

The Anatomy of a Diploma Mill

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Brown University



* The views herein are that of the author's, not that of her employers

The Pitch

No coursework,
exams,
attendance!

All at a low, low
price!

Do you want to:

- Obtain an degree legally within 48 hours?
- Be confident that your degree is verifiable and attributed? That is your employer May contact any time to the institution that provides you the certificate.
- Get degrees avoiding any COURSE WORK, EXAM or ATTENDANCE?
- Pay a very little amount of money that any such services around the world
- DO NOT want too many identical degrees within the same country or city? (We control certain number of degrees available in different country or city)
- Get a quality university degree that can impress your employers or other people?

We are CONFIDENT that we can help you!

What is special about our degrees?

- All degrees are registered
- Legal and Verifiable
- Accredited by academic accreditation agency
- No coursework, No attendance, No assignment and No Exam,
- Express Delivery Of the Certificates
- Impressive Diploma leather folder and presentation
- Authentic Degree, otherwise Money Return Guaranteed!

Legal and
verifiable!

We are providing this service since 1999. 11 years of experience in this field.

Associate Degree, USD\$ 170
Bachelor Degree, USD\$ 190
Masters Degree, USD\$ 220
Doctorate Degree, USD\$ 260
Professorship, USD\$ 310
Fellowship, USD\$ 310
Scholarship, USD\$ 310
Honorary Doctorate, USD\$ 370

[Order Your Degree Now !](#)

Diploma Mills

- Degrees obtained from unaccredited universities in exchange for \$
 - Distinct from counterfeiters and distance education
- Est. 200k degrees purchased per year
 - Probably “confer” ***more degrees per year than any single state*** except for CA and NY
- Billion dollar industry
- Common purposes:
 - Job qualification
 - Promotions/raises
 - Visa hacking
 - Identity theft



Why are they bad news?



Cut-Rate Diplomas

How doubts about the government's own "Dr. Laura" exposed a résumé fraud scandal.



Quackwatch SM

Your Guide to Quackery, Health Fraud, and Intelligent Decisions

**Bogus Naturopath (Laurence Perry)
Convicted of Manslaughter**

DIPLOMA MILL NEWS

Member of Accrediting Group Has Ph.D. From 'Notorious Diploma Mill'

How students get caught

- Promoted to prominent position
 - Publish bio online
- Alienated colleagues
- Take on life-or-death responsibilities
- Harp on credentials (“call me doctor”)
- Too many specifics
 - University location
 - Recent dates
- Federal gov’t sweeps



What separates them from real universities?

- In practice: state degree granting rights
 - May be accredited by an under-developed country, or self-signing
- Award degrees based on life experience
 - Few or no teaching facilities
- Degree referral services
- Pay by the degree rather than by credits
- A .edu address is not enough!

