

My name is Randy Diel and I'm an Army veteran who attended American InterContinental University. As I was finishing my bachelors degree in computer information systems, the school convinced me to continue my education through a masters program. It turned out to be a complete sham.

The program failed to provide quality teaching and instruction. Though teachers were industry professionals, they did not know how to teach. They just said, "here's your book, here are your assignments." There were no lectures, class discussions, or even exams. All we did was team projects and posts on discussion boards. I assumed it was a legitimate program since it was approved by the VA, but it was a real scam.

The biggest problem was that AIU combined classes for bachelors and masters students. Most of our assignments were group projects. During one project, my classmate wasn't participating and turned in subpar work. At first I thought that he was just slacking off, but I then found out he was very early in his Bachelor's degree and didn't have the knowledge base to contribute. It was clear the school was just looking out for its bottom line by combining what should have been two separate classes into one.

The program was also crazy expensive. I had to pay twice as much as bachelors students, even though we took the same classes. The high costs used up my GI Bill, and I had to take out federal student loans to support myself.

I told the Dean I was not receiving the level of education I was paying for, but she did not take me seriously. It was so bad that I disenrolled in the middle of a class even though I was only one semester away from graduating. I looked into transferring, but no other program would accept credits from a school that doesn't even give exams.

People say a degree is a door-opener, but my AIU degree hasn't opened any doors. At best, people have never heard of the school, and at worst they question my abilities because of the school's bad reputation. The school touted their alumni network, but it hasn't helped me. I independently worked hard to secure a computer systems internship during school and have steadily built my own connections in the industry. My experience has gotten me all of my subsequent jobs, and I work in positions that do not require a bachelors degree.

I have paid off more than half my student debt, but it is frustrating to make payments each month for a low-quality education that did not provide the benefits the school promised.

I hope that the U.S. Department of Education will better regulate colleges to ensure that other veterans end up at schools that give them a good education instead of a degree that's just a rubber stamp.