

ATTACHMENT A

Informed Retraction: Guidelines for Evaluating Multiple Concurrent Honor Offenses

Note: This Attachment A supplements Article III.B.5 of the By-Laws of the Honor Committee. The following guidelines and examples are provided as tools that may be helpful in evaluating whether two or more alleged Honor Offenses resulted from the same “single nexus of events,” in which case they may be covered by a single Informed Retraction (“IR”). These guidelines (and the accompanying examples) are not exhaustive, and they do not address every possible scenario in which the issue of multiple alleged Honor Offenses may arise. In any case, the Vice Chairs retain the sole reasonable discretion to determine when multiple concurrent Honor Offenses may be covered by a single IR.

- (1) Logical Necessity. Whenever one or more alleged Honor Offenses is the logically necessary result of another alleged Honor Offense, these shall be deemed to have stemmed from the same “single nexus of events,” and, accordingly, may be covered by a single IR.

EXAMPLES:

- (a) If (in the most obvious case), a student pledges an exam on which he or she is later reported for alleged Cheating, the pledge (in essence, a statement that the student has not Cheated) itself could be construed as Lying. These two alleged Honor Offenses—Cheating on the exam and Lying in the related pledge—would be covered by a single IR.
- (b) If (in a slightly less obvious case), a student exceeds the time limit for an electronic exam—constituting an alleged Act of Cheating—and subsequently indicates in the manner required by such exam (or by the instructor teaching assistant who administers such exam) that he or she did not exceed the time limit—constituting an alleged Act of Lying—such student may submit a single IR to cover both such alleged Acts.

In both of the examples, above, the alleged Acts of Lying are logically connected to the alleged Acts of Cheating; i.e., the alleged Acts of Lying would not exist but for the Cheating which is the subject of the Lying.

- (2) Dependence. Whenever one or more alleged Honor Offenses could not have been committed in the absence of some other alleged Honor Offense by the same student, these multiple alleged Honor Offenses shall be deemed to have stemmed from the same “single nexus of events,” and, accordingly, may be covered by a single IR.

EXAMPLE:

If a student commits an alleged Act of Stealing and subsequently denies this Act—constituting an alleged Act of Lying—such a student may submit a single IR to cover both of such alleged Honor Offenses. While the student could have committed the alleged Act of Stealing without committing the alleged Act of Lying, he or she could not have committed the alleged Act of Lying without having already committed the alleged Act of Stealing, as the latter was the subject of the former.

- (3) Substantially Similar Conduct and Circumstances in Cases of Lying or Stealing. In certain cases, where two or more alleged Honor Offenses involve “substantially similar conduct and circumstances,” these may, in the sole reasonable discretion of the Vice Chairs, be deemed to have stemmed from the same “single nexus of events,” and, accordingly, may be covered by a single IR.

EXAMPLES:

- (a) If a student makes multiple purchases on a stolen credit card, she or he may submit a single IR for such multiple Acts of Stealing.
 - (b) If a student lies to a professor on multiple occasions about the reasons for his or her absence(s) from a class, such a student may submit a single IR to cover such multiple Acts of Lying.
 - (c) If a student lies to a professor about the reasons for his or her absence(s) from class, and subsequently lies to the same professor about the reasons an assignment was submitted late, such multiple Acts of Lying will ***not*** be deemed to involve “substantially similar conduct and circumstances” and therefore may ***not*** be covered by a single IR.
- (4) Substantially Similar Conduct and Circumstances in Cases of Cheating: In cases involving multiple alleged Acts of Cheating, such Acts may be deemed to involve “substantially similar conduct and circumstances” when, in the sole reasonable discretion of the Vice Chairs:
- (i) such Acts of Cheating occur in a single class (if applicable); *and*
 - (ii) such Acts of Cheating involve a single assignment *or multiple assignments of the same type* (e.g., a series of projects, homework assignments, lab reports, quizzes, or exams of the same type); *and*
 - (iii) such Acts of Cheating, if applicable, involve *the same method of Cheating on multiple assignments* (e.g., plagiarism, collaboration, or the use of other unauthorized sources); *and*
 - (iv) such Acts of Cheating, if applicable, employ *the same or substantially similar unauthorized sources* (e.g., a paper previously submitted for a grade in the same or a similar class by a friend; a past exam from the class in question; the exam answers seen on the paper(s) of surrounding students; class notes on a closed-notes exam; information consulted on a cell phone; Wikipedia, or other online encyclopedias or similar resources).

EXAMPLES:

- (a) If a student uses a friend’s lab notebook to obtain unauthorized aid on the first and third lab assignments for a particular class, these alleged Acts of Cheating involve “substantially similar conduct and circumstances,” and, accordingly, may be covered by a single IR.
- (b) If a student exceeds the permitted time for an exam, and uses unauthorized materials in completing such exam, these alleged Acts of Cheating involve “substantially similar conduct and circumstances,” and, accordingly, may be covered by a single IR.

Notwithstanding anything to the contrary contained herein, two or more alleged Acts of Cheating will be deemed ***not*** to involve “substantially similar conduct and circumstances,” and therefore will ***not*** be covered by a single IR, when, in the sole reasonable discretion of the Vice Chairs, such alleged Acts involve:

- (i) projects, homework assignments, lab reports, quizzes, or exams, or work of any kind in more than one class;
- (ii) different types of assignments (e.g. projects, homework assignments, lab reports, quizzes, or exams) within a single class;
- (iii) different methods of Cheating on multiple assignments (e.g., an allegation of plagiarism with respect to one assignment, and an allegation of unauthorized collaboration with respect to a second assignment);
- (iv) the use of substantially different unauthorized resources (e.g., an allegation of plagiarism from Wikipedia on one assignment, and an allegation of plagiarism from the paper of a friend on a second assignment); or
- (v) conduct that is repeated following questioning, confrontation, or feedback by a relevant professor, teaching assistant, or other affected party.

EXAMPLES:

- (a) If a student plagiarizes a paper and subsequently utilizes unauthorized materials while taking a final exam in the same class, these alleged Acts of Cheating do ***not*** involve “substantially similar conduct and circumstances,” and, accordingly, may ***not*** be covered by a single IR.
- (b) If a student uses the same unauthorized resource on midterm exams in two separate classes, these alleged Acts of Cheating do ***not*** involve “substantially similar conduct and circumstances,” and, accordingly, may ***not*** be covered by a single IR.
- (c) If a student is confronted (in person, by email, or in any other manner) by a teaching assistant who asks whether (or implies that) such student has plagiarized portions of an assignment, and such student repeats an Act of plagiarism on a subsequent assignment in the same class, these alleged Acts of Cheating do ***not*** involve “substantially similar conduct and circumstances,” and, accordingly, may ***not*** be covered by a single IR.