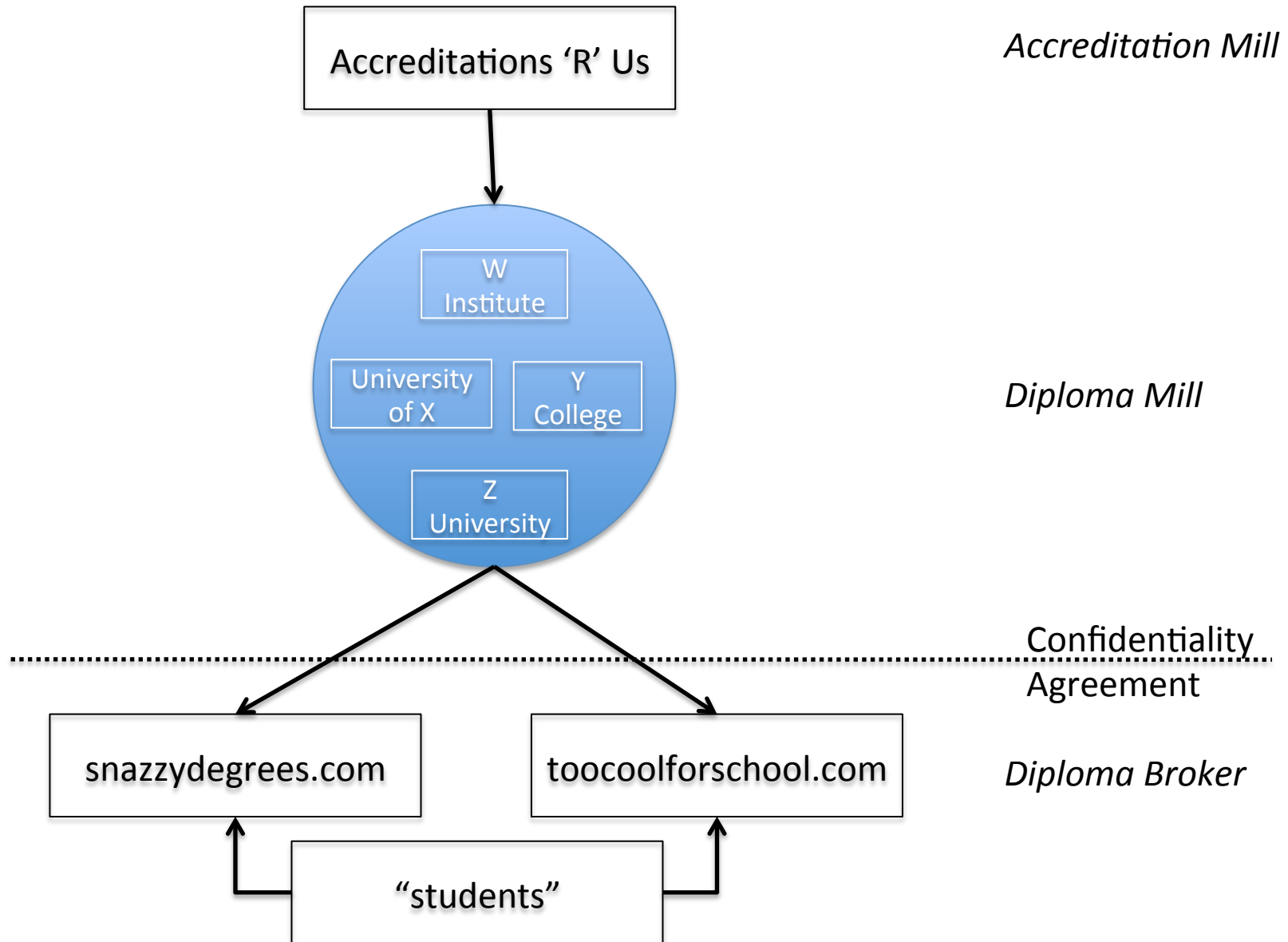
What separates them? (con'd)

- In US, degree-granting rights awarded by:
 - Congress,
 - Sovereign Indian tribes
 - States
- >98% of universities licensed by state
- Most fakes register as non-public secular orgs
- Accreditation is voluntary
- DMs exploit this loophole

How do they stay in business?

- Use of the word “accredited” is policed by the FTC
 - Have not enforced law once to date
- It is best to be from Idaho, Hawaii, Montana, or California
 - Or a combination of several states for jurisdictional hopscotch
- Be accredited by a foreign country
 - For style points, bribe their officials
- Many move from state to state as they get busted

