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 | a ) β ) γ |, there are a set of freely rankable constraints that refer to ranges of the scale, starting with the most marked element (e.g. *{a}, *{a,β}, *{a,β,γ}). 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.