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Progressive Composition Assignments

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Music Theory I Progressive Composition Assignment

This assignment offers an opportunity for you to develop your creative expression. As we explore the fundamentals of music and diatonic harmony, you will be asked to apply that knowledge to the development of a progressive composition project. You are encouraged to approach this assignment with musical expressiveness and technical care. Composing is like writing an excellent essay; you need time to review and revise your work several times. Please allow time for that important process. Consider it an opportunity to demonstrate your highest level of creativity and musicianship.

The assignment will be completed in four phases. Each phase must be uploaded to the AsU Learn website by the last class meeting prior to a unit quiz. Each phase must be completed using a music notation software program of your choice. Professional layout and notation, musicianship, and creativity will be evaluated as well as the specific requirements of the assignments. FINALE software is provided in the tutor lab, and the theory tutors are able to provide assistance on request.

PHASE ONE: Diatonic Melody (Live Recording Required)

Compose a melody for your principal instrument/voice using the following guidelines:

1. The melody should be in the appropriate range and exhibit idiomatic writing for your instrument. The instrument/voice name must appear to the left of your first measure.
2. The melody may be in any key and meter that you choose, but it must be diatonic (no chromatic pitches at this point).
3. The melody must have an appropriate key signature, tempo marking, dynamic markings, and articulations to express your musical intention. Vocal melodies must include a text that is properly notated below the staff.
4. The melody must be at least 8 measures long.
5. The melody must be composed of two phrases. The first phrase must come to an inconclusive cadence that suggests the dominant harmony (i.e, on *Sol*, *Re*, or *Ti*). The second phrase must cadence conclusively on the tonic pitch (*Do*) on a downbeat.
6. Each phrase must exhibit an active contour (or melodic shape) that covers at least an octave.
7. A clear melodic/rhythmic figure (motive) must be present in some form in both phrases to provide unity.
8. Title your composition "Diatonic Melody in *KEY*".

9. A professional looking PDF file of the score and an MP3 recording of your live performance of the melody must be uploaded to the AsULearn site prior to the deadline.

You are encouraged to examine the melodies found in your sight singing text that are taken from the literature (i.e., with composer identified). Pay particular attention to the melodic contours, motivic developments, expressive markings, and articulations of these melodies.

Evaluation

1. The melody is composed in the appropriate range and exhibits idiomatic writing for the instrument. (20 points)
2. The instrument/voice name appears to the left of the first measure. (5 points)
3. Appropriate key and time signature are included. (10 points)
4. Proper use of tempo marking and dynamics. (10 points)
5. If a vocal piece, the text tool is used appropriately. (-5 if not used)
6. Melody is at least 8 measures long. (10 points)
7. Melody is composed of two phrases; the first phrase must conclude with an inconclusive cadence, and the second with a conclusive cadence. (15 points)
8. Both phrases must exhibit an active melodic contour or shape. (10 points)
9. The phrases must be related motivically. (15 points)
10. Title and composer name are included. (5 points)
11. Professional looking PDF uploaded to AsULearn.
12. MP3 of a live recording uploaded to AsULearn. (-30 points if not)

PHASE TWO: Lead Sheet and Diatonic Harmonization

Revise the melody you composed in Phase One based on the feedback you received from your instructor, then complete the following:

1. Compose a diatonic harmonic progression that successfully accompanies your melody. You will need to experiment with the various diatonic triads and seventh chords that are available within the key you chose.
2. The first phrase must end on the dominant chord, and the second phrase must end on the tonic chord.
3. There must be several changes of harmony in each phrase, and some seventh chords must be present.
4. Listen to your progression critically. If it sounds awkward or strange to you, revise until it clearly expresses your musical intent.
5. Notate the harmonic progression above the staff using a lead sheet symbol at the point of each harmonic change. While there are several different practices for notating lead sheet symbols, use those symbols that are indicated in the text.
6. Give an original name to your composition and place it in the title box.

7. A professional looking PDF file of the score and an MP3 recording of a performance of your composition must be uploaded to the AsU Learn site prior to the deadline. Depending on the instrumentation, you may need to recruit a second musician to perform the melody or accompaniment (block chords are fine at this point) on the recording. Alternatively, you may produce a MIDI performance of the composition using appropriate instrumental/vocal sounds.

Evaluation

1. Proper use of strong diatonic progression. (25 points)
2. Cadential structure as outlined in assignment (HC and PAC). (15 points)
3. Appropriate use of harmonic rhythm. (15 points)
4. At least two seventh chords are included. (15 points)
5. Notation of harmonic progression above the staff using lead sheet symbols. (25 points)
6. Title and composer name included. (5 points)
7. Professional looking PDF uploaded to AsU Learn.
8. MP3 recording uploaded to AsU Learn. (-30 points if not)

Example:

Dreams of Spring

B. Harbinson

Andante ♩ = 72

Trumpet in B \flat

mp *f* *mp*

PHASE THREE: Chorale Harmonization

Revise the composition you created in Phase Two based on the feedback you received from your instructor, then complete the following:

1. Add a grand staff below your melodic line for the accompaniment.
2. Partwrite your harmonic progression (SATB chorale format) as an accompaniment to the melodic line. You are free to revise the harmonic progression; make sure your lead sheet symbols indicate the revisions. Enter the parts on the grand staff. NOTE: If you play a transposing instrument, the

lead sheet symbols and accompaniment will be at concert pitch; the melody will be at transposed (written) pitch.

