institutions represented in this study, 81% offer chamber music to their students. Although the bass was not used very often in chamber music before the twentieth century, chamber music benefits the bass student by developing listening skills and knowledge of form, styles, and repertoire in a smaller setting than orchestra. Typically there is only one bassist in a chamber ensemble.

Although bass ensemble can be taught to as little as two bassists and up to a large number of bassists in one ensemble, of the 129 respondents, only 51% gave their students an opportunity to play in bass ensemble. Many respondents complained of not having enough serious students to offer a bass ensemble. Many bass instructors use master class time to teach bass ensemble while others offer it as a separate class. Table 2 and Figure 9 show the numbers of ensembles offered from the possible 129 respondents.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Students can play in student orchestra</td>
<td>121</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students can play in chamber group</td>
<td>104</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students can play in jazz ensemble</td>
<td>119</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students can play in bass ensemble</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>63</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2: Numbers of institutions that offer and do not offer various ensembles.
Master class is important for several reasons: 1) it gives the instructor an opportunity to present material to the whole bass studio at once; 2) students observe technical and musical aspects of bass playing; 3) students are generally encouraged to give critiques of their own as well as their colleagues' performances; 4) it develops stage presence; 5) and it gives the bassists an opportunity to get to know each other socially as well as professionally.

Of the 122 respondents, 89 (73%) offered master class. Of those instructors who offered master classes, 37 taught weekly, 9 taught monthly, and 43 taught
periodically. Table 3 and Figure 10 show the time period breakdown of numbers of instructors who offer master classes.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total number instructors who conduct master classes</td>
<td>89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instructors who conduct weekly master classes</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instructors who conduct monthly master classes</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instructors who conduct periodic master classes</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3: Time period breakdown of the numbers of instructors who offer master classes.

![Bar chart](chart.png)

Figure 10: Time period breakdown of the numbers of instructors who offer master classes.

In order to participate in an ensemble, the student must have access to a bass. Most institutions own several upright basses. The total number of upright
basses owned by the 129 responding institutions was 707; 95% of institutions (a total of 123) owned at least one bass. The mean number of basses owned was 5.89. The standard deviation was 4.92. Figure 11 shows the numbers of institutions that do and do not own basses.

![Graph showing numbers of institutions that do and do not own basses.]

Figure 11: Numbers of institutions that do and do not own basses.

3.5 Method Books

Of the 129 respondents, 88% of bass instructors (a total of 113) require their students to study a method book. A method book takes the student from the first stage of playing to an advanced level. This is different from a technique book, which is typically for the more developed player. Figure 12 shows the numbers of instructors who do and do not require a method book for their students.
The following alphabetized contrabass method book list contains information taken from respondents who use these materials as part of their instruction for students. Full titles, and publication data are indexed in the References section. If a listing number does not follow the method title, then there was only one listing:

1) Bellson
2) Bille (25 listings)
3) Bottesini (2 listings)
4) Brown (2 listings)
5) Grodner
6) Karr (2 listings)
7) Montag (13 listings)
8) “My own”¹ (7 listings)
9) Nanny (42 listings)
10) Rabbath (48 listings)
11) Rollez (10 listings)
11) Reid - The Evolving Bassist (4 listings)
12) Richmond
13) Shar - The Improviser's Bass Method
14) Simandl (95 listings)
15) Streicher (6 listings)
16) Suzuki
17) Vance (16 listings)
18) York Publications

The Simandl method is the most popular method by 47 listings over Rabbath (second highest) and 53 over Nanny (third highest). One of the reasons for this popularity could be that in the United States, the Simandl method is considered to be “the bible of bass methods;” most early twentieth-century American bassists were taught from this method and continued to use it for their students. Another reason could be that Simandl is relatively inexpensive and the complete method has only two volumes.

The following quotes are taken from respondents who use specific contrabass method books. The method books are alphabetized and the quotes under

¹“My own.” Refers to instructors who use their own materials for bass instruction.
each author heading are listed in order of the largest number of a specific significant word. If the number of significant words are the same, then they are listed alphabetically and then from shortest to longest quote. Significant words are taken from the respondent and determined by the investigator as to their descriptive values as they relate to the method books; these words are underlined. The words “etudes,” “scales,” and “arpeggios” may not be significant because they were prompted in the questionnaire.

Regarding Bille:

1) “Bille for etudes”
2) “Bille for scales and etudes”
3) “Etudes, scales, and arpeggios are included.”
4) “Bille has plenty of etudes in each position.”
5) “Bille for lower position etudes which are more melodic.”
6) “Bille has a graduated course of study covering etudes, harmonics, and thumb position.”
7) “Bille is good for the upper position (8va).”
8) “Bille for scales and arpeggio”
9) “Bille for bowing variations”
10) “Bille for bowing, left hand, all around good book”
11) “Bille for music”
12) “Bille for concerto-like pieces in all keys (VOL. III) and musicality”
13) “Bille for variety”
14) “It works for me.”
15) “Bille is most easily available”
16) “Bille for orchestral playing; styles and tempi”
17) “It helps their intonation and gives them sound patterns of fingerings.”