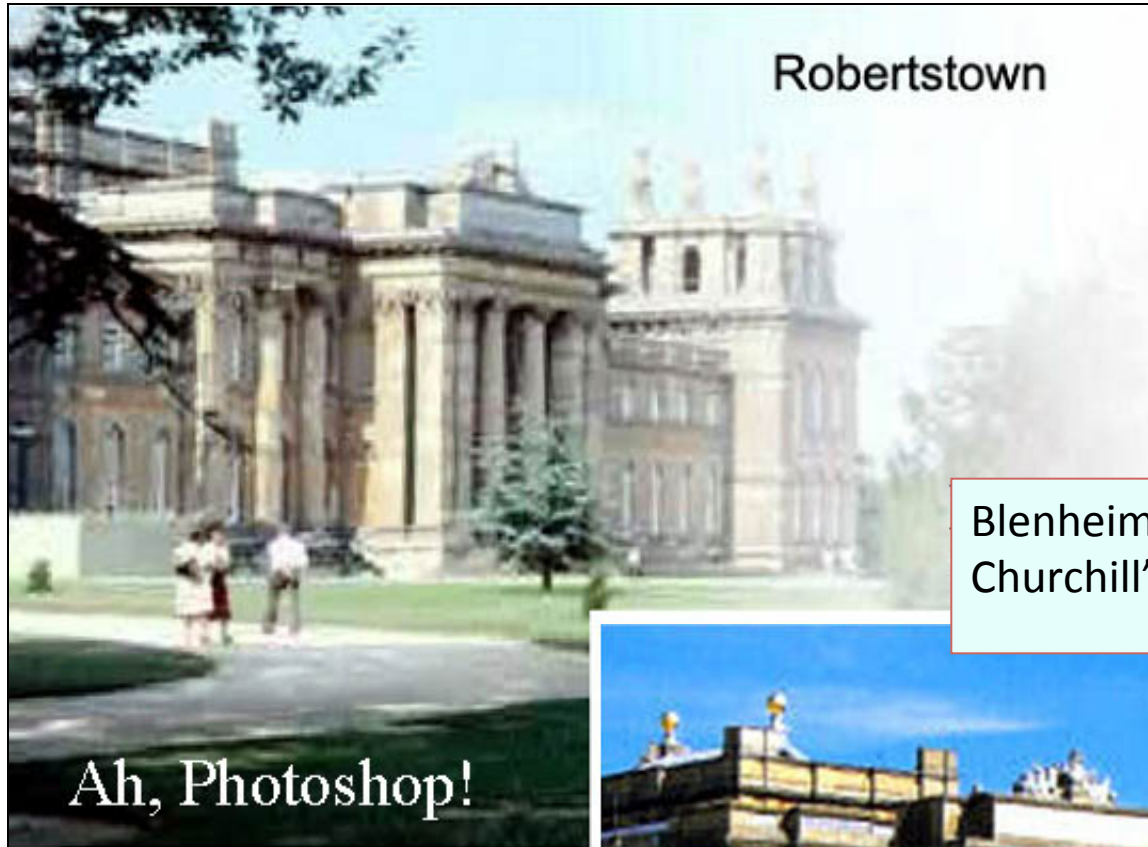
The lay of the land



Tricks of the trade

- Sound-a-likes to prestigious institutions
- Create degrees from defunct universities
- May backdate diplomas
- Flipside: occasionally real schools sell diplomas out the back door.
- Misleading address (floor # → P.O. Box)
- Fake campus pics
- Use anonymous domain registrations

Fake Campus



Blenheim Palace is Winston Churchill's birthplace.

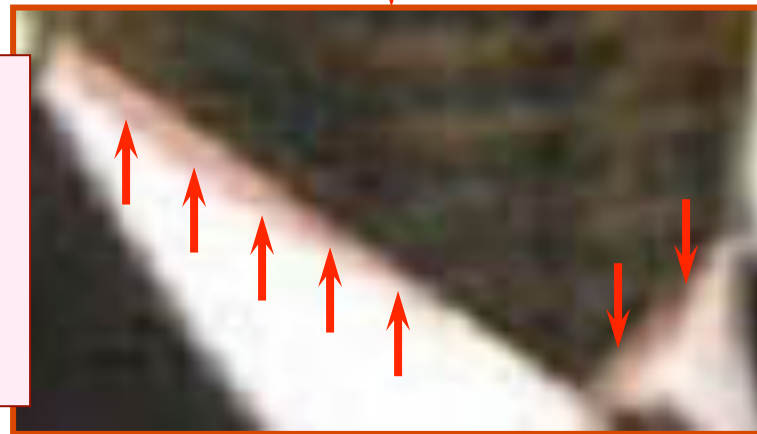


Source: G. Gollin, UIUC

Zombie Professors



Saint Regis faculty:
Richard Hoyer
William Harrison
Adino Guevara



Source: G. Gollin, UIUC

Bootstrap the process

The image shows two overlapping search engine results pages. The top page is a Google search for "buy registered degree", showing approximately 82,600,000 results. The bottom page is a Bing search for the same query, showing 1-10 of 198,000,000 results. Both pages feature several advertisements for buying degrees from various universities and degree programs.

