

1 **HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES - FLOOR VERSION**

2 STATE OF OKLAHOMA

3 2nd Session of the 59th Legislature (2024)

4 HOUSE BILL 4050

By: May of the House

5 and

6 **Prieto** of the Senate

7
8 AS INTRODUCED

9 An Act relating to higher education; amending 70 O.S.
10 2021, Section 4104, which relates to degrees from
11 private educational institutions; providing an
12 exemption for certain religious degrees; requiring
13 use of a religious modifier; providing an effective
14 date; and declaring an emergency.

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

16 SECTION 1. AMENDATORY 70 O.S. 2021, 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 shall be
10 placed on the degree, on the transcript, and wherever the title of
11 the degree appears in official school documents or publications.

12 SECTION 2. This act shall become effective July 1, 2024.

13 SECTION 3. It being immediately necessary for the preservation
14 of the public peace, health or 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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18 COMMITTEE REPORT BY: COMMITTEE ON HIGHER EDUCATION AND CAREER TECH,
19 dated 02/19/2024 - DO PASS, As Coauthored.

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