Repeated significant terms from the 17 pedagogues who use the Bille method are: 6 for etudes; 4 for positions; 3 for scales; 2 for arpeggios; 2 for bowing; and 2 for music. Any other significant term was used only one time.

Regarding Brown:
1) “Brown for jazz technique”

Regarding Grodner:
1) “Grodner for double-stops as a support for playing Bach”

Regarding Karr:
1) “Karr for beginners”
2) “Karr books 2 and 3 have excellent exercises, duets, and the narrative explains what each exercise is working on.”

Regarding Montag:
1) “Montag for scales and etudes”

Regarding Nanny:
1) “Nanny for bow exercises”
2) “Nanny’s several volumes encompass the best systematic system of bowing, shifting, etc.”

3) “It develops the left hand in particular.”

4) “Nanny for left hand technique” (2 listings)

5) “Nanny for etudes” (2 listings)

6) “Nanny for reading and slow learning”

7) “Nanny for scales and arpeggios” (2 listings)

8) “Nanny teaches across the board (jazz students).”

9) “I alternate both Nanny and Simandl for variety but each student uses only one.”

Repeated significant terms from the 9 instructors who implement the Nanny method are: 2 for bow; and 2 for left hand. Any other significant term was used only one time.

Regarding Rabbath:

1) “Rabbath for scales and arpeggios” (4 listings)

2) “Rabbath for scales, arpeggios, and stretching (fingers)"

3) “Rabbath for fluid movement and scales in the upper positions”

4) “Rabbath for etudes, scales across the board (strings), and pivot"

5) “Rabbath for positions, pivot, bowing, scales, and extended techniques.”

6) “Rabbath book 2 for etudes and finger exercises; book 3 for scales and arpeggios”

7) “Rabbath for extended fingering"
8) “Rabbath for modern approach to finger problems”
9) “Rabbath uses the entire fingerboard sooner but confuses some students.”
10) “Rabbath for facility all over the fingerboard and use of tunes instead of etudes”
11) “Rabbath for technique”
12) “Rabbath is good for technical development.”
13) “Rabbath is good for intermediate to advanced students (left hand fluency, rhythmic training, extended techniques).”
14) “Rabbath for playing across strings”
15) “Rabbath to follow up Vance and supplement to Simandl”

Repeated significant terms from the 15 respondents who use the Rabbath method are: 9 for scales; 6 for arpeggios; 6 for finger; 4 for technique; 2 for etudes; 2 for positions; and 2 for strings. Any other significant term was used only one time.

Regarding Reid:
1) “Reid builds bass lines”
2) “Reid for jazz” (2 listings)

Regarding Simandl:
1) “Simandl for reading etudes”
2) “Simandl etudes are melodic.”
3) “Simandl for scales and etudes”
4) “Simandl for etudes” (8 listings)
5) “Simandl for foundation studies (etudes)”
6) “Simandl for etudes and musical training”
7) “Simandl for etudes, intervals, and bowing”
8) “Simandl for etudes but I adjust fingerings”
9) “Simandl for logical presentation and etudes”
10) “Simandl for etudes and positions” (2 listings)
11) “Simandl for understanding fingerboard and etudes”
12) “Simandl for etudes and thumb position” (2 listings)
13) “Simandl for basic technique and etudes” (2 listings)
14) “Simandl for etudes and methodical position studies”
15) “Simandl for positions, scales and etudes” (3 listings)
16) “I like the exercises as well as the etudes in Simandl.”
17) “Simandl for consistent studies (etudes) in each position”
18) “Especially considering the level of my students, Simandl offers a thorough systematic approach to the left hand and provides good etudes for many levels of advancement.”
19) “Simandl for positions and fingerings”
20) “Simandl for learning positions - music”
21) “Simandl for basic position work” (2 listings)
22) “Simandl to develop positions and rudiments of music.”
23) “Simandl for organization of progressive position studies”
24) “Simandl for positions, intonation, and bowing” (2 listings)
25) “Simandl for scales and fingerings” (2 listings)
26) “Simandl for basic understanding of the fingerboard”
27) “Simandl for beginning students and low register tone”
28) “Simandl is appropriate for the level of students I have.”
29) “Students like Simandl (I don’t know why) and have requested it.”
30) “I alternate Nanny and Simandl for variety but each student uses only one.”
31) “It is well organized and good for various levels of players (students). The studies mainly focus on the right hand.”
32) “Simandl provides a student with the most complete training for the orchestra student (although it is dry and difficult to get through).
33) “Simandl for reading”
34) “Simandl for reading and slow learning”
35) “Simandl is good for reading skills (easy to hear sequences).”
36) “Simandl for technique”
37) “Simandl for left hand”
38) “It develops the left hand in particular.”
39) “It works for me.”
40) “Simandl does the job.”
41) “It is the method I used.”
42) “Simandl is really boring.”
43) “Simandl for organization”
44) “Best way to improve tone”
45) “Simandl is comprehensive”
46) “Simandl is most easily available”
47) “Simandl is standard at this institution.”
48) “Simandl gives a firm grounding for bass”
49) “Simandl for beginners (basic foundation)”
50) “Simandl is geared towards orchestral playing”
51) “Simandl for chromatic approach and note relationships”
52) “All students are electric except one who uses Simandl
53) “It’s what I used. It’s basic, fundamental, and thorough.”

