

Good morning. My name is Ashley Beverly. I'm a Navy veteran and I have been a social worker for seven years. I decided I wanted to get my doctorate in Clinical Social Work, so I enrolled at Walden University in 2017. Walden told me it would take 2-3 years to get my doctorate. I attended for four years without completing my degree, and they used up my GI Bill and I had to take out over \$90,000 in loans on top of my GI Bill. And the whole time I was attending, the quality of the program was extremely poor.

The educational setup was ridiculous. They had a discussion board and you had to do one module each week. The teachers did not interact or engage in the discussion. The teachers lacked proficiency in the field. They did not have familiarity with common issues and terminology that I knew from my own experience as a social worker. They never provided direction and took a long time to respond to any questions or messages, if they responded at all. There was very little rigor. I had to teach myself. I also had to travel to Florida and Colorado to complete in-person residency coursework that had no educational value and was a complete waste of time.

Once I reached the dissertation phase, I noticed that Walden kept cycling me through the same process. I developed a strong dissertation, but I was prevented from progressing in the program. A reviewer would look over my work and tell me it was great, but then someone on the committee would suggest extensive changes. I would make those changes, the reviewer would say it was great and then someone on the committee would make another round of extensive changes. I went through this cycle at least four times. Meanwhile, my chair was never available to guide me and my faculty advisors kept changing. Walden just kept dragging it out, praising my work but never allowing me to progress. I brought my concerns to leadership, but nothing changed.

I left Walden after I had maxed out my student aid, and I still wasn't done with my degree after four years. One of the Faculty Advisors put a lot of pressure on me to convince me to continue by paying out of pocket. My credits won't transfer to other schools, and Walden is withholding my transcripts because they say I owe \$3,000 but my financial aid should have been more than enough.

My growth was stifled and I was unable to advance as a researcher at Walden. I am here today to ask you to consider regulations that will prevent schools like Walden from lying to students during the recruitment process and then failing to deliver any educational value while they collect up all of the available funding they can get.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment today.