

Concepts for the Music Theory Sections of the Graduate Preliminary Exam

Match term to definition, or be able to identify/label in a musical example

Traditional Harmony:

diatonic

chromatic

period

figured bass

mode mixture

progression

tonicization

modulation

prolongation:

- cadential six-four chord

- passing 6/4 chord

- neighbor 6/4 chord

- bass arpeggiation

- pedal tone

Non-Chord tones

neighbor tone

appoggiatura

changing tone

escape tone

anticipation

suspension

retardation

Diatonic chords

tonic (diatonic triad built on scale step 1)

supertonic (diatonic triad built on scale step 2)

mediant (diatonic triad built on scale step 3)

subdominant (diatonic triad built on scale step 4)

dominant (diatonic triad built on scale step 5)

submediant (diatonic triad built on scale step 6)

leading tone (diatonic triad built on scale step 7)

Functional Harmony/Harmonic function

- tonic function

- pre-dominant function

- dominant function (V, V7, vii and vii7 all have dominant function)

- secondary functions (related to tonicization, secondary dominant, etc.)

Harmonic cadences:

- Plagal cadence

- Authentic cadence

- Half cadence

- Deceptive cadence

Chord Substitutions: (you can substitute one similarly-constructed chord for another)

- I vi

- ii IV

- V vii (the "dominant 7" chord [V7 of the main diatonic key] is the union of both of these triads)

Diatonic pivot chord: moves from the original key to the new key (usually a closely-related key) by way of a chord both keys share. In a modulation from D minor to A minor d minor can be a pivot chord (it is both "i" in D minor and "iv" in A minor)

Secondary leading-tone 7th chord (vii of another key)

Non-Dominant diatonic 7th chord (diatonic "minor 7th" or "major 7th" chord in a key)

Secondary dominant 7th chord (V7 of another key)

Scalar variant chord (chromatically-altered diatonic chord)

Unacceptable voice leading:

Voice crossing, Parallel Octaves, Parallel 5ths, Contrary 5ths

Retgression (going backward in a progression)

Improper Doubling (usually double either root or 5th--never double tendency tones)

Acceptable voice-leading:

- keep each voice in its proper range

(soprano=middle c' to g" [top space of treble clef])

(alto= g to d')

(tenor=c to g' [3rd ledger line above bass clef])

(bass=G [bottom line of bass clef] to d)

- keep common tone(s) in the same voice(s) when possible

- primarily use stepwise motion in all voices

- use large leaps sparingly--a large leap in one direction is usually followed by a stepwise or other small move in the other direction

- avoid parallel motion or similar motion in all voices (use contrary and oblique motion): in 4-part writing if there is no common tone then move upper three voices contrary to the bass.

- No parallel 5ths or parallel octaves (also no "contrary" 5ths or octaves--this is when consecutive 5ths or octaves are created by contrary instead of parallel motion)

- Resolve all "tendency tones" in the same voice--a leading-tone must resolve UP by half-step to the tonic; 7ths of "dominant 7th" and "secondary dominant 7ths must resolve down by a half-step, a chromatically-raised pitch resolves up by half-step while a chromatically-lowered pitch must resolve down by half-step. Never double a tendency tone because this necessitates parallel octaves for both tendency tones to be resolved correctly.

- No augmented intervals when in harmonic minor using scale steps 6 and 7

20th-century Techniques

Be able to match the following to its definition or to identify within a musical example:

Modes: (these may be transposed at any pitch level)

- Aeolian, Locrian, Ionian, Dorian, Phrygian, Lydian, Mixolydian

Modern Modes and Scales:

- Lydian minor
- Whole-tone scale
- Octatonic scales (diminished)
- Gapped scale (such as a pentatonic scale)

Chordal sonorities/simultaneities/Clusters:

- Secundal, Tertian, Quartal, Quintal, Whole-tone chord, Bichord, Mystic chord
- Pandiatonicism
- Tone cluster
- Sound mass
- Heterophony
- Montage
- Multiphonic

Modern Rhythmic terms:

- Additive rhythm
- Metric modulation
- Non-retrogradable rhythm
- Polyrhythm
- Serialized rhythm