3. The harmonic progression must exhibit only strong progression as discussed in class.
4. The stems for the Soprano/Tenor voices must ascend; the stems for the Alto/Bass voices must descend.
5. The accompaniment must have appropriate dynamic markings and articulations to clearly express your musical intention.
6. Title your composition "Chorale Harmonization".
7. A professional looking PDF file of the score and an MP3 recording of a performance of your composition must be uploaded to the AsULearn site prior to the deadline. Depending on the instrumentation, you may need to recruit a second musician to perform the melody or accompaniment on the recording. Alternatively, you may produce a MIDI performance of the composition using appropriate instrumental/vocal sounds.

Evaluation

1. Correct spelling of harmonies created in assignment 2. (30 points)
2. Proper voice leading principles as outlined in class. (25 points)
3. Lead sheet symbols correctly identify the harmonic progression. (15 points)
4. Strong harmonic progression is exhibited. (15 points)
5. Proper stem direction is exhibited. (5 points)
6. Appropriate dynamic markings and articulations are included. (5 points)
7. Title and composer name included. (5 points)
8. Professional looking PDF uploaded to AsULearn.
9. Professional looking PDF uploaded to AsULearn.
10. MP3 recording uploaded to AsULearn. (-30 points if not)

Example:

Chorale Harmonization

B. Harbinson

Andante ♩ = 72

Trumpet in B \flat

Chord symbols: $E\flat$, $Fm7$, $B\flat$, $E\flat$, $A\flat$, $B\flat$, Fm , $B\flat$, $E\flat$, $A\flat$, $E\flat$, $B\flat7$, $E\flat$.

Dynamics: *mp*, *f*, *mp*.

PHASE FOUR: Chord Inversions and Non-chord Tones

Revise the composition you created in Phase Three based on the feedback you received from your instructor, then complete the following:

1. Revise your harmonic progression and voice-leading to include some inverted chords. Include at least one second-inversion triad. This should result in greater harmonic variety and a more melodic bass line. Revise your lead sheet symbols where necessary to indicate the chord inversions.
2. Add non-chord tones (at least four different types) to the accompaniment. The added notes should not compromise the voice-leading of the accompaniment or the melody.
3. Add a key and complete roman numeral analysis below the staff.
4. Title your composition “Chord Inversions and Non-chord Tones”.
5. A professional looking PDF file of the score and an MP3 recording of a performance of your composition must be uploaded to the AsULearn site prior to the deadline. Depending on the instrumentation, you may need to recruit a second musician to perform the melody or accompaniment on the

recording. Alternatively, you may produce a MIDI performance of the composition using appropriate instrumental/vocal sounds.

Evaluation

1. Inclusion of first inversion triads within progression. (15 points)
2. Inclusion of one second-inversion triad. (10 points)
3. Proper voice leading is demonstrated as outlined in class. (15 points)
4. Lead sheet symbols correctly identify the harmonic progression. (15 points)
5. Proper inclusion of four different non-chord tones. (20 points)
6. Correct Roman numeral analysis below the staff. (20 points)
7. Title and composer name included. (5 points)
8. Professional looking PDF uploaded to AsU Learn.
9. MP3 recording uploaded to AsU Learn. (-30 points if not)

Example:

Chord Inversions and Non-Chord Tones

B. Harbinson

Andante ♩ = 72

Trumpet in B \flat

The score consists of two systems of music. The first system (measures 1-4) shows a trumpet line starting with a half note E \flat (marked *mp*) followed by quarter notes G \flat , A \flat , and B \flat . The piano accompaniment starts with a half note E \flat (marked *mp*) and includes a non-chord tone (NT) on the second measure. The second system (measures 5-8) shows the trumpet line with quarter notes G \flat , A \flat , B \flat , and a half note E \flat (marked *f*). The piano accompaniment includes a suspension (S) on the eighth measure. Roman numeral analysis is provided below the piano staff.

Chord symbols above the staff: Eb, Fm7, B \flat , Eb/G, A \flat , B \flat , Fm, B \flat , Eb, Cm, Eb/B \flat , B \flat 7, Eb.

Non-chord tones (NT) and suspension (S) are indicated above the piano staff.

Roman numeral analysis below the piano staff: Eb: I, ii7, V, I6, IV, V, ii, V, I, PT, vi, I6, V7, I.

Figured bass notation: 4, 4-3.