Google Search Results:

- Search: buy registered degree
- About 82,600,000 results (0.20 seconds)
- Advertisements:
 - Buy Degree | McFordUniversity.Com** (www.mcforduniversity.com/): Buy a University Degree based on your Work or Life Experience.
 - Buy Your Degree - Don't Wait | glendaleuniversity.com** (www.glendaleuniversity.com/): Buy Your Degree Now Glendale University Online Free App
 - Kaplan @ Business Degree | Kaplan.edu** (www.kaplan.edu/): Launch A Career In Business & Do It On Your Time. Request Info!
- Organic Results:
 - Online Accredited Degree Programs, Buy an Accredited Degree ...** (www.registereddegree.com/): Get your Accredited Degrees Online. Accredited Degrees instant at affo...
 - Online Accredited Degree P** (www.registereddegree.com/faq): Buy College Degree. FAQ from R...
 - Blog | Online Accredited De** (www.registereddegree.com/categ...): 11 Jul 2014 - Accredited degree...

Bing Search Results:

- Search: buy registered degree
- 1-10 of 198,000,000 results -Advanced
- Advertisements:
 - Top Online College Degree**: Grant Funding May Be Available for Those That Qualify! Free Info. www.ClassesUSA.com
 - Buy A Degree**: Looking for Buy A Degree? Find & Compare Buy A Degree Offers Now. buyerpricer.com/buy-a-degree
 - Earn High School Diploma**: High School Course Online. 100% Online Study. Get Free Info Now. Earn-Degrees-Online.net/HighSchool
 - Buy Degree**: Find Buy Degree That Fits Your Interests & Budget Now. DegreeCoursesDirect.com
 - Buy College Degree**: Get Instant Answers For Buy College Degree Now. GreatDegreeMaster.com
- Organic Results:
 - Buying University Degree**
 - Buying College Degrees**
 - Buy My Degree**
 - Buy Accredited Degree**
 - Buy a Bachelor's Degree**
 - Buy a Real College Degree**
 - Buy a Bachelor Degree Online**
 - 76 Degree Buy Coconut Oil**
- RELATED SEARCHES:
 - ALL RESULTS
 - Online Accredited Degree Programs, Buy an Accredited Degree | Buy ...**: BUY YOUR DEGREE? Do you want to quickly succeed and be recognized by getting a registered bachelor, master or university doctorate PHD degrees ? www.registereddegree.com
 - Online Accredited Degree Programs, Buy an Accredited Degree ...**: Buy University Degree from Registered Degree. Bachelor, Master and PHD Degrees available from Accredited Universities in the world. registereddegree.com/order
 - Home - Cheapest Fastest Accredited University Degree**: Legally registered degree can be a door opener to many opportunities. ENJOY better VIP ... If you want to go direct, then Click the link above ("Buy DEGREE now"). ONE ... cheapestdegree.com
 - Degree Requirements: Registered Nurse to Bachelor of Science in ...**: Degree Options Registered Nurse to Bachelor of Science in Nursing Degree Completion Program Degree Requirements. The minimum requirement for the Bachelor of Science ... nursing.iupui.edu/degrees/rtob/degree.shtml
- SEARCH HISTORY:
 - Search more to see your history
 - See all
 - Clear all · Turn off
- Related Searches for buy registered degree

