

**Gugelmeyer, Roger**

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**From:** Getter, William  
**Sent:** Friday, May 29, 2009 5:42 PM  
**To:** [REDACTED]  
**Subject:** RE: Herzing- Birmingham, AL - (Important)  
**Attachments:** Herzing letter.doc

Dear [REDACTED]

Thank you for your note outlining the customer service issues you faced while an online student from the Birmingham Campus. I am truly sorry that your experience did not meet your expectations. I will be sharing your feedback with all those involved. Be assured that you sharing your concerns will help us improve our online student customer service.

On the issue of your degree diploma, I personally checked with the Birmingham Campus this afternoon and learned that the backlog of diplomas were all produced yesterday. It should be on its way to you. If you don't see it straight away, please do not hesitate to contact me again.

Again, thank you for sharing your feedback.

Best Regards,

*William M. Getter*

Dr. William M. Getter  
Vice President of Academic Affairs  
Herzing University  
525 N. Dix Street  
Milwaukee, WI 53202

Redacted by HELP Committee

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Friday, May 29, 2009 2:15 PM  
**To:** Getter, William  
**Subject:** Fw: Herzing- Birmingham, AL - (Important)

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5/29/09

To Bill Getter,

Re: Herzing University at Birmingham, AL

First let me introduce myself. My name is [REDACTED] I started attending Herzing College in 1998. In 2002, I graduated with my Associates Degree in Business Administration. I am the first person in my family to attend and graduate college. I attended Herzing at night and worked a full time job all while raising an infant/toddler. My experience with Herzing was ok. I chose Herzing because of the close proximity of my home and work. In addition to the location, I did not want to attend a major university because I did not want to be "just a student". When I first attended Herzing, [REDACTED] was excellent and very thorough. He returned every call and assisted me with questions, etc.

After I graduated in 2002, I decided to build a house and continue with other priorities. In 2007, I decided to obtain my Bachelors degree, however the only option I had was to attend online because of my career, motherhood and community involvement. Herzing "seemed" like the right place to attend since I was an already established student and my credits and classes could transfer.

Needless to say, I have not have a great experience with Herzing University in the past 1 ½ years. For starters, "blackboard" is not very user friendly. There were numerous times that blackboard was down and "IT was working on it". In addition, in one particular class, we did not get a response from the teacher until after several days of class. Also, if a class assignment, test or final was multiple choices, blackboard would not recognize I had selected the appropriate answers and when I would submit my answers the error was "The following questions were not answered 1, 2, 3, 4, etc." Upon trying to re-submit my answers, halfway through this process, my laptop would "freeze up" and "get stuck". I had to call IT several times with no improvement. IT suggested Fire fox, and other suggestions, and still nothing would help. This was extremely aggravating throughout each class. I had to call or email each instructor about this "problem" and get him/her to reset the assignment or test. In addition, had to re-type each question or problem and re-submit it in a Word document.

My laptop is relatively new and my computer should not have been the issue. Making matters more frustrating, my last class at Herzing was taken as an independent study course because there were not enough students to make a full class. On my first day of class with [REDACTED], I took the pre-test on campus. At the end of the test, the same "message" appeared at the end of my pre-test. "The following questions were not answered 1, 2, 3, 4, etc." I ask Mr. [REDACTED] why this problem continued to occur on each test. He said "Because there is a glitch in the system but your answers have already been submitted so you do not have to start the test over". If I would known there was a "glitch"

in the system to begin with, it would have saved some time on taking each test several times to insure the data transmitted, to say nothing of the aggravation, and frustration with the entire blackboard.

Another "issue" that really, really upsets and disturbs me is that Herzing University does not offer on ground assistances for online students! I have always maintained very good grades and attendance, and expect help when I am not doing well in a class. I should have had no problem receiving it. Example: My most recent class was *Decision Making: Quantitative Analysis*. This class was extremely difficult. In week one, I knew first hand that I was going to require tutoring in order to stay afloat. I called Herzing and ask for help. The response was "You need to ask your online teacher and classmates for help". I did!

My instructor called me, and might I add she lives in Wisconsin and I live in Alabama. She did not speak English clearly nor slowly enough to be understood. She and I (along with another student) conducted a conference call in or around the third week of class. By this time, I was more lost than I was in week one. She rushed through the assignment and expected us to "catch on" and "catch up" in a 30 minute phone call. I desperately needed more of the instructor's time. I did ask my classmates, several times for help. Only one guy responded and really did not help. By this time it was week 4 or 5. The instructor and I attempted to conduct another conference. I was still lost. I continued to ask my friends, family and co-workers to tutor me. I even called Herzing again, but still I could not get the help I needed. I finally finished the class with a 74. The lowest grade I had received at Herzing with my Bachelors degree. I was disappointed in my grade; however I blame the low grade was not because of my lack of effort but on the lack of support offered by Herzing instructors.

