

1 STATE OF OKLAHOMA

2 1st Session of the 55th Legislature (2015)

3 SENATE BILL 254

By: Dahm

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6 AS INTRODUCED

7 An Act relating to higher education; amending 70 O.S.
8 2011, Section 4104, which relates to degrees offered
9 by private institutions; exempting from certain
10 requirements religious degrees issued by certain
11 institutions; requiring religious degrees and
12 associated documents to contain certain modifier;
13 providing an effective date; and declaring an
14 emergency.

15 BE IT ENACTED BY THE PEOPLE OF THE STATE OF OKLAHOMA:

16 SECTION 1. AMENDATORY 70 O.S. 2011, Section 4104, is
17 amended to read as follows:

18 Section 4104. A. A private educational institution shall grant
19 only those degrees authorized by the Oklahoma State Regents for
20 Higher Education unless approved otherwise by a national or regional
21 accrediting agency which is recognized by the Secretary of the
22 United States Department of Education as a reliable authority as to
23 the quality of education or training offered by institutions of
24 higher education for the purposes of the Higher Education Act of
1965, as amended.

1 B. 1. This section shall not apply to religious degrees which
2 are used solely for religious purposes within a religious
3 organization or any institution of higher education whose primary
4 purpose is to provide religious training or theological education
5 and which is exempt from taxation pursuant to the provisions of
6 Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code, 26 U.S.C., Section
7 501(c)(3).

8 2. Each degree title offered pursuant to this subsection shall
9 include a religious modifier. The religious modifier must be placed
10 on the degree, on the transcript, and wherever the title of the
11 degree appears in official school documents or publications.

12 SECTION 2. This act shall become effective July 1, 2015.

13 SECTION 3. It being immediately necessary for the preservation
14 of the public peace, health and safety, an emergency is hereby
15 declared to exist, by reason whereof this act shall take effect and
16 be in full force from and after its passage and approval.

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