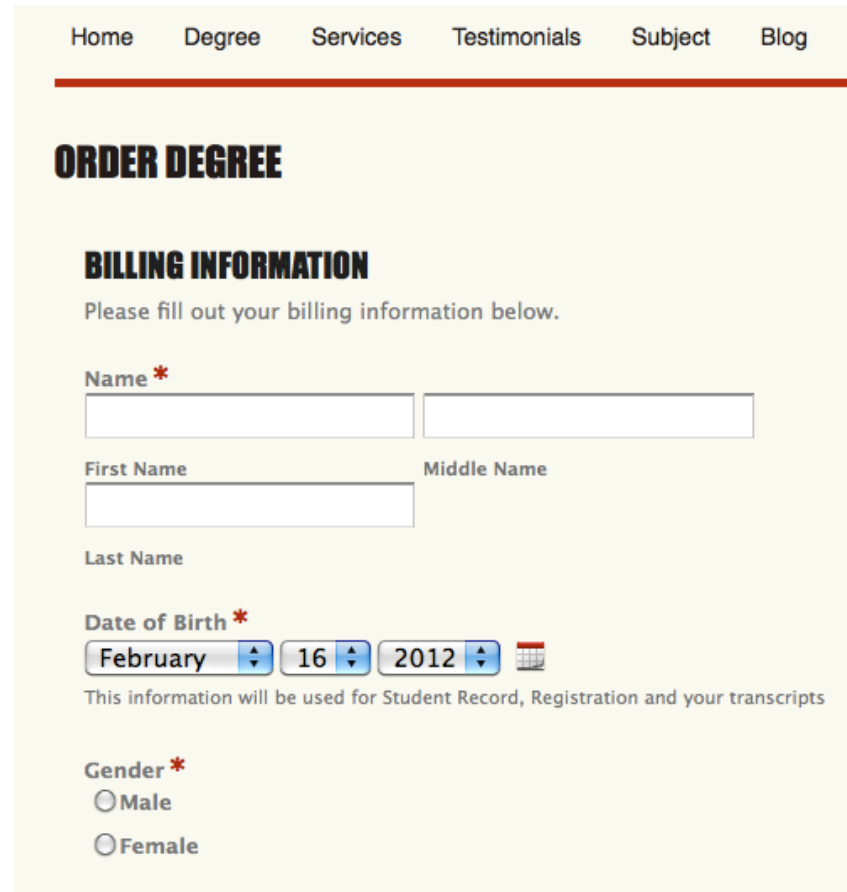
Case Study: Belford University

- Accredited in United Arab Emirates
 - Mailing address the same
- Administration in Humble, TX, possibly Wyoming
- Website located in the UK
- Probably sells degrees via affordabledegrees.com
- Associated HS is currently subject of a class action lawsuit



So, how do I get a diploma?

- Several sites will sell you whole packages
- Do not disclose the name of the university “for privacy”
- Main requirement: credit card
 - Sometimes ask for an id
 - Mostly for MAD



Home Degree Services Testimonials Subject Blog

ORDER DEGREE

BILLING INFORMATION

Please fill out your billing information below.

Name *

First Name Middle Name

Last Name

Date of Birth *

February 16 2012

This information will be used for Student Record, Registration and your transcripts

Gender *

Male

Female

Tailor your college experience...

Pick a graduation date

Select or invent a major

How was it completed?

DEGREE INFORMATION

Exact Name Appears in the Diploma *

Name will be printed exactly as shown (please put your complete first name, middle name and last name) This name will be printed EXACTLY in your diploma

Graduation Date *

February 16 2012

Please put your desired graduation date (we can backdate your degree if you wanted)

Degree Level *

Please select your degree level

Major

Computer Science

Please select your major of study

OTHER:

If the major cannot be found in the list, please indicate here if we can help.

Mode of Study *

Full Time Study

Part Time Study

Distance Learning

Online Study

Mixed Mode (Part Time and Online Study)

Please indicate your mode of study (This will help us better understand your need and to make your documents better)

Tailor your college experience...

Buy a transcript

to order the following extra items with your degree ?