Another issue that I have with Herzing is the fact that the graduation ceremony is held on a Friday, in the middle of the day. This time DOES NOT work well with the majority of working adults. Herzing does major marketing towards online and night students, you would think that having a graduation ceremony during the evening or on a week-end day would encourage participation in the graduation ceremony and attendance at the ceremony. Certainly, other surrounding Universities do not conduct their graduation ceremonies DURING THE DAY! On-line students work long and hard toward completing their degrees, most while caring for families and working full time jobs, I believe I speak for many when I say it would certainly have been nice to take part in the graduation activities!

While I am on the subject, I was given two different dates and times for the graduation ceremony. Herzing University in Birmingham should be communicating with the faculty and staff in addition to ALL of their students.

In my experience, communication between Herzing and on-line students does not exist. Few times was I contacted for anything. I received no notice of graduation date, exit exams, caps and gowns, etc.

If I wanted to know what was going on, I had to call Herzing and probably have spoken with almost every person in the Administration department. I called Herzing on a weekly to bi-weekly basis for various reasons. When I would call and have to leave a message, for the most part, it would take several days for a returned call. Has anyone not ever heard of the "Sun-down rule"? Obviously not! Towards the end of college, I knew that I was supposed to attend an exit exam. Fortunately, I knew this because of that being a requirement when completing my Associates degree. I called Herzing and spoke with Redacted by HELP Co I ask Redacted by HEL when the exit exam was scheduled. She said "That I should receive Redacted by HELI something in the mail soon about the dates and time and that I should hear from Redacted by HELI soon". Needless to say I never did!

Redacted by HEL I called Redacted by HEL back on a Friday, April 17<sup>th</sup>, 2009. To my surprise and irritation, the exit exam date had passed. I explained to Joyce that I did not receive any indication about the exit exam and that my final was on Monday, April 20<sup>th</sup>, 2009. She and I set up an appointment for her to go over the material.

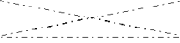
As I was leaving the campus on April 23<sup>h</sup>, 2009, Redacted by HELP Committee ask "How was I doing?" He and I sat in his office for a long time as I vented to him about the disappointment that I have had in Herzing. Redacted by HELP verified my address and telephone in the system. To our surprise, my telephone number was incorrect. How can a student who has been attending Herzing for 1 ½ years have the wrong telephone number in the system? I have had my cell number for several years so there should be no excuse. In addition, I have been employed at the same location for almost four years. Herzing had my previous employer's telephone number! I am absolutely astonished by the lack of communication, lack of effort and lack of support that I have had from Herzing.

If I were getting my education for free, I MIGHT be able to tolerate this lack of customer service. However, since I have paid for my education myself without any assistance from my family or friends, I expect higher standards from Herzing.

Finally, I would like to discuss my diploma issue. I called Herzing and let them know that I was not going to attend the graduation ceremony on May 15<sup>th</sup>, due to the fact that it was being held in the middle of the day and it was not convenient for working adults. I was told at the end of April that each student would receive his/her diploma before the actually graduation ceremony. As May 15<sup>th</sup> approached, I still did not have my diploma. Once again I called Herzing. This time I was told that Herzing was creating new diplomas and mats with "Herzing University" on them and that we would receive them soon.

Redacted by HELP Well, today is May 29<sup>th</sup> and guess what??? Still no diploma! I had to once again call Redacted by HELP, whom by the way is the only person who shows excellent customer service skills. He returns phone calls back in a timely manner. He has great phone skills, good manners and always follows through with action. When I spoke with him he said that Redacted by HELP Committee is in charge of the diplomas. I have left her a message, so we will see if I get a returned call.

Please understand while I am grateful for the opportunity to complete my on-line degree and anticipate many career opportunities to open up because of it, I felt compelled to voice my concerns with your Birmingham Campus program. I hoping this letter will help identify areas that you can improve upon to enhance customer service. Online students are an important part of your customer base and if you wish to grow your Birmingham campus, their needs must be addressed timely and effectively!

Please feel free to contact me at  if you would like to discuss further.

Thank you

