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[< Back to Regular Story Page](#)

Crown College to pay \$87,000 to settle lawsuit

DAVID WICKERT; The News Tribune

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Crown College of Tacoma will pay more than \$87,000 to settle claims by six students who said the school misled them about whether their credits would transfer to other colleges.

It's the third lawsuit against the school on similar grounds.

The students claimed officials at Crown – a private, for-profit school that offers criminal justice, business and other degrees – misled them about whether their credits would transfer to traditional colleges. Though Crown's credits transfer to the for-profit University of Phoenix and the nonprofit City University, by and large its credits do not transfer to traditional public colleges like the University of Washington. Nor do they generally transfer to private, nonprofit colleges like the University of Puget Sound.

In settling the lawsuit, Crown admitted no wrongdoing.

In January a Pierce County Superior Court jury found that Crown violated the state Consumer Protection Act in a lawsuit filed by another student, who claimed a school official told her she could transfer her credits to Gonzaga University in Spokane.

A judge ordered Crown College to pay nearly \$77,000 in damages and attorney's fees in that case.

In 2004 Crown settled a similar lawsuit brought by four students.

Crown isn't the only local college facing student lawsuits:

- Scores of students have filed a class-action lawsuit against the Gig Harbor-based Business Computer Training Institute. The for-profit school closed last year amid allegations it preyed on low-income students, promising high-tech training and good-paying jobs but delivering shoddy classes and retail and fast-food jobs.
- Numerous students have sued Tacoma's Bryman College, claiming the for-profit school misled them about the medical assistant program's accreditation status, their eligibility to take a national certification exam and other issues.
- Eleven students have sued Bates Technical College, a public school, over its court reporter program, claiming their instructor was not qualified and created a hostile environment for students.

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