

Ignorance is not bliss. Ignorance is ignorance.

Also refer to stories about diploma mills on the Cheyenne Herald website

There is at least one useful bit of information gleaned from the anonymous letters posted on the multitude of forums and blogs available now on the internet.

The bit of information is just how little some people know when they think they know it all.

Examples abound but I only look at about three or four forums - one is the WTE forum and three have to do with diploma mills in one way or another. Two are specifically soliciting postings from former Kennedy-Western University and Warren National University students. Each "institution" has a forum of its own but my attention is directed primarily to the WNU one. The Cheyenne Herald is mentioned frequently as a source of information and I try to see that quotes from my articles and from the website are accurate.

Recent postings (anonymous, of course) by someone who claimed to be a "graduate" are reproduced in the box following:

Better than U of Phoenix and Kaplan

"Tough courses at master's and doctoral level. Hard doctoral dissertation (sic) to research and write; reviewed and approved by three tenured professors...two from PAC (sic), one from Big 12. Took two other grad courses not as tough and demanding, one from U of Phoenix and one from Kaplan. WNU (previously Kennedy-Western) let several thousand BS/BA, MBA/MA, and PhD/DBA down in 2009 by failing to attain WACS. WACS officials said K-W/WNU had the courses and texts, tests and papers as difficult as resident universities, but financially ran the school into the ground (transparent to the students and graduates) and couldn't prove solvency needed for WACS. Earned degrees by many should be honored by all, but fire throwers will want to lump this school in with diploma mills, which is 180 degrees opposite of actual reality." (Posted on the Warren National University forum, February 11, 2010)

Then, the same anonymous liar posted on the Kennedy-Western University forum on February 22, 2010:

PhD / BA review

"Demanding courses, excellent texts, difficult tests, good faculty help whenever needed. Dissertation research long and time consuming, graded and passed by PAC 10 tenured professors. State accreditation. Regional failed to attain. For-profit owners pocketed all proceeds; invested little back into program -- NACS wouldn't accept excuses. Had almost 25 year run. Still excellent online education attained."

There is very little in the postings that are true or accurate. It is likely that the poster has no "degree" from either discredited "institution." Anonymous posters are predisposed to lie and exaggerate. That's why they don't use their own name. It's so much harder to lie and exaggerate if people know who you are.

The beginning of the posts I will not challenge. Never having taken a course from any of the places mentioned, UOP, Kaplan, KW-U or WNU, I have no basis of comparison. But I would seriously doubt any dissertation was reviewed and approved by credible scholars based on what the former Chief Academic Officer of Warren National University told me in an exclusive interview.

It is when the anonymous poster segued into his/her supposed knowledge of the operations of KW-U / WNU that I became offended. A knowledgeable person would know that Warren National posted on its

own website that accreditation would have meant nothing to those who had earned "degrees" prior to the date of accreditation. The failure of gaining accreditation did not let down any prior "graduates" of KW-U or WNU. They held and would forever hold an unaccredited degree that would have little value and that minimal value would diminish over time. Some would try to pass it off as from an accredited "institution" but WNU made it clear that earlier degrees would remain virtually without worth or value. If the anonymous poster really knew this subject as he/she pretends, he/she would have been aware of that fact.

Anonymous posters make things up out of whole cloth - we'll get into some of the postings about the Safeway closing that will confirm that in a bit - but present it as though they know what they're writing about and some readers of these free-flow forums will believe what they read.

The post "WACS officials said K-W/WNU

had the courses and texts, tests and papers as difficult as resident universities, but financially ran the school into the ground ..." is an absolute made-up statement. Why am I so certain? First, WACS stands for "Western Association of Schools and Colleges" and "is responsible for the evaluation of the quality and effectiveness of colleges and universities offering the baccalaureate degree and above in California, Hawaii, Guam and the Pacific Basin."

In the second post, the lonely misfit living in a basement bedroom in his parent's home changed the accrediting agency to "NACS." And the professors who "approved" dissertations changed from two from PAC (sic) and Big 12 to just PAC10. And, now, K-WU had "state accreditation." There is no such thing.

The writer just made this stuff up. Just made it up from whole cloth. There is so little truth contained as to be worthless.

