

REDACTED

From: Redacted
Sent: Tuesday, July 28, 2009 12:39 PM
To: REDACTED
Subject: This is my formal complaint

REDACTED

I know that we spoke yesterday about my complaint but I wanted to send it to you in writing as well.

April 2009 I became sick after having a surgical procedure. I called my academic adviser to drop me from my class that I was attending at the time. After several days of unanswered phone calls REDACTED finally returned my call. We decided that the next time the class started would best fit my needs. On May 15, 2009 I had a message on my answering machine from REDACTED (I believe that is her name) to return her phone call regarding my financial aid. I did not know that she was my new financial aid adviser at the time. I returned her phone call on several occasions without her responding. On the day that my class was supposed to start I realized without any notice from the school that I was logged out from the blackboard. Again I called REDACTED without any response. I called my adviser and again could not reach her as well, I finally called the main number. I was told from another adviser that I could not attend any classes until my financial aid was resolved. I called REDACTED again and still no response. Then I started receiving emails from REDACTED with REDACTED signature. (Very confusing) I responded through e-mail and then called a few days later when I didn't get a response. The problem was that when I called REDACTED had no recollection of my e-mail. (Probably due to the fact that I had sent it to the other REDACTED was not at all understanding to my situation, he was very rude and told me that I new my financial aid had been out since June 2008. I never new that fact because know body ever called or sent an e-mail about it. My point to him was "how could I be allowed to take eight classes without payment"? He could not respond to that except to tell me that he needs the payment and my responsibility is to set up a payment plan. I called REDACTED again in June 2009 and told her that she needed to call me back but I was getting on a plane in two hours for a family vacation. That is when REDACTED finally decided to return my phone call. While on the airplane REDACTED left a message for me to re-do my FASA by Sunday night. REDACTED knew that I was going to be on a plane and that I was going on my family vacation and that know body normally takes there tax information while going on vacation. I feel as if this was a set up by REDACTED because I had already called her manager and reported her.

My major complaint is the fact that when I was enrolling in classes I had no problems with someone from the school returning my phone call. Now that I am an existing student (on the Deans list) I cannot get anyone to return my phone calls. I believe that I fell through the cracks with advisers changing constantly! I want to be able to transfer my credits to another college and I believe that part of the payment is my responsibility but I should receive help from the financial aid department for help as well. This was in part the financial aid departments fault since my advisers changed constantly and my financial status was never acknowledged. Since this incident, after speaking to many advisers and department managers, I was given the option of filling out a verification worksheet which allowed me to return to classes. I filled out the worksheet with the expected date of my taxes to be filed and just this past week returned to classes. I was told that I would not have any financial aid issues while waiting for my taxes to be completed (expected date September 25, 2009). My first week of class and I receive another e-mail, this time from my new financial aid adviser notifying me that I will not be able to attend future classes while this problem exist. How can these issues not be resolved when each person that I have spoken to said that they will note this in my file?

7/28/2009

Confidential Treatment Requested

BPI-HELP_00027543

I will forward the emails that I have received regarding this matter to you as well so that you can see how an existing student is treated. Thank you and have a blessed day.

Redacted

--- On Wed, 7/22/09, [REDACTED] wrote:

From: [REDACTED]
Subject: Grievance Update Response Requested
To: [Redacted]
Date: Wednesday, July 22, 2009, 7:28 PM

Hi [Redacted],

My name is [REDACTED] and I am a Student Grievance Resolution Coordinator with the Office of the Ombudsman. I have just been assigned to your Grievance, as your previous Student Grievance Resolution Coordinator has left the University. Based on our notes it appears that you submitted your formal grievance on July 9, 2009. If it is at all possible to forward this information to my e-address, it would be greatly appreciated. I apologize for any inconvenience this has placed on you.

In the event that you have not yet submitted a formal grievance I've attached the Grievance Procedure for your review. To file a formal grievance you will need to submit the following to GrievanceResolution@ashford.edu;

- Subject line stating: this is my formal complaint
- Description of the issue(s)
- Resolution you are seeking
- Attach any supporting documentation

Feel free to contact me if you have any questions or concerns. I look forward to receiving this information.