Repeated significant terms from the 53 pedagogues who use the Simandl method are: 30 for etudes; 16 for position; 6 for finger; 6 for scale; 6 for student; 3 for bow; 3 for music; 3 for reading; 3 for technique; and 2 for left hand. Any other significant term was used only one time.

Regarding Streicher:

1) “Streicher is good for the thumb position (treble clef).”
2) “Streicher: positions, shifting, string crossing; a logical and progressive approach”
3) “Streicher is imaginative, stimulating, disciplined.”

Repeated significant terms from the 3 respondents who use the Streicher method are 2 for position. Any other significant term was used only one time.

Regarding Vance:

1) “I start quite a few beginners.”
2) “Vance for beginners (basic foundation)”

3) “Vance for beginners; to get them around the whole bass.”

4) “The students I get need extensive remedial work. Vance is an excellent set of six sequential volumes from beginners to the Dragonetti Concerto.”

5) “It helps their intonation and gives them sound patterns of fingerings.”

6) Vance for facility all over the fingerboard and the use of tunes instead of etudes”

7) “Vance for less advanced students”

8) “Vance for technique” (2 listings)

9) “Vance for scales, bowing, and etudes”

Repeated significant terms from the 9 instructors who use the Vance method are: 4 for beginners; 2 for finger; 2 for students; and 2 for technique. Any other significant term was used only one time.

Regarding York Publications:

1) “York for melodic and technical materials”

The following general quotes are taken from respondents who use their own pedagogical method books or did not list a method book:

General Quotes:

1) “I try to fit each method to each student.”
2) “I use the best material I know for each student.”
3) “All things depend on the students needs.” (2 listings)
4) “I use different materials for specific student needs.”
5) “I use any method book that has an effective approach to a problem faced by the student.”
6) “Each method causes the student to deal with multiple fingering patterns; visualize the fingerboard in different ways.”
7) “I use the materials for traditional fingerings, etudes, bowing, and various ideas (concepts).”
8) “I use my own scale and arpeggio materials.”
9) “Gannett - Phase Exercises for scales, arpeggios, intonation, left hand strength, and agility”
10) “I don’t like etudes, it’s just window dressing and mindless meandering that can cause harm. I like fundamental technique through scales, arpeggios, and bowing; then orchestral and solo work.”
11) “I use methods for comprehensive technical development.”
12) “My own develops technique from a harmonic/melodic/rhythmic approach.”
13) “Sight reading and ideas for soloing (Reid and Shar)”
14) “Each has strengths and all have weaknesses or quirks.”
15) “I use several sources, not written in books. We have an exercise routine prescribed by rote - A la Gary Karr; very effective.”
16) “I collect etudes, exercises in a notebook and photocopy as needed. They are in a prescribed order. I find bass pedagogy to be in the baby stage.”
Repeated significant terms from the 16 respondents who use their own method or materials are: 7 for student; 4 for finger; 3 for method; 3 for scales; 3 for technique; 2 for bow; 2 for etudes; and 2 for exercises. Any other significant term was used only one time.

The following bass technique books were listed even though they were not requested. For full title and publication data, these technique books are listed at the end of this document under References. If a listing number does not follow the method title, then there was only one listing:

1) Dr. Arthur Davis System for Double Bass
2) Findeissen
3) Flesch
4) Gale
5) Green (6 listings)
6) Hoag
7) Hrabe
8) Kreutzer
9) Portnoi
10) Storch-Hrabe (6 listings)
11) Sturm (2 listings)
12) Petracchi (5 listings)
13) Trumf
14) Zimmermann (5 listings)
The following quotes are taken from respondents regarding reasons for using a particular technique book:

1) “Davis for advanced student fingering, scales, etudes, and intervalic studies”

2) “Findeissen for advanced students and scale studies for technique and articulations”

3) “Flesch for scale system”

4) “Gale provides systematic and comprehensive materials for the beginning and intermediate players (students).”

5) “Green for basics”

6) “Green for technique” (2 listings)

7) “Green for bowing technique (especially off the string)”

8) “Hoag to stretch the ear”

9) “Kreutzer for left hand”

10) “Petracchi for exercises and etudes”

11) “Petracchi for thumb position” (5 listings)

12) “Petracchi helps their intonation and gives them sound patterns of fingerings.”

