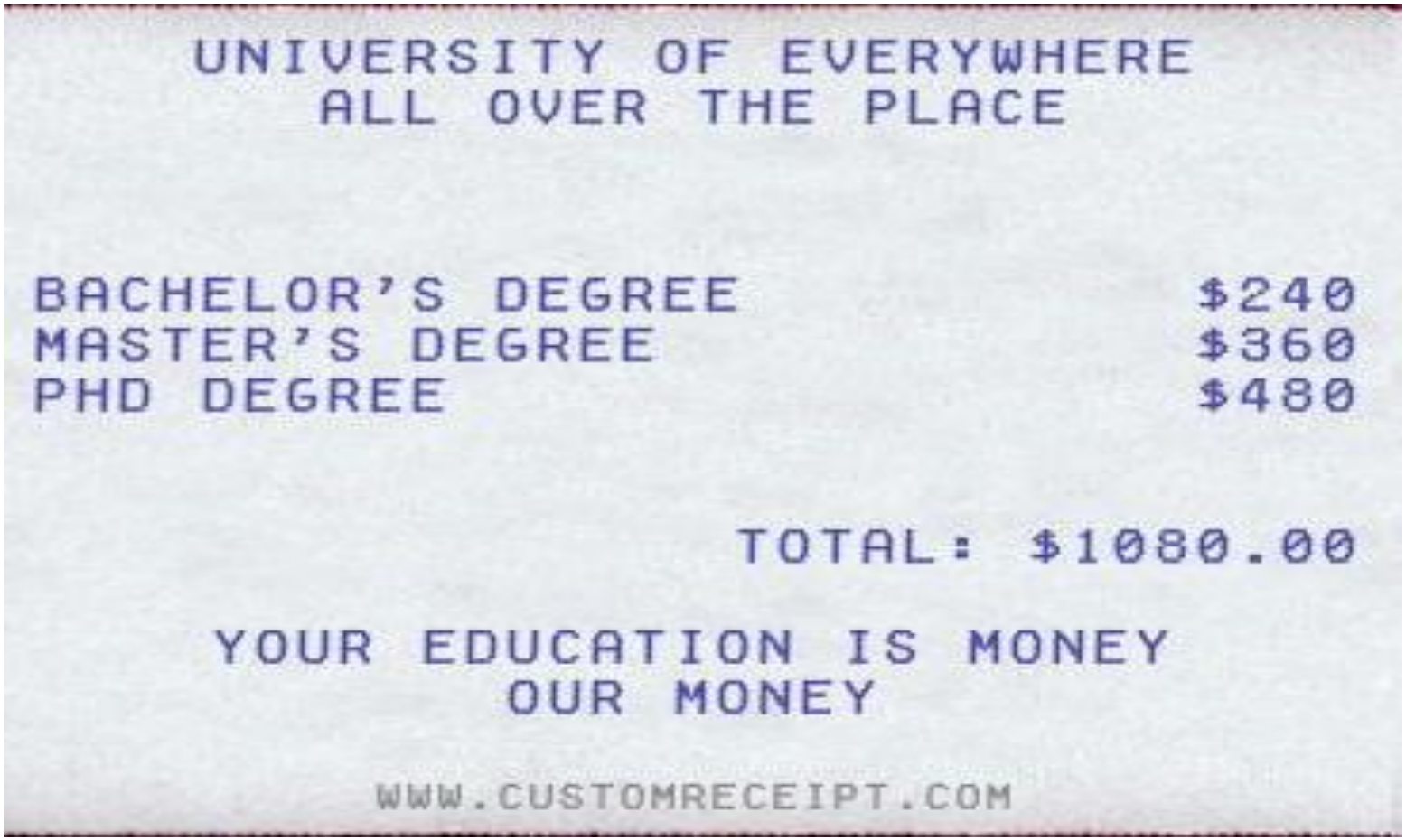
5 July

André Hesselbäck

News from the weird but not-so-wonderful world of diploma mills

Universitets- och högskolerådet

Lest we forget what a diploma mill is



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Those were the days…old school degree mills

- One-person operations
- Fewer vendors
- Self-accreditation and recognition, if any
- Interesting locations
- American, International or both

