

ICA Clarinetfest Auxiliary Like-Instrument Questions

Did you participate in bass clarinet choir as a high schooler, a college student, or both?

I played in bass clarinet choir for college only

I participated in bass clarinet choir as a college student.

I only participated in bass clarinet choir as a college student, my school didn't quite have that many bass clarinets.

College Student

I participated in bass clarinet choir when I was in college.

A college student

As a college student

I participated in the bass choir as a college student.

I only participated in bass clarinet choir when I got to college.

Was this your first experience playing bass clarinet?

Not exactly my first but still definitely new to it!

No, this was not my first experience playing bass clarinet.

No, I started on bass clarinet my junior year of high school and have been ever since.

I started on bass clarinet NOT soprano clarinet in sixth grade!

My first experience playing bass clarinet happened the summer before my 8th grade year. I had asked to switch to bass clarinet the year before and wanted to learn the instrument over the summer. I checked out a bass clarinet, and got right to it. It took a bit of time to get used to the embouchure and air speed change, but once I got the hang of it I knew this was going to be my new main instrument.

No.

Yes.

No I have played bass clarinet before.

I have played bass clarinet for the 2 years I have been here at TAMUK. This includes Contrabass clarinet as well.

What convinced you to join the bass clarinet choir?

Expanding my horizon as a teacher and performer

Dr. VR, my love for bass clarinet, and recognition of the importance of teaching auxiliary clarinets to more students convinced me to join the bass clarinet choir.

Simply put, the bass clarinet.

The opportunity to be a part of such a unique and interesting ensemble comprised of auxiliary clarinets!

It was easier since we were all learning about what works for one another.

I joined bass clarinet choir because I was encouraged to, but I had fun in doing so.

I've been playing bass clarinet for 6-7 years, so I thought it was a fun opportunity.

Dr. VR had talked about how auxiliary clarinets can really help improve the fundamentals needed to successfully play the Bb clarinet.

I wanted an opportunity to play bass clarinet again.

It is always a pleasure to add more voices. Especially with an instrument like bass clarinet. There are a plethora of pieces and transcriptions for bass clarinet that make playing with others such a fun time.

Do you think it was easier to learn in a group?

I think learning in a group really helps you feel not alone and like it's ok to make mistakes

While I typically prefer leaning on a one-to-one basis, being in this group made it easier to learn fundamental concepts, as we all collaborated on providing examples of potential errors when playing or teaching bass clarinet.

I feel comfortable learning in a group, i feel like everyone is grounded and learning with each other.

In some ways learning was easier with a group because if I didn't understand something, it was likely someone else did and I could go to them for a different explanation of the subject. At some points however, I felt ready to move on to something else while the rest of group was still on the same page.

Yes because if I needed help I could just ask the person next to me.

Yes.

I don't think it was easier, although in a group you can witness different problems and learning from that is a great experience.

I do feel it was a fun experience to learn with others. Especially with the coachings over Zoom with the composer for Woof.

What were the biggest challenges?

Biggest challenge was that everything about my clarinet embouchure needed to be pumped up to 11 and bad habits really became apparent

The biggest challenges with performing in a bass clarinet choir are intonation and blending. Auxiliary clarinets are hard to tune, so making the necessary adjustments alongside the entire ensemble was challenging. Moreover, since a majority of the ensemble was new to bass clarinet, developing our ensemble sound and tone required extra attention.

I think just playing in a bigger group and getting use to it, and my role in such a group.

Listening and learning to blend.

I feel like the biggest challenge the bass clarinet choir faced was forming a mature ensemble sound where everyone sounds like they are proficient bass clarinet players.

I think the biggest challenge was air. For those that have played bass clarinet before we knew this instrument takes much more air than a Bb, but for those who have never played bass before it was a challenge.

The biggest challenge for me was getting all the notes to speak and having the right air support throughout the phrases (I always took a breath like every two measures)

The biggest problem would be getting rehearsal times with all members.

For me, it was having multiple independent parts in a 5 beat piece. But in the end it all lined up very well.

How has this experience helped you to teach bass clarinet or mentor other high school students?

I haven't had the chance to teach bass clarinet yet but I definitely feel a lot more prepared to do so 😊

Yes, this experience has helped me teach bass clarinet in a high school setting! Not only did we have the opportunity to work with high school students pre-pandemic, but we were able to watch and sit in with Dr. VR as she teaches bass clarinet to high school students. Being in this ensemble, I now have a better understanding of how bass clarinet and soprano clarinet are similar and how they are different.

It has provided some new insights into ways I can teach and lead other to being succes on bass or in a group.

It has helped by being able to identify problem areas that I had experienced within the same auxiliary ensemble and how to surpass those same problems.

This experience has given me a new perspective on what issues to expect and give attention to from someone who is new to the bass clarinet, even if they are proficient clarinet players. It helped me differentiate what issues have to do with the player as a musician, and what issues have to do with the player as a bass clarinet player.

This experience helped me teach bass clarinet better because no one really taught me bass, I learned on my own until I got to college. There were many tips and tricks that I picked up that will help me teach better in the future.

It has put me behind the bass clarinet and now I have learned the various common issues that beginning students will have that can be a little different from the Bb clarinet. Helping other students and seeing how other students solve issues gave new strategies and such that would prepare me to teach bass clarinet.

I feel that I am able to teach how to put air into the instrument as well as how to form the embouchure.

Any other comments you would like to add?

N/A

Performing and rehearsing with this ensemble has highlighted how important and beneficial it is for clarinetists to learn the auxiliary clarinets.

The ability to learn how to play the auxiliary instruments is based on three important factors that are not in any specific order. 1.) Eagerness to learn the auxiliary instrument 2.) quality of equipment ex: mouthpieces reeds 3.) instrument is in working order.

N/A

N/A

N/A

N/A

N/A

Did the TAMUK bass clarinet choir factor into your decision to attend TAMUK?

Most definitely. I remember first hearing about in high school, and the idea of multiple bass clarinets in a single ensemble, the idea was "tasty."