STATE OF NEW YORK

7549

2025-2026 Regular Sessions

IN ASSEMBLY

April 1, 2025

Introduced by M. of A. E. BROWN -- read once and referred to the Committee on Higher Education

AN ACT to amend the education law, in relation to the revocation of university or college degrees for certain acts and establishes the degree revocation registry

The People of the State of New York, represented in Senate and Assembly, do enact as follows:

Section 1. Short title. This act shall be known and may be cited as the "degree integrity and accountability act".

§ 2. Legislative findings and intent. The legislature finds that individuals who engage in serious misconduct, including criminal activity, terrorism advocacy, or severe violations of institutional policies, should not benefit from academic credentials that falsely represent their character and qualifications. Universities have the authority to revoke degrees in cases of fraud or academic dishonesty, but there is no clear process to ensure transparency and accountability in cases of severe post-graduation misconduct.

To prevent bad actors from misrepresenting their academic credentials and deceiving employers, this act establishes a public registry of degree revocations, ensuring employers can verify whether a degree has been rescinded.

§ 3. The education law is amended by adding two new sections 6436-a and 6436-b to read as follows:

§ 6436-a. Mandatory degree revocation for criminal and ethical violations. 1. The trustees or other governing board of every college chartered by the regents or incorporated by special act of the legislature and which maintains a campus, unless otherwise provided, shall adopt written rules for implementing all policies required pursuant to this section and for the maintenance of public order on college campuses and other college property used for educational purposes and provide a program for the enforcement thereof.

EXPLANATION--Matter in *italics* (underscored) is new; matter in brackets [-] is old law to be omitted.

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2. A degree-granting institution shall revoke the degree of any individual who has:

(a) been convicted of a violent felony offense as defined in subdivision one of section 70.02 of the penal law, terrorism-related offense under article four hundred ninety of the penal law, or hate crime under section 485.05 of the penal law;

(b) engaged in acts that constitute material support for terrorist organizations, including advocacy, incitement, or financial aid;

(c) participated in or led organized efforts to disrupt educational institutions through unlawful occupation, destruction of property, or threats of violence; or

(d) been found guilty of severe misconduct by a university disciplinary board, including academic fraud, falsification of credentials pursuant to section two hundred twenty-five of this chapter, or any act that would have prevented graduation had it been known at the time.

3. All degree-granting institutions shall report any degree revocation to the department within thirty days of such revocation.

4. Any degree-granting institution that fails to report a degree revocation may face fines up to five hundred thousand dollars per instance and may lose eligibility for state funding.

5. Any employer found to knowingly conceal or misrepresent a revoked degree in official records may face civil penalties.

§ 6436-b. Degree revocation registry. 1. The department shall establish and maintain an online database listing students whose degrees have been revoked, including, but not limited to, the:

(a) Name of the individual;

(b) Institution from which the degree was revoked;

(c) Date of revocation; and

(d) General reason for revocation.

2. Employers, academic institutions, and government agencies shall have unrestricted access to the database.

3. Students whose names appear on such registry may appeal for removal only if they receive legal exoneration or demonstrate a wrongful inclusion.

§ 4. This act shall take effect immediately.