13) “Portnoi for thorough fundamentals”

14) “Storch-Hrabe for virtuosity”

15) “Storch-Hrabe for music and left hand”

16) “Storch-Hrabe for technique and stamina”

17) “Storch-Hrabe for bow control and rhythm”
18) “Sturm for phrasing”
19) “Sturm for right hand”
20) “Trumf has a clear format for routine. It's comprehensive and well defined.”
21) “Zimmermann for string crossing”
22) “Zimmermann for bowing” (3 listings)

From the method books listed in the questionnaire (and including the Bille method), the following are the total number of respondents for each method that gave a rating on a scale of 1-10 where 1 was the lowest rating and 10 was the highest: 13 submitted ratings for Montag; 42 submitted ratings for Nanny; 48 submitted ratings for Rabbath; 10 submitted ratings for Rollez; 95 submitted ratings for Simandl; 21 submitted ratings for Streicher; 20 submitted ratings for Bille. Table 4 and Figure 13 show the total ratings for each method while Table 5 and Figure 14 show the average ratings for each method based on a 1-10 scale (1 = lowest, 10 = highest).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Method</th>
<th>Total Rating</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Montag</td>
<td>59</td>
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<tr>
<td>Nanny</td>
<td>259</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rabbath</td>
<td>350</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rollez</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Simandl</td>
<td>670</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Streicher</td>
<td>134</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bille</td>
<td>147</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4: Total ratings based on a 1-10 scale (1 = lowest, 10 = highest).
Figure 13: Total ratings for each method based on a 1-10 scale (1 = lowest, 10 = highest).

Table 5: Average ratings for each method based on a 1-10 scale (1 = lowest, 10 = highest).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Method</th>
<th>Average Rating</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Montag</td>
<td>4.54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nanny</td>
<td>6.17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rabbath</td>
<td>7.29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rollez</td>
<td>3.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Simandl</td>
<td>7.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Streicher</td>
<td>6.38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bille</td>
<td>8.16</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Figure 14: Average ratings for each method based on a 1-10 scale (1 = lowest, 10 = highest).

3.6 Bows

28% of bass instructors perform with the German bow, while 57% use the French bow.

23% teach only French bow, while 3% teach only German. Table 5 and Figure 15 show the numbers of instructors out of 128 who perform and teach with German, French, or both bows.
Perform with a German bow 36
Perform with a French bow 73
Perform with both 19
Teach German bow 4
Teach French bow 29
Teach both 95

Table 6: Numbers of instructors who perform and teach with German, French, or both bows.

Figure 15: Numbers of instructors who perform and teach with German, French, or both bows.

3.7 Left Hand Technique

The use of the thumb on the fingerboard in the lower positions (below the first
partial) is becoming more acceptable. This technique gives the bassist the opportunity to play larger intervals without shifting. While this technique was rarely used before the second half of this century, more bassists are now using it. Out of the 125 responses to this question, 61% (a total of 76) use the thumb in the lower positions. Commentary received for this question was arranged in most positive to most negative order and is displayed below:

1) “yes, a lot”
2) “yes, much of the time”
3) “yes, but not in scale studies”
4) “yes, 1/2 step below regularly but further is rare”
5) “yes, for warm-up exercises”
6) “yes, advanced”
7) “yes, occasionally” (2 listings)
8) “yes, sometimes” (2 listings)
9) “yes, but not often”
10) “yes, but seldom”
11) “yes, but rarely”
12) “yes, when all else fails”
13) “no, rare”
14) “no, but considering”

While the percentages indicate a positive response, the comments seem to indicate controversy. For example numbers 11 and 13 use the term “rarely”
and "rare" respectively but marked opposite answers for the questionnaire ("yes" and "no" respectively). These comments lead one to believe that the above percentages are not so accurate. Figure 16 shows the numbers of instructors who teach and do not teach the use of the thumb below the second partial.

![Bar Chart]

Figure 16: Numbers of instructors who teach and do not teach the use of the thumb below the second partial.

Many bassists complain that extended fingerings damage the hand. However, several instructors contend that if the bassist has a large enough hand, this technique is invaluable for certain passages. Out of the 127 respondents, 69% (a total of 87) teach extended fingerings. Commentary received for this question is put in most positive to most negative order and is displayed below:

1) "yes, introductory"
2) "yes, from D up"
3) “yes, advanced” (2 listings)
4) “yes, for more advanced students” (2 listings)
5) “yes, sometimes” (2 listings)
6) “yes, sparingly”
7) “yes, only when needed”
8) “yes, only in emergencies”
9) “yes, but seldom”
10) “no, seldom”
11) “no, not as a rule but sometimes”
12) “no, rare”
13) “no, except when needed”
14) “no, except a few orchestral passages”
15) “no, most players hands too small”

While the percentages indicate a positive response by more than 2 to 1, comments (as in the previous technique) seem to indicate controversy. For example: answers to items 9 and 10 use the same descriptive adverb but the response to the questionnaire had opposite answers. Figure 17 shows the numbers of instructors who teach and do not teach extended fingerings.
Out of 127 responses, 75% (a total of 95) teach pivot fingerings. Pivot fingering is a technique that is emphasized in the Rabbath Method. The pivot is a movement of the left hand up or down the fingerboard while the thumb remains stationary (stays in the same position). Of the 95 instructors who teach pivot fingerings, 46 of them also gave a rating on a 1-10 scale (1 = lowest, 10 = highest) for the Rabbath Method. Comments:

1) “yes, extensively”
2) “yes, if the hand is flexible the technique is solid”
3) “yes, introductory”
4) “yes, advanced” (2 listings)
5) “yes, when called for”
6) “yes, sometimes” (4 listings)
7) “yes for more advanced students”
8) “yes, when necessary”
9) “yes, but only as an addition to the basic hand position”
10) “yes, rarely”
11) “no, except some orchestral excerpts”
12) “no, not really”

While the percentages indicate a positive response by almost 3 to 1, the comments (as in the previous two techniques) seem to indicate controversy. For example: answers to items 10 and 11 both indicate rare use and limited use but responded to the questionnaire with opposite answers. Figure 18 shows the numbers of instructors who teach and do not teach pivot fingerings.

![Bar chart showing numbers of instructors who teach and do not teach pivot fingerings.]

**Figure 18: Numbers of instructors who teach and do not teach pivot fingerings.**

Several bass instructors seem to be realizing the advantages of the modern techniques of extended and pivot fingering systems. However, the use of the third finger in the lower positions is not as popular a concept. Out of the 127 respondents, only 39% (a total of 49) teach the use of the third finger separate
from the fourth in the lower positions. Comments for this question are as follows:

1) "yes, Davis System"
2) "yes, especially when the interval is w-h; 1-3-4"
3) "yes, as replacement of second finger"
4) "yes, instead of second when more comfortable"
5) "yes, for extensions"
6) "yes, depends on the students hand size."
7) "yes, not early in their progress though"
8) "yes, in certain instances"
9) "yes, only near the octave"
10) "yes, on occasion"
11) "yes, occasionally"
12) "yes, sometimes"
13) "yes, when necessary"
14) "yes, but rarely" (4 listings)
15) "yes, for special situations"
16) "yes, but emergency use only"
17) "yes, for Mozart #39" (2 listings)
18) "no, not often"
19) "no, with some exceptions"
20) "no, but depends on hand size"
21) "no, except in some Rabbath scales"
22) "no, except F# when descending"
23) "no, bad for most hands"
24) "no, danger of hand damage too great"
25) "no, absolutely not"

Figure 19 shows the numbers of instructors who do and do not teach the use of the third finger in the lower positions.

![Bar chart showing numbers of instructors who do and do not teach the use of the third finger in lower positions]

Figure 19: Numbers of instructors who do and do not teach the use of the third finger in lower positions.

3.8 Materials for Student Practice

Of the 125 responses, 47% (a total of 59) of students record their lessons. Many students have tendencies to forget some of the instruction they received in the private bass lesson. By recording their lessons, they will be better able
to remember what to work on during their practice times. Comments:

1) “yes, some do” (3 listings)
2) “yes, sometimes” (2 listings)
3) “yes, sometimes, and periodically video taped”
4) “yes, on occasion”
5) “yes, but not often”
6) “no, but will start”
7) “no, wish they did”
8) “no, except in special situations”

Recording sessions should not be limited to lesson times. Practice times should also be included when possible. A higher percentage of bass instructors believe their students record their practice times. Out of 124 responses, 60% (a total of 74) of teachers believe their students record practice sessions. Many instructors suggest that their students record themselves but some advise against it because it can be very discouraging to hear all the mistakes (especially for the beginning students). Comments:

1) “yes, for mid-term grades”
2) “yes, particularly before juries”
3) “yes, I encourage it”
4) “yes, I advise” (2 listings)
5) “yes, some do” (3 listings)
6) “yes, sometimes”
7) “yes, on occasion” (2 listings)
8) “yes, occasionally”
9) “yes, hopefully”
10) “no, but I tell them to”
11) “no, not a requirement”
12) “no, except when told to do so - beginners don’t cope well”
13) “no, it causes discouragement”

Figure 20 shows the numbers of students who do and do not record their lessons or practice sessions.

![Bar chart showing numbers of students who do and do not record their lessons or practice sessions.]

Figure 20: Numbers of students who do and do not record their lessons or practice sessions.

If a video recording device is not available to the student for practice time, a mirror can be of value. Of the 127 responses to this question, an overwhelming 95% (a total of 121) of instructors require that their students
practice in front of a mirror. Comments:

1) “yes, absolutely”
2) “yes, for some problems” (2 listings)
3) “yes, suggest”
4) “yes, although I didn’t have one until my 30’s”
5) “yes, for scales mostly”
6) “yes, at times”
7) “yes, occasionally”
8) “yes, sometimes” (2 listings)

The use of the metronome can be invaluable to the beginning student as well as the professional bassist. Out of the 127 responses, 98% (a total of 125) of instructors advise their students to practice with a metronome. Comments:

1) “always” (4 listings)
2) “absolutely”
3) “especially with off-beats”
4) “sparingly but often with subdivision”
5) “yes, and a tuner”
6) “Yes, at first but they must become independent of it.”
7) “Yes, but not automatically all the time.”
8) “yes, but also without”
9) “yes, sometimes”
10) "yes, part time"

Figure 21 shows the numbers of teachers who advise students to practice with a mirror or metronome.