Academic Transcripts
 USD\$ 100

This is the academic transcripts to show all your courses during your period of study

Quantity

Please specify the number of transcripts you wanted to order

Desired Grade for Transcripts

Please indicate your desired grade if you are ordering transcript

OTHER DEGREE RELATED ITEMS

Student Records
 USD\$ 95

This is your student records to proof of your study and graduation

Acceptance Letter
 USD\$ 95

This is the university acceptance letter (admission letter)

Graduation Letter
 USD\$ 95

This is the university graduation letter

Select your grades

Manufacture supporting docs

Tailor your college experience...

Reference Letter by First Professor

USD\$ 95

This reference letter will be written by one of your professors in your faculty

Reference Letter by a Second Professor

USD\$ 85

This reference letter will be written by one of your professors in your faculty

Reference Letter by a Third Professor

USD\$ 85

This reference letter will be written by one of your professors in your faculty

Letter of Appreciation

USD\$ 95

This letter will be written by our professors or senior administrators at your school

Student ID Card

USD\$ 135

Official University Student ID card and this can be used as official ID

SHIPPING METHOD

Registered Air Mail: 2 to 3 weeks (Depending on your location)

Express Air Mail: 7 days

DHL or Fedex: 4 days

Buy letter(s)
of reference

Get a
student ID

...but don't talk about it

- Diploma mills use ToS to deter scrutiny
- Clickwrap requires:
 - Client not a journalist
 - Client not law enforcement
 - Client will not use “public interest” defense
 - Strict confidentiality agreement
 - For personal use only
- Most of these terms are of limited enforceability

Not even trying to look real...

I further understand that The University offers no classes, no curriculum, no lectures, no staff or faculty, no literature, learning materials, testing, or thesis or dissertation review.

Certification of Understanding (Signature required) By checking the "Agree" Box below:

I certify that the information contained in this online order form / application is complete, accurate, and true. I understand that any misrepresentation of facts on this application could be cause for refusal of admission, reversal of certification, or dismissal from the Graduate Records of the University if discovered. I further understand that The University offers no classes, no curriculum, no lectures, no staff or faculty, no literature, learning materials, testing, or thesis or dissertation review. I also understand that the University is not a United States based educational institution, nor is it recognized, endorsed or accredited by any accrediting agency recognized by the United States Department of Education. The University is an international business company conferring degrees to qualified applicants based upon previous life and work experience, training or education obtained from other institutions and career, work and life experience. I further certify, that I will not utilize my graduation package, and the materials therein, to misrepresent my qualifications, training, experience, or work History, and that I will indemnify The University against any and all claims or liabilities which may result should I do so. I also understand that because the University is not registered, recognized, accredited or endorsed by any United States or other governmental or regulatory body, my graduation package may be considered an "honorary degree" or in some instances, a "novelty product" in the United States or by certain other governmental bodies, agencies, institutions or employers. I further understand that it is my sole responsibility to determine the legality of use of the instruments contained in the graduation package. Neither this site, nor its owners, operators or agents may be held liable for any damages if you misuse or misrepresent your qualifications, credentials or experience. You accept full responsibility; assume all risk and any consequences. I Agree to the above and Understand the provisions of the Fraud Policy and Legal Action Notice [here](#)

I agree

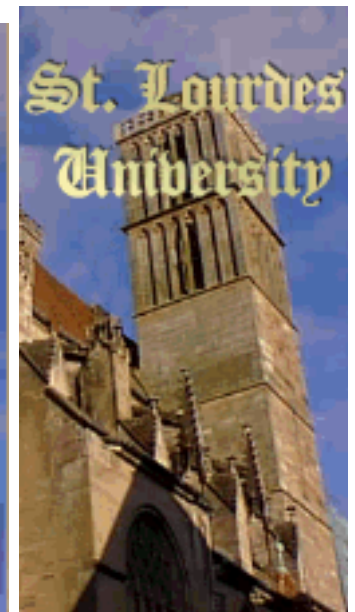
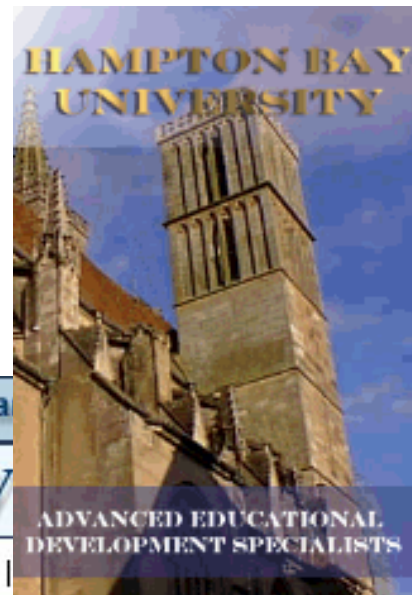
Document: Done (0.881 secs)