Warren National's application for accreditation went to the Higher Learning Commission, North Central Association (HLC). Warren was "licensed" in Wyoming at the time of application and never applied to WACS for accreditation.

I will make the anonymous creep an offer. If he can provide me any written documentation from WACS (NACS is the National Association of College Stores) to Warren National University, dated in the past four years, having to do with an application for accreditation, I will reproduce it in its entirety (after I verify its authenticity) on my website which has several hundred (350-500) visits every day.

The anonymous poster (notice the spelling and punctuation errors in the post - he/she holds a Doctoral?) said that WNU could not "prove solvency needed for WACS." WNU had an investment group out of Texas at the time they applied for accreditation - a group that invested several million dollars into the operation. Had WNU been able to secure accreditation from HLC, money would have been available to continue operations. The "institution" would have been valued at tens of millions of dollars had it gained accreditation. They had a long track record of being able to sell a valueless education to thousands - it would have a piece of cake with value. Everything was in place to do the job right. They had just found it more profitable to do things wrong. By most definitions, WNU was a diploma mill in that it was selling unaccredited "degrees." In fairness, I would make a distinction between WNU and those diploma mills that only sell a piece of paper. WNU, and K-WU before it, did provide text books, administer tests, etc., like a real college or university. But it sold a degree with limited to no value.

A degree from an accredited university allows a holder to advance to a higher degree. A degree from an unaccredited "institution" does not. Even WNU would not accept its own Bachelor's Degree toward a Master's Degree or its own Master's Degree toward a Doctoral or Ph.D. When a degree seller admits that its own degree does not make you eligible to pursue a higher degree from the same "institution," you know even they knew it wasn't the equivalent of a degree from an accredited college or university.

The "earned degrees" from K-WU / WNU will not be honored by all. Gradually, they be honored by none. If you hold one, hold your breath. If your employer does not know the details of your degree, count your blessings. As more and more publicity spreads (legislation in some states will outlaw the degrees) more and more employers will deem them worthless.

Students in unaccredited "institutions" like K-WU / WNU can learn. They can learn a great deal. And if that is sufficient to satisfy their use of such a degree, no harm, no foul. But if a "degree" is required for their job, advancement or

higher pay, it is only a matter of time until the considerable investment of time, effort and money expended toward an unaccredited degree may come back to bite them on the rear end.

The City of Cheyenne bought and paid for a degree (with public funds) for a former police chief from an unaccredited degree seller (Lacrosse University of Mississippi) - a business that was never authorized to "grant degrees" by the State of Mississippi. More and more employers have gotten wise and require that any degree used to get or hold a job or any degree for which they'll pay tuition reimbursement must be from an accredited college or university. In such places, a degree from K-WU or WNU is absolutely worthless.

Many of the anonymous posts on the WTE forum are just as preposterous. Some regarding the State purchase of the Safeway property and others follow:

"Ironic and a tragedy of sorts that the State, who should be fostering and cultivating our western heritage will now be responsible for taking over our only downtown grocery store."

"... and in taking our only downtown grocery store, also destroying part of the fiber of our downtown. This store was a part of this community for fifty years."

Never mind that the State did not buy the property until years after Safeway initially advised them that the property was for sale and months after Safeway told the State they were closing the store.

An anonymous poster on February 14, 2010: *"How many articles is this lousy newspaper gonna run about this over-rated story? this store smells like rotten milk."*

A few days later, an anonymous poster: *"Now the Cole theater is closing ... They deserve to close. That theatre smelled like rotten milk!"* Same person? Yah!

Others misidentified a local retailer closing, naming the wrong one, Auto Electric, instead of the right one, Automatic Electric. Forget the potential damage in telling the few WTE forum readers of your drivel - you can appear knowledgeable when you are, in fact, completely ignorant of the facts. Clueless.

On February 15, 2010, a "dbb" wrote: *"How did Kaysen cause Auto Electric to go out of business?"*

On February 16, 2010, a "jw" wrote: *"Auto Electric's demise has NOTHING to do with who the mayor is, ... but if the company is poorly run or can't compete then there is not much the government can do about it and they shouldn't."*

The second poster was concerned that there be no reflection on the mayor but oblivious to the fact they identified the wrong business. (See page 10.)