![Bar Chart]

Figure 21: Numbers of teachers who advise students to practice with a mirror or metronome.

3.9 Student Solo Obligations

Out of a 123 responses regarding recitals, Table 7 shows the total numbers of responses for recital requirements for each degree offered while Table 8 shows the average numbers of recitals required for each degree offered. Comments include programs not listed in the questionnaire as well as general statements regarding programs:
1) “BFA in performance”
2) “BME” (2 listings)
3) “BS in education”
4) “Performance Diploma”
5) “PB (Pedagogy)”
6) “Jr. - partial and Sr. - full recital”
7) “Three mock-auditions can substitute for one masters recital.”
8) “An orchestral board can count as one recital.”
9) “I recommend every two years but the school has no requirement”
10) “We give joint performances each semester.”
11) “0 but advise”
12) “only associates is offered but no recital.” (2 listings)
13) “I have all electric students that must take upright instruction.”
14) “no bass majors”
15) “NA” (2 listings)
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<tr>
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<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*For "1 recital" the degrees were: BME; Performance Diploma; PB (Pedagogy), BS in education.

For "2 recitals" the degree was: BFA in Performance.

Table 7: Total numbers of responses for recital requirements for each degree offered.

BA  -  1.34
BM  -  1.57
MA  -  1.69
MM  -  1.75
MFA -  2.1
AD  -  2.2
DMA -  3.22
Ph.D. - 1.4

Table 8: Average numbers of recitals required for each degree offered.
Of the 123 respondents, 87% require an orchestral board or jury for their programs. Comments:

1) “yes, orchestra jury of 1/2 hour (memorized)”
2) “yes, one each semester and before each recital”
3) “yes, one mock-audition every semester”
4) “yes, I do but the department does not.”
5) “yes, yearly juries are chosen by a jury”
6) “yes but only when the student is ready”
7) “yes but informal”
8) “no, but optional for high school or beginning students”
9) “no, just initial entrance requirements”
10) “no, not yet”
11) “no, because almost all of my students are electric with no experience”
12) “no bass majors”
CHAPTER 4

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

4.1 Summary

During this century, the contrabass has seen more solo literature than all of the other centuries combined. Many of these new works have demanded new techniques and helped create higher standards of contrabass performance.

The investigator based his conclusions on the results of the questionnaire sent to 489 bass instructors at colleges and universities in the USA listed in the 1996 *Directory of music faculties in colleges and universities, U.S. and Canada*. Usable responses were received from 129 bass instructors or 26% of the sample. Answers were sought to the following questions:

1. What experience does the instructor have as a performer and educator?

2. What ensembles are available for the student?

3. What method books are being used and how does the instructor rate them?
4. Does the instructor limit the choice of bow?

5. What left hand techniques are taught?

6. What materials are suggested for students to practice with?

7. How many solo obligations does the student need to meet for degree requirements?

It is hoped that the answers to these questions will help bass instructors improve the quality of their programs.

4.2 What is the experience of the instructor?

It seems reasonable to assume that the experience of the instructor directly relates to the quality of education of the bass student. In a ratio of more than 5:1, bass instructors have a background of bass performance/education. The sample shows that over half of these instructors have completed a master of music degree and just under a fifth of them have a doctoral degree. The average years taught at a particular institution was 10.3.

Out of 1,013 students' listed by the respondents, the average number of bass students for the 1996-97 academic year was about eight and keeping written
records of these students progress seems to be regarded as desirable. By more than 2:1 the respondents keep written records.

Slightly under half of the respondents either play or teach the electric bass.

4.3 What ensembles are available?

The quality, type, and number of ensembles made available to the student directly affects her/his future performance possibilities. Nearly all of the institutions reporting offered both orchestra and jazz ensembles. Both of these ensembles seem to be considered essential for bass performance opportunities.

4.4 What method and technique books are currently being implemented?

Method books are designed to take a student from the very first stage to an advanced level. Some of the reasons for using particular methods were the inclusion of etudes, scales, and arpeggios; which were prompted by the questionnaire. Other reasons included positions, bowing, styles, exercises, left hand, and organization.

The most popular method, used by nearly 2:1 of the sample, was Simandl's. It was used by 95 instructors out of 129. On a scale of 1-10, the average rating for Simandl was 7.1. The Rabbath method was second to Simandl (48
instructors) and rated slightly higher at 7.3; perhaps the Simandl method is 
used by more instructors because it has been around longer. The Nanny 
method placed third in use with 42 instructors using it and giving it a 6.2 rating. 
The methods by Streicher, Montag, and Rollez were used by less than one-
quarter of the sample; while the Streicher rated at 6.4, the other two rated less 
than 5. The most widely used method book not listed in the questionnaire was 
by Bille.

