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This paper discusses an approach to express markedness hierarchies in Optimality Theory without the use of a universally fixed ranking (cf Prince & Smolensky 1993). Instead, for a hierarchy $|\alpha \succ \beta \succ \gamma|$, there are a set of freely rankable constraints that refer to ranges of the scale, starting with the most marked element (e.g. $*\{\alpha\}$, $*\{\alpha,\beta\}$, $*\{\alpha,\beta,\gamma\}$). Such constraints are shown to allow language-specific ‘conflation’ of markedness categories – where categories are ignored for a particular process. An analysis of sonority-driven stress in the Uralic language Nganasan illustrates the points made