

Good morning/afternoon. I'm Deborah Butrim, and I served in the Army for 20 years. Towards the end of my service, I enrolled in a PhD program at Walden University.

I was going to enroll at a different school, but I met some Walden representatives at a hospital on base. They seemed to be recruiting military members there. They promised that I would be able to finish my degree in three years. They made it seem like it would be fast and that it would be covered in full by my GI Bill.

Once I completed the coursework, I selected a Chair and started the Doc Study portion. My time at Walden turned into a never ending circle, dragging out my time in the program. I would send versions of my dissertation to my chair, who would provide only small, minute changes. I would make those changes and then the chair would send back the same paper but with a few different small changes. This process would repeat in a never-ending circle. I never received any substantive feedback that would improve my work, just elementary edits. It was often just as simple as adding commas and semicolons. I was never allowed to progress past this phase.

I complained about my chair several times. The only solution I received was to change my chair, but then I would have had to start from scratch again. This would have caused me even more of a delay, and would have cost more money.

I had to take the eight-week Doc Study course over and over again for a year and a half, around six times in a row. My GI Bill was charged each time, and eventually my GI Bill benefits were dried up. I eventually left because I wasn't willing to take out loans and go into debt for more of the same treatment.

While at Walden I was required to travel and attend two in-person residences, and these were nonsense. They just provided word documents that contained links that I could have looked up myself. There was no benefit to these in-person residences, but they used up weeks of my GI Bill.

Walden said it would take just 3 years to get my degree and that was not true. I feel like my PhD process at Walden was dragged out for no educational purpose. I hope that you will remember stories like mine when you consider the rules around accreditation today. Thank you for the time to comment.