

1 AN ACT regarding higher education.

2 Be it enacted by the People of the State of Illinois,  
3 represented in the General Assembly:

4 Section 5. The Criminal Code of 1961 is amended by adding  
5 Section 17-2.5 as follows:

6 (720 ILCS 5/17-2.5 new)

7 Sec. 17-2.5. False academic degrees.

8 (a) It is unlawful for a person to knowingly manufacture  
9 or produce for profit or for sale a false academic degree,  
10 unless the degree explicitly states "for novelty purposes  
11 only".

12 (b) It is unlawful for a person to knowingly use a false  
13 academic degree for the purpose of obtaining employment or  
14 admission to an institution of higher learning or admission  
15 to an advanced degree program at an institution of higher  
16 learning or for the purpose of obtaining a promotion or  
17 higher compensation in employment.

18 (c) Sentence. A person who violates this Section is  
19 guilty of a Class A misdemeanor.

20 (d) In this Section:

21 "False academic degree" means a certificate, diploma,  
22 transcript, or other document purporting to be issued by an  
23 institution of higher learning or purporting to indicate that  
24 a person has completed an organized academic program of study  
25 at an institution of higher learning when the person has not  
26 completed the organized academic program of study indicated  
27 on the certificate, diploma, transcript, or other document.

28 "Institution of higher learning" means a public or  
29 private college, university, or community college located in  
30 the State of Illinois that is authorized by the Board of  
31 Higher Education or the Illinois Community College Board to

1 issue post-secondary degrees, or a public or private college,  
2 university, or community college located anywhere in the  
3 United States that is or has been legally constituted to  
4 offer degrees and instruction in its state of origin or  
5 incorporation.

6 Section 99. Effective date. This Act takes effect upon  
7 becoming law.