Technique books are essentially for the more advanced student; they focus on 
specific techniques to enhance those begun in method books. While 
technique books were not solicited by the questionnaire, many respondents 
listed them; perhaps the fine line of distinction between method and technique 
books is not clear to many bass instructors. The most widely used technique 
books cited by the respondents included Green, Storch-Hrabe, Petracchi, and 
Zimmermann. Unsolicited comments for technique books focused more on the 
right hand than did comments for the method books.

4.5 What techniques and materials are recommended for bass students?

While 57% of the instructors use the French bow for performance and 28% use 
the German bow, the remaining 15% perform with either one. Most of the 
instructors are willing to teach either bow.

Modern techniques tend to be more controversial than traditional techniques.
Unsolicited comments for the technical questions ranged from “yes, extensively” to “no, absolutely not.” Three of the four modern techniques (including extended fingerings, pivot fingerings, and use of the thumb in the lower positions) had just over 60% positive responses. Use of the third finger in the lower positions had just over 60% negative responses. All of these techniques still seem to be in the experimental stage. Future studies should continue to inquire about these techniques and should also include other technical questions such as: when shifting while moving across strings, do you go to the new string first or shift first?

Materials such as mirrors, metronomes, and recording devices (which can be used for immediate feedback) were highly recommended for student use by bass instructors; 95% of the sample responded favorably for the use of a mirror and 98% for the use of a metronome when practicing. Unsolicited comments for recording lessons were mostly positive. Although many instructors did not know if their students were recording their practice sessions, most hoped that they were. Positive unsolicited comments suggested recording lessons and practice sessions before particular events such as juries and mid-terms while negative comments felt that the student would become discouraged by listening to the sounds of the recordings.

4.6 What are some of the obligations that the student must meet to complete the major program?
The number of recitals required by institutions varied. While some only required one recital for a bachelor of arts degree, others required 4 recitals for the same degree.

Some comments for the recital requirements included programs offered that were not listed in the questionnaire, options the student could choose, and general commentary.

More than three-quarters of the respondents require orchestral boards or juries for their programs. One institution even requires students to have the orchestral board memorized.

4.7 Conclusions and recommendations.

The response from the questionnaire was 26% of the sample with a total number of 129 responses received. These responses were sent from bass instructors representing colleges and universities of all sizes (full time faculty averaging 23.77 with a standard deviation of 21 and part time faculty averaging 15.66 with a standard deviation of 13) from all over the United States. Most of these instructors are also performers with strong academic backgrounds. They instruct a total of 1,013 bass students who study bass at academic institutions. They make up a total of 1,307.5 years of experience at these specific institutions; and instructors often move from one institution to another, so it is recommended that future studies include the number of years
a bass instructor has taught at other institutions. Future studies should also include Canada and send a second request for response to potential respondents.

The experience level of a bass instructor directly affects the student. Performance background, academic study, and who the instructor studied bass with often dictates the teaching style, methods, techniques, and materials that the instructor uses. For example, 23% of the sample exclusively teach the French bow and 3% teach only the German bow to their students. This was either a bias that was learned from their experience or they simply did not take the time to learn how to teach the other bow; both bows have distinct advantages (generally French for finesse and German for power) and students should be made aware of these distinctions so that they can decide which bow is better for them.

Similar to the choice of bow, the choice of techniques should be tailored to the student. Certain physical aspects of the student should be considered for specific advanced techniques. Comments for using the thumb in the lower position (61% do teach and use this technique) were nearly all positive and even the two negative comments indicated usage. Comments for extended fingerings, which is used by 69% of teachers, was mostly conservative and included: “rare; only in emergencies; most players hands too small.” With only two exceptions, comments for pivot technique (used by 75% of instructors) was positive. The use of the third finger in the lower positions was the least
popular technique surveyed (39% use it); twenty-five comments were highly
diverse. Positive comments included use “as a replacement of the second
finger” while negative comments included “bad for most hands.” Studies are
recommended for physical make-up of the hands as they relate to traditional
and modern technique movements.

Method books seem to be popular (88% use them). The older Simandl
method is still used by most instructors (74%) but rated on a 1-10 scale (1 =
lowest, 10 = highest) at 7.05 (lower than both Rabbath and Bille). Future
studies should include the Bille method and the Xomehko (Russian) method
as part of the core of method books to be rated. A separate analysis of these
method books would be beneficial to bass instructors. It is also recommended
that technique books be included as a separate question from method books.

Method and technique books are used to help the student make progress in
the playing level. Instructors should keep written records of students’
progress; it is both responsible and professional. The sample seems to agree
by more than 2:1. The student should receive feedback of progress made
during each semester or quarter. This feedback should be given in more of a
detailed statement than a letter or number grade.

Ensembles enhance the level of student performance practice. The sample
shows that institutions offer many ensembles for bassists: 94% offer orchestra;
92% offer jazz ensemble; 81% offer chamber ensemble; and 51% offer bass
ensemble. Bass ensemble is a relatively new concept and repertoire for bass ensemble has grown in the last 30 years. Bass ensembles can include from two to a large number of bassists but more typically the number is from two to four. Bass ensemble provides an opportunity for students to collaborate in a noncompetitive environment. Having the experience of music making with colleagues encourages camaraderie and musicianship. It is recommended that wind ensemble be included in future studies.