Best regards,

7/28/2009

Confidential Treatment Requested

BPI-HELP_00027544

Bridgepoint Education, Inc.
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REDACTED

Student Grievance Resolution Coordinator

Ashford University

866.475.0317
866.830.1341 Fax

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7/28/2009

Confidential Treatment Requested

BPI-HELP_00027545

Bridgepoint Education, Inc.
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August 28, 2009

Redacted

Dear Redacted

The Office of Grievance Resolution received your formal grievance on July 28, 2009, via an email to your newly appointed Student Grievance Resolution Coordinator. Your grievance stated;

- (1) that you received a voicemail from your newly appointed Financial Service Advisor on May 15, 2009, regarding financial aid;
- (2) that you returned this phone call several times without your advisor responding;
- (3) that you were then placed on a finance hold and unscheduled from your class;
- (4) that you began receiving notices from the University's collections department;
- (5) that the collections representatives stated you needed to setup a payment plan; and
- (6) that you believe you fell through the cracks because your advisors changed constantly.

From your grievance we are advised;

- (1) that you would like to transfer your credits to another educational institution; and
- (2) that you should receive financial assistance from the University.

The University has completed a thorough investigation into these issues by reviewing your financial and student records. Our findings indicate that you selected Financial Aid as your primary finance option on the Student Finance Agreement of the Online Enrollment Agreement. The Student Finance Agreement was electronically signed on November 12, 2007, and again on August 28, 2008, which indicates;

Financial Aid Plan:

Students must complete their FAFSA, Institution Application for Financial Aid, Master Promissory Note for Loans and Entrance Counseling in order to secure deferment of tuition and future course scheduling.

Continuous attendance, with no attendance breaks greater than 29 days, is required to retain eligibility of disbursed Federal Financial Aid funds. Repayment of any outstanding account balance, including amounts due to funds required to be returned by Ashford University by regulation -- due to subsequent changes in student eligibility -- are the responsibility of the student

In addition, the information contained in the Online Enrollment Agreement, students are responsible for following the guidelines outlined in the University Catalog. This information was relayed to you in two

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BPI-HELP_00027546

emails; 1) from your financial service advisor, "Welcoming you to Ashford University" on November 20, 2007, and 2) the other from the University Registrar informing you about the University Catalog on November 20, 2007 and again on July 15, 2009. On page 35, of the 2007-2008 Catalog, it states;

Financial Aid Plan

The University will provide assistance to all students and families who are eligible for financial aid. The University provides a convenient online application process. This process includes access to required financial aid forms, options for electronically signing the application, and links to complete the Free Application for Federal Student

Aid (FAFSA) and Master Promissory Note. All students seeking federal financial aid benefits must be admitted to a financial-aid eligible degree program to determine financial aid eligibility. To select the Financial Aid Plan as the primary financing option, at least 50% of a student's annual tuition must be funded through the federal financial aid benefits. To apply for the Financial Aid finance option, the student must meet the following conditions:

- Complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA);
- Complete all required paperwork and documentation;
- Complete a Loan Entrance Interview;
- Complete the Admissions Application; and
- Pay all applicable fees.

If the student fails to supply all required documents or is unable to qualify for federal financial aid, the student is held responsible for any outstanding balances incurred and must select another finance option. On this plan, it is the student's responsibility to reapply for funding as necessary. Students enrolled in On-Campus Traditional Programs are encouraged to reapply each year by April 1, for the upcoming academic year. Students enrolled in College of External Studies or Graduate Programs must reapply 90 days prior to the start of each academic year. Tardiness in applying could result in disqualification and require compliance with the terms and conditions of the Cash Plan.

Based on this information, the University cannot comply with your request to be credited a portion of your balance. The University is willing to work with you to obtain financial aid funding for the 2009-2010 award year, which you will be eligible for excess funds. These funds may be used to aid you in payment of your previously accrued balance. According to University policy stated on page 33, of the 2007-2008 Catalog; "Ashford University will withhold transcripts, degree verification, and grade reports until accounts are paid in full." At this time the University is unable to release official transcripts to another university, due to your outstanding balance.

If you no longer wish to attend, the University is willing to offer you a three-year, interest free repayment plan with our in-house collections department. Please contact [REDACTED] Collections Specialist, at 866.974.5700 [REDACTED] or [REDACTED] by September 11, 2009 to avoid any applicable late fees. If payment arrangements have not been made by this time the collections process will resume and your account may be sent to an outside collections agency.

Please be advised that this decision may be appealed to the President of the University. Refer to page 22 of the 2009-2010 Catalog and submit your appeal to GrievanceResolution@ashford.edu.

It is always the intention of Ashford University and our employees to provide excellent student services and an excellent learning experience. We wish you all the best of luck in your future endeavors.

Sincerely,

REDACTED

Vice President of Online Student Services