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WASHINGTON
INTERNATIONAL
UNIVERSITY

A Cyberspace University.
Founded 1994.
Incorporated in B.V.I. - 186940

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The more the merrier? – degree mills today

- Strength in numbers – industrial scale, networks and consortia
- Not so American or International, now it's ”Global” or ”multi-locational”
- Competition and hostile take-overs
- Legitimacy, real or perceived – accreditation mills
- Acceptance by third parties – credential evaluation mills
- Manipulating the sources – fake handbooks and databases

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One approach - Axact

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Axact – a very brief overview

- Operating in plain sight since around 1997
- Intially sold term papers, then added universities
- 700-900 fake university websites
- 400-500 fake accreditation agencies
- 100s of fake high school sites
- ’Feeder’ sites, affordable degrees come
- Has sold millions of fake degrees and made billions of USD

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…some more

- Bought out competitors (Almeda, Paramount California)
- ’Upsell’ – additional products
- Tracking and intimidating customers, former employees, media, and law enforcement agents
- Branching out – fake job sites, fake travel agencies
- Fake degrees as parts of ”migration packages”
- Relocated and reorganised – new sites launched continually, now using the .education domain

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School of Business and Management

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Another approach

- American Association for Higher Education and Accreditation
- California University FCE
- Quality Assurance Commission
- A network of schools and individuals in collaboration

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AAHE has enjoyed the same, Original United States 501-C3 Status since 1969

≡

American Association for Higher Education

Search ...

AAHEA LEGAL STATUS

IRS
Department of the Treasury
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AAHE HAS ENJOYED THE SAME, ORIGINAL UNITED STATES 501-C3 STATUS SINCE 1969. AAHEA is a tax-exempt organisation eligible to receive tax-deductible contributions.

READ MORE ...

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The times they are a-changing..

- Less focus on recognition, more on accreditation
- Validation, joint and double degree programmes, top-ups, credit transfer etc – preferably in co-operation with legitimate unis
- Credential Evaluation – an untapped resource
- Alternative sources and databases

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Accreditation –new developments

- Less in terms of self-accreditation
- Lots of effort put into acquiring legitimate accreditation, candidate for accreditation status, membership etc
- Accreditation as a source of revenue

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Open-minded credential evaluators

- California University FCE
- Approval Degrees Association
- Quality Assurance Commission -QAC

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California University FCE

University Tower, 4199 Campus Drive, Suite 550, Irvine, California 92612 USA and
Amorsolo Buildings # 1, 2, 3, & 4 - 6550 to 6558 Fountain Avenue, Hollywood, Los Angeles, CA 90028-7823 USA and
DeLa Pena & Amorsolo Building, 2701 to 2703 Beverly Blvd, Los Angeles, California 90057 USA
Business locations are on Premier Hollywood, Beverly Hills and Irvine real estate properties.
Web Site: http://californiauniversity.edu.cufce.org | E-mail: cauniversity@cufce.org

EDUCAUSE ID: 198820

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Be it known that, as a prestigious independent tertiary institution that is internationally accredited by **ASIC** - the **Accrediting Service for Schools, Colleges and Universities** based in the United Kingdom, a U.K. Government approved Accrediting Agency; As such listed in the **CHEA – Council for Higher Education Accreditation International Directory** of bona fide accrediting agencies.

Whereas, the programs of the institution named below has been validated and approved for credit transfer and double degree awards by some Universities recognized by the International Association of Universities and listed in the **IAU/UNESCO Directory of Universities**.

Whereas, the institution named below has accepted its affiliation with California University FCE., in Recognition of its acceptance, this Certificate of Affiliation is hereby awarded upon

University of Northwest Europe

Kerkrade, Netherlands and Brussels, Belgium

Whereas, California University FCE is now recognized by the United Nations NGO Branch A member of **CHEA INTERNATIONAL QUALITY GROUP** under **UNESCO.**
ID: 459C246 is granted to CUFCE as an evaluator.

In testimony whereof, the seal of California University FCE, the signatures of The President and the Executive Vice President-Secretary are hereunto affixed.

Given at the City of Los Angeles, California, United States of America
This 28th day of July 2016. Document No: CU7990-07-2916

DR. LUIS AMORSOLO
President

DR. LEANDRO S. AMORSOLO
Executive Vice President-Secretary

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Approval Degrees Association (Graduate Organization), Inc.