Master class (also known as string seminar among other names) is important for the development of the aspiring bass student and can be used to conduct bass ensemble. These classes are taught by 73% of the 122 respondents and time periods are taught as follows: 37 weekly; 9 monthly; and 43 periodically.

The use of the mirror, recording devices, and metronome seems essential for students. While the use of a mirror for practice and lesson sessions is strongly favored (98% of instructors recommend), the use of a video camera seems more desirable. Too often the focus of attention by the performer becomes distracted while playing the bass. A video camera can be used for both video and audio feedback with a minimal amount of set-up time. In this age of technology, most institutions have media centers where recording equipment is available. Students should be encouraged to record their lessons (preferably video) to remind themselves of the details taught in the lesson. Students will have a better understanding of what they need to work on and make the appropriate changes in their practice habits if they can see and hear
themselves.

While it is essential to develop an internal pulse and have the ability to subdivide it, the metronome keeps the player honest. Even after a student gains confidence in her/his internal pulse, the metronome should be implemented on an occasional basis. The metronome should be used first on strong beats and then on weak beats. Students should also be able to subdivided the beat into basic divisions of two, three, and four. This will ultimately enable them to comprehend more complex rhythmic divisions.

Completing a major music program not only gives the student self confidence in his/her abilities as a musician but also earns the respect of her/his peers and instructors, which should gain him/her recommendations for prospective employment. It is recommended that future studies include the following programs for further research: BFA (bachelor of fine arts); BME (bachelor of music education); BS (bachelor of science); and performance diploma.

Holding a jury or orchestral board at least once a year should be required for all music majors. Of the 123 respondents, 87% require one or the other of these.

In conclusion, the investigator believes that this study has shown where bass pedagogy is at just before the turn of the twenty-first century. Ideally institutions should have experienced faculty with a variety of ensembles
available to the student. The bass instructor should adapt teaching techniques and methods to the students needs. Finally, students should have the resources they need to be the best players they can be.
LIST OF REFERENCES


APPENDIX A

QUESTIONNAIRE

1. Please state your name, the name of the institution which employs you, and your zip code.

2. Number of music faculty full time_____; part time_____.

3. Is bass performance/education your major field? _____.

4. Please check the following that applies to you: _BA. _BM. _MA. _MM. _MFA. _AD. _DMA. _PhD. _Soloist. _Orchestral Performer _Jazz Performer.

5. How many bass students per week did you teach during the 1996-97 academic year at the stated institution?

6. Do you keep physical records of each student's progress?

7. Does this institution offer any scholarship money to any of your current bass students?

8. Do you play and teach electric bass?

9. Do your students have the opportunity to play in a student orchestra?

10. Do your students have the opportunity to play in chamber music?

11. Do your students have the opportunity to play in jazz ensemble?

12. Do your students have the opportunity to play in bass ensemble?


14. How long have you been teaching at this institution?

15. Does this institution own any basses?

16. If the answer to question 15 is yes, how many basses does it own?
17. Do you require your bass students to study a method book?

18. If the answer to question 17 is yes, which bass method books do you use?

19. Please state briefly the reasons why you use each particular method book. For example: Simandl for etudes; Rabbath for scales and arpeggios.

20. Please give a rating on a scale of 1-10 (1 being the lowest rating and 10 being the highest rating) for each of the following method books which you have employed: __Montag. __Nanny. __Rabbath. __Rollez. __Simandl. __Streicher. __Other (please state name) ____________________

21. Do you perform with the German or French bow?

22. Do you teach the French or German bow?

23. Do you use the thumb in the lower positions (below the second partial)?

24. Do your students sit or stand when playing the bass? __Number who sit. __Number who stand. __Number who do both.

25. Do you teach extended fingerings?

26. Do you teach pivot fingerings?

27. Do you teach the use of the third finger separate from the fourth in the lower positions?

28. Do your students record their lessons? __ Practice sessions? __

29. Do you prescribe for your students to practice in front of a mirror?

30. Do you advise your students to practice with a metronome?

31. How many recitals do you require for each of the following degrees (please write in a number only for the degrees offered): __Associates. __BA. __BM. __MA. __MM. __MFA. __AD. __DMA. __PhD. __Other (please state programs) ____________________

32. Do you require an orchestral board or jury for any of the programs offered?
APPENDIX B

ACCOMPANYING LETTER

Dear Colleague

Enclosed with this letter is a questionnaire regarding current trends in bass pedagogy at colleges and universities in the United States. The answers from this survey will be part of my DMA document on classical bass methodologies (excluding technique and etude books). All of the answers will be compiled anonymously. After processing the answers to this questionnaire, I will submit the results to the International Society of Bassists for publication. The questions should be easy to answer and take approximately 10 minutes. I have enclosed a self addressed stamped envelope for the answers to the questionnaire. Please answer all of the questions to the best of your knowledge.

Thank you in advance for your participation,

Tod Leavitt