How To Identify A Diploma Mill

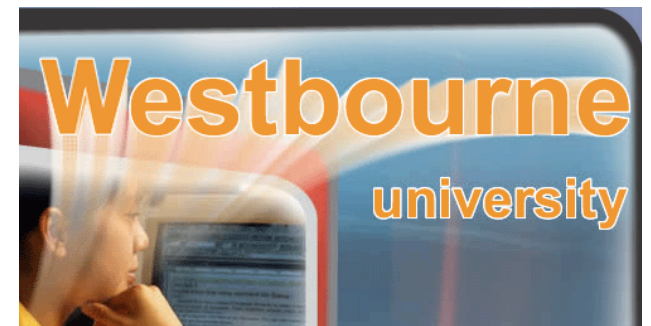
- Award life experience
- No physical address
- Bare bones website
- Offers wacky majors (i.e., hypnotherapy)
- Will not allow access to theses for grad degrees
- Oregon Office of Degree Authorization list
- No campus visits
- No phone contact w/academic faculty
- “Hinky” copied web page text



“Chains” of universities



University Degree Program



Cat-and-mouse



- Diploma mills are usually charged with:
 - Conspiracy, Mail fraud and/or wire fraud
- Relevant lawsuits
 - St. Clement's U. vs the state of Maine
 - St. Luke's School of Medicine vs Gollin, Oregon
- Cyberstalk and malign at least one researcher and his family
- Some actively court legislators to deter regulation
- DMs create a chilling effect to protect business



Steve Randock

Operation Gold Seal



Dixie Randock

- JTF undercover operation in 2008
 - USSS, DHS, ICE, Postal Inspectors, IRS, Fed. Protective Agency, Spokane PD, Washington AG, US Attny of E. Washington
- Target: St. Regis University
 - Granted degrees from 66 real schools, 121 fakes
 - 1/3 postgraduate, 1/3 high school
 - Bribed officials in Liberia
 - Sold \$7.3M worth of degrees over 3.5 years
- 8 defendants; ringleaders sentenced to 3 years in prison for wire & mail fraud

St. Regis Fallout

- “Students” included:
 - Teachers
 - Dept. of Health oncology expert
 - Lots of feds and their contractors
 - Some w/Top Secret clearances
 - White house staffer, State Dept.
 - Author of books on “prescription dosages and nursing care”
 - A police chief
 - A building inspector



Accreditation Mills

- Like a self-signed certificate
- Common tactics:
 - Invent an accreditor
 - Buy approval from an impoverished country
 - Claim to accredit Harvard, etc., w/o their consent
 - Register with the Better Business Bureau
- Not recognized by DoE or CHEA
- Some claim accreditation by submitting Apostille to State Dept.
 - Like getting notarized w/o verifying content
- ~200+ unrecognized accrediting agencies in USA

Additional Information

- George Gollin, UIUC
 - http://www.hep.uiuc.edu/home/g-gollin/higher_education.html
- Ezell & Bear: **Degree Mills: The Billion-dollar Industry**
- John Bear, *Bears' Guide*
 - <http://www.degree.net/diploma-mills/>
- Oregon diploma mill list
 - <http://www.osac.state.or.us/oda/unaccredited.aspx>
- Pets with diplomas
 - http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Colby_Nolan