

MU 109B Part-Writing, Figured Bass, and Roman Numeral Analysis Reference List

1. Parallels

- a. **no parallel p8^{ves}, p5^{ths}, unisons**, or their compounds (// p12^{ths}, etc.)
check **every** voice-pair; be especially careful when root motion is by **step** (IV–V, V–vi, etc.)
- b. **no direct 5^{ths} or 8^{ves}** between the outer voices, unless the soprano moves by step
- c. **no consecutive p8^{ves}, p5^{ths}** (or their compounds) by contrary motion, e.g. 5–12, 15–8, etc.

2. Leading tone in minor (LT)

Remember to **raise the leading tone** for dominant-function chords (V and vii^o)

3. Spacing

adjacent upper voices (S/A, A/T) in chorale style must be **within an 8^{ve}**; bass and tenor normally within a 12th

4. Doublings—do not double any tendency tone, These include:

- a. the **leading tone** in V or vii^o (but OK to double in a iii chord, or to double the subtonic in general)
- b. any **chordal 7th** (N.B. a chord 7th is not necessarily a 7th over the bass)
- c. the **4th** over the bass in a $\frac{5}{4}$ chord or a $\frac{5}{2}$ chord (6th in a $\frac{5}{4}$ chord may occasionally be doubled)
- d. any **secondary leading tone** (such as #4 in V/V)

FORGET OTHER GENERAL DOUBLING “RULES” on pp. 237-8 of *MGTA* or that you may have heard (“double the bass” “don’t double the third” etc.) These are oversimplifications at odds with practice.

5. Resolution of tendency tones

- a. the leading tone in the soprano or bass must resolve up to the tonic unless:

- 1) it is part of the descending scale-fragment $\hat{1} - \hat{7} - \hat{6} - \hat{5}$, or
- 2) it resolves down a half step to become the 7th of the following chord

- b. a chordal 7th must resolve **down by step**

(see the one common exception on p. 260 (ex. 13.2.g) of *MGTA*)

- c. 4th of a $\frac{6}{4}$ or a $\frac{5}{4}$ chord must resolve **down by step** (in the same voice)

Any of these resolutions may be delayed by suspension; in this case the tendency tone will remain in the same voice-part and eventually resolve properly. But if a harmony is repeated, a tendency tone may exchange voices before resolving (in the new voice).

6. Unaccountable $\frac{6}{4}$ chords

The only proper contexts for $\frac{6}{4}$ chords are the cadential $\frac{6}{4}$, passing $\frac{6}{4}$, arpeggio $\frac{6}{4}$ and pedal (or neighbor) $\frac{6}{4}$. Do not use a $\frac{6}{4}$ unless it is one of these and is handled accordingly.

7. Melodic restrictions (= restrictions on horizontal intervals, in all parts, in chorale texture)

- a. **no melodic +2nd, +4th, or any other augmented interval** (dim. intervals are OK if they resolve inward)
- b. do not leap a 7th
- c. no leaps greater than an 8^{ve}
- d. do not leap to a dissonant tone

These restrictions apply to chorale style; they are often relaxed in instrumental writing.

8. Interpretation of figures

- a. Do not write notes not called for in the figures (such as a 3rd above the bass where only a 4th is indicated, or a 7th where none is indicated). The conventional abbreviations are exceptions (6 for $\frac{6}{3}$, etc.).
- b. Do not omit any note that is called for, or is understood by convention to be required (such as the 3rd over the bass in the figure 6 or $\frac{6}{5}$).

9. Analysis

- a. All roman numerals must reflect the chord **root** and **quality**
- b. All roman numerals must indicate a **recognized tonal function** (e.g. V/V rather than II)
(you must “order off the menu”)