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Important:

Remember - Decisions will be made based on the information you supply.

Do not leave room for errors. Reliable evidence of your educational credentials will help you to achieve your goals.

Statistics

Visitors: 357005

Student Information System Login

Please enter your Student ID & Password:

Student ID:

Password:

Submit

Note: Please Click Here to Verify Certificates of Training Completion.

Approval Degrees Association (Graduate Organization), Inc.

ADA

EIN No. : 98-0475361

Based upon the information supplied to us by all listed universities & affiliations, I Deborah Campbell, a member of the board of Approval Degrees Association (ADA), hereby believe that the fore mentioned universities and institutions are in compliance with the academic, curriculum and educational policies and regulations pursuant to accepted international standards and thereby approve their degree programs.

ADA understands, and is highly experienced in the interpretation of credentials, professional licensure and education obtained internationally or credential attained by alternative methods.

Deborah Campbell

Why do you need to have your credentials evaluated?

A person educated outside their country of residence can request his/her academic credentials evaluated to internationally accepted equivalents for a variety of reasons.

For Educational Purposes:

Academic recognition is required for individuals who are seeking entry to an educational institution. Students who wish to continue their studies need to present their educational achievements in appropriate format.

For Employment:

Professional recognition is important for entry to the labor market because the employers are unfamiliar with different formats of foreign qualifications. A wide range of employment opportunities are available all over the world. To explore these opportunities you must have a certified equivalent of your education.

For Immigration:

Whether you are applying for temporary or permanent residence your application will gain credibility with correct reference to your educational background.

In the some countries there is no government agency that provides such services.

A qualified foreigner wishing to apply for a visa to study or work in their country of residence needs a statement from a competent authority indicating that educational qualifications are comparable to the national requirements ADA is a recognized agency that facilitates transfer of academic records between educational institutions.

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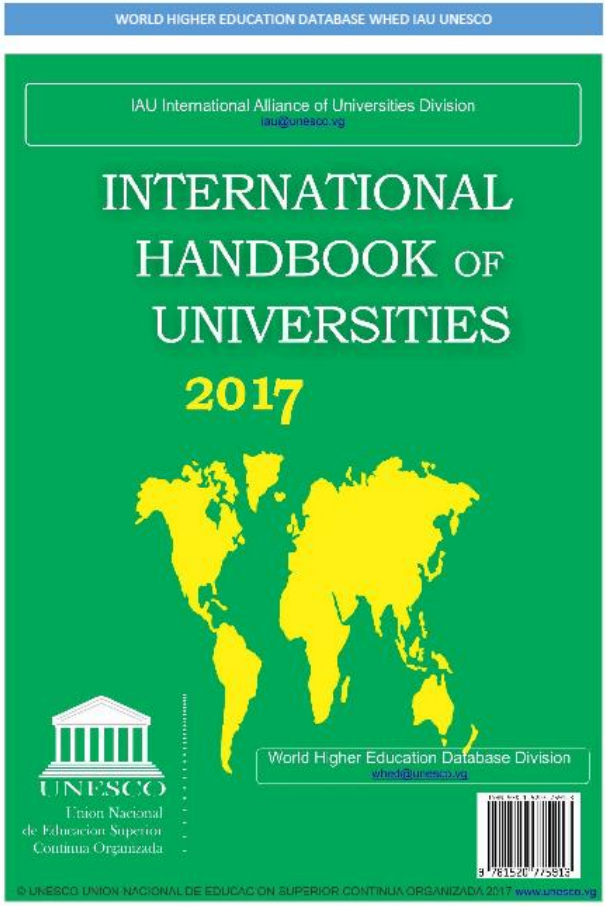
Fake databases



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Effects of this? Degree mills

- …pose a risk to peoples health and lives.
- …harm the reputation of recognised universities
- …will have a negative impact on the value of real education
- …may have a negative impact on research and education
- …reduce education (and accreditation) to tradeable commodities
- Revenues are used to finance other types of crime

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What to do?

- Take the fight
- Screen your applicants
- Protect legally terms like university, academy etc
- Information, produce and exchange

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