

## First-Species Counterpoint Grading Guidelines

3-point mistakes:

- parallel and “antiparallel” (also known as “contrary” or “consecutive”) fifths
- parallel and “antiparallel” (also known as “contrary” or “consecutive”) octaves

2-point mistakes:

- direct fifth or octave (i.e., similar motion into P5 or P8) if the upper voice leaps
- use of harmonic dissonance

1-point mistakes:

- illegal melodic leap (e.g., 7<sup>th</sup>, 9<sup>th</sup>, anything augmented or diminished except for  $\hat{3}$  down to  $\hat{1}$  in a minor key, etc.)
- consecutive leaps not involving  $\hat{1}$ ,  $\hat{3}$ , and  $\hat{5}$ : two leaps = -1, three leaps = -2, etc.
- simultaneous leaps (with the exception of a voice exchange, or the exclusive use of  $\hat{1}$ ,  $\hat{3}$ , and  $\hat{5}$ )
- upper voice leap into harmonic P8 or P5 (exception: upper voice leaps  $\hat{4}$  to  $\hat{2}$  while lower voice steps  $\hat{4}$  to  $\hat{5}$ )
- voice crossing
- overlap
- unresolved leading tone
- poor use of  $\hat{6}$  and/or  $\hat{7}$  in a minor key
- ending on something other than  $\hat{1}$  or  $\hat{3}$  in the upper voice
- ending on something other than  $\hat{1}$  in the lower voice
- inappropriate approach to final note
- excessive parallel motion (i.e., too many thirds or sixths in a row: four = -1, five = -2, etc.)
- more than two perfect consonances in a row: three = -1, four = -2, etc.
- inappropriate or missing accidental
- more than one instance of oblique motion: two = -1, three = -2, etc.
- unbalanced leap
- range of more than an octave
- ending in the wrong register (i.e., more than a fifth from the starting note)
- pretty much anything else that isn't a good idea

Possible global deductions (1 or 2 points, depending on severity):

- overuse of perfect intervals
- very boring melody