MUS 233
The Neapolitan Chord

General
• Used to embellish the approach to the dominant
• Usually found in minor mode in 1st inversion: → “Neapolitan sixth” or N6
  • A major triad whose root is the flat-2nd (in the key of C maj. or min., the N chord would be a D-flat major triad)
  • More typical in a minor key because there is only one chromatic alteration to make (flattening the 2nd scale degree)

Specifics
• If a tone is doubled, it is usually the 3rd
• The N6 chord moves to V(7) (or I6/4-V(7)); possibly to vii7/V
  • NOT followed by iv/IV or ii7/ii
• The root (flat 2nd) usually moves down (especially when in soprano) with the leading tone as its goal
• When moving to I6/4, use parallel 4ths to avoid parallel 5ths
• Preceded by VI, iv/IV, i/I

Other Uses
• May appear in root position, or rarely in 6/4 inversion (the bass will be doubled)
• May occur in major mode
• May be tonicized or modulated to [V(7)/N or VI (flat-VI in maj.) = V/N]
• Could (rarely) be a structure other than major (n, N7, N6)
• Could be a common chord in a modulation to a foreign key (as it will be in your final project!)

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a:  | 1
b:  | N6
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A classic example from Beethoven Op. 27, No. 2 (Moonlight Sonata):

![MUS 233 The Neapolitan Chord](image-url)