

Redacted

May 8, 2009

Redacted

Student Grievance Resolution Coordinator
Ashford University

Dear Redacted,

First let me take the opportunity to thank you for speaking with me yesterday regarding this matter that has come up against me and the financial aid division of the school. To adhere to the format you have provided for me in formally lodging my grievance, I will state the issue and then follow with supporting emails pertaining to the matter.

The issue

In March I was notified by a representative from the finance office that I owe the school \$1,470.00, and was then directed to speak with a collections representative. In speaking with the representative he relayed to me the reason I owe the funds is that due to a delay in my final class being registered, the financial aid office had sent me the check for \$1,470.00. Now that I have taken the class, I have to return the funds.

1. I was not aware that my class was late in registering, being that my advisors and I had been in conversation of this particular class since around July -August of 2008. Furthermore, upon enrolling at Ashford, according to my list of required classes, it was a written understanding of how many classes I would need and when I would take each one, to complete the program. Why then is a surprise to the financial division when I took the class?
2. The school sent me this notice in October of 2008.

"Dear I Redacted,

Ashford University's stipend process has been updated to provide funding for your coursework throughout the academic year. Effective October 13th, 2008, Ashford University will begin issuing four stipends per academic year. The amount of funding you receive will not change, only the scheduled disbursement of the stipends. This change will allow the financial aid disbursements to better coincide with the timing of anticipated charges for the courses in which you enroll. Thirty percent of the payment period's stipend will be available for disbursement after the seventh week of successful continuous enrollment, and the remaining seventy percent will be available after the fourteenth week of successful continuous enrollment.

Should you have any questions, or desire further clarification, please contact me at Redacted or Redacted by ext. Redacted"

I did have continuous enrollment, so now I am unclear where the breach did occur. Now I do recognize that my class did not start immediately after the one preceding it, due to (what was my

understanding) it being a Master's level class, where their scheduling was different from the one I had become accustomed to. However, the class was in place to start.

What am I seeking?

I need the Ombudsmen Office to prove to the finance office that I do not owe this money. Second, please stop delaying my registering for the rest of my classes, as I am anxious to continue on with my studies there at Ashford. I am not in the habit of taking what's not mine, and therefore when the school issued me the check, based on the pre-notification of its pending arrival, I understood that to mean all things were "all right" - meaning all obligations have been met and that the fund was "leftovers". Unfortunately, it also came at a time when it was much needed due to my unemployment status then and now. So please let this matter go away, and if I am wrong, please show me how I came to be so.

Thanks again for being willing to hear me, and also for your willingness to represent me by researching the matter. Ashford is a wonderful school; I strongly believe that I have received value for my investment and wish to continue my education there. I have even referred two people to the school because I believe in it, and would hate to walk away from a great relationship all because of a minor misunderstanding. So I look forward to hearing from you soon, and will cooperate with you in every way to move progress along positively.

Sincerely,

Redacted

June 2, 2009

Redacted

Dear | Redacted

Ashford University (hereinafter "the University") is in receipt of your formal grievance sent to the University's Ombudsman's Office via email on May 8, 2009. Per your grievance, the University is advised of the following:

- The finance department released a stipend check to you in the amount of \$2,530.24, without withholding \$1,470.00, for your final elective course, BUS610.
- You believe the finance department should have withheld the cost of tuition for your final course, as it was "no surprise" you had a final course left to complete your bachelor's degree.
- You do not feel responsible for paying the balance on your account, and would like this issue resolved so you can register in the master's program.

Following a thorough investigation into your concerns, student record, and financial record, the University determined the following:

- The University acknowledges that the stipend sent to you was the incorrect amount, as tuition for your final course should have been withheld. We apologize for any inconvenience this situation may have caused. However, the University maintains that you are financially responsible for repaying the balance on your account, totaling \$1,011.00.
- The University is willing to lift the hold on your account and permit you to progress into the master's program under the following conditions:
 - A one-third of the total balance owed must be paid as a down payment on the account, totaling \$337.00.
 - The remaining balance, \$674.00, must be paid to the University within ninety (90) days from the beginning of your masters program.

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If you find this resolution to be unacceptable, you do have the option to appeal the decision to the President of the University, Dr. Jane McAuliffe. Please refer to page 23 of the 2008-2009 University catalog for the procedure, and send your appeal to Redacted by HELP upon its completion. Please note that you have approximately thirty (30) days from receipt of this letter to file an appeal.

Please know 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

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Vice President of Online Student Services