



Crown College sued by students

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TACOMA, Wash. – Just one week after BCTI closed its campuses, some students are suing Crown College in Tacoma for fraud.

The Crown College students claim in their class-action lawsuit that school officials told them their credits and degrees would transfer to other institutions, but later learned most institutions will not accept their credits.

Though Crown is nationally accredited by an agency that oversees career schools, traditional colleges, such as the University of Washington or the University of Puget Sound, are regionally accredited and most do not accept transfer credits from nationally accredited schools.

The students say they did not know that Crown College credits would not transfer to other colleges or universities.

John Wabel, who owns and runs Crown College, said some regionally accredited colleges do accept students with Crown College degrees and credits. For example, University of Phoenix and City University accept most Crown College credits.

But Crown isn't the only local school to wind up in court over student complaints. Earlier this month, students of the Gig Harbor-based Business Career Training Institute (BCTI) filed a class-action lawsuit claiming the career school targeted welfare recipients, the unemployed and other vulnerable students and offered high-priced programs that provided little useful training, but left students thousands of dollars in debt.

Under scrutiny from state officials in Washington and Oregon, BCTI closed all of its campuses last week.

In February, 11 students sued Bates Technical College over its court reporter program, claiming their instructor was not qualified and created a hostile environment for students.

In 2002, Bates paid \$1.25 million to settle a similar lawsuit brought by 15 former students in its program that teaches how to make dentures.

In 2000, Green River Community College settled a lawsuit by giving free tuition to 179 law enforcement program students who claimed Green River misrepresented the program's quality, equipment and facilities and students' ability to transfer credits and get jobs.

Online at: http://www.king5.com/education/stories/NW_032105EDBcrowncollegeKC.15fa2c0a4.html