

Application Information for Religious Exemption in North Carolina

No institution shall be subject to licensure under this section with respect to post-secondary degree activity based upon a program of study, equivalent experience, or achievement testing, the institutionally planned objective of which is the attainment of a degree in theology, divinity, or religious education or in any other program of study, equivalent experience, or achievement testing that is designed by the institution primarily for career preparation in a religious vocation. This exemption shall be extended to any institution with respect to each program of study, equivalent experience, and achievement test that the institution demonstrates to the satisfaction of the Board should be exempt from licensure requirements. [G.S. 116-15(c)]

The Board of Governors of The University of North Carolina has been authorized by the North Carolina General Assembly (G. S. 116-15) to license postsecondary, nonpublic institutions seeking to offer degree programs in the State of North Carolina. The General Statute which authorizes licensure also provides for exemptions from licensure for institutions that offer postsecondary degree activity in a program of study whose objective is to offer a degree in theology, divinity or religious education.

The institution seeking exemption shall demonstrate to UNC General Administration that it is indeed proposing to offer degree programs which fit the aforementioned description. In order to initially demonstrate that the institution you represent does qualify for exemption, we for the following supporting documentation:

1. Letter of intent addressed to UNC General Administration that describes the programs the institution is proposing to offer; the location of the institution; the expected start dates; and the projected size of the student body
2. Copies of Articles of Incorporation (issued by the North Carolina Secretary of State) for the institution
3. By-laws of the institution
4. Copies of diplomas or certificates for every proposed degree program that will be offered at the completion degree requirements
5. Photographs of the instructional facilities
6. Members of the Board of Directors with titles and degrees
7. Student catalogue with the course descriptions, refund policies, admissions policies, the exemption statement, and other areas clearly described
8. Signify your institutions' compliance with all the following items located in the Policy of the Board of Governors of the University of North Carolina with respect to religious exemption from licensure under G.S. 116-15.

**POLICIES OF THE
BOARD OF GOVERNORS OF THE UNIVERSITY OF NORTH CAROLINA
WITH RESPECT TO EXEMPTION FROM LICENSURE UNDER G.S. 116-15
OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

1. Delegation. It shall be the responsibility of the President to apply the provisions of G. S. 116-15 and relevant policies and procedures of the Board of Governors, including these policies, to any application for exemption pursuant to G.S. 116-15(d) from licensure to undertake post-secondary degree activity with reference to religious education and in each case to determine the propriety of such exemption.
2. Definitions. The definitions set forth in G.S. 116-15(a) are attached to and hereby incorporated by reference into these policies.
3. Standards for exemption. Exemption from licensure with respect to religious education under G.S. 116-15(d) shall rest upon one of the following:
 - a. That the subject education constitutes post-secondary degree activity based upon a program of study, equivalent experience, or achievement testing the institutionally planned objective of which is the attainment of a degree in theology, divinity, or religious education;
 - b. That the subject education constitutes a program of study, equivalent experience, or achievement testing, other than that identified in Section a, above, that is designed by the offering institution primarily for career preparation in a religious vocation.
4. Extent of exemption. An institution shall be conferred exemption from licensure only with respect to each program of study, equivalent experience, or achievement test that the institution demonstrates to the satisfaction of the President comes within one of the standards for exemption set forth in Section 3, above.
5. Determination of eligibility for exemption. The President shall determine whether to confer exemption with respect to religious education as provided in G.S. 116-15 only upon the President's receipt from staff of a recommendation concerning exemption based upon the following:
 - a. Staff summary of a site visit to the petitioning institution.
 - b. Documents and information relevant to the qualifying nature of the petitioning institution and the subject curriculum, which shall include:
 - (1) Articles of incorporation of the institution, including all current amendments thereto.
 - (2) The title of each degree program for which exemption is sought.

(3) The educational credential proposed to be given by the institution upon satisfactory completion of each program of study, equivalent experience, or achievement test for which exemption is sought.

(4) The catalog statement and any other institutional statement (such as curriculum outline) for each program of study, equivalent experience, or achievement test for which exemption is sought.

c. Assurances from the petitioning institution that it has conformed, or will conform, institutional literature and educational credentials to the conditions of licensure exemption pursuant to these policies, which shall include:

(1) Designating any degree program of study or academic credential for which exemption from licensure is to pertain by a title that clearly indicates its religious nature. Any degree program or credential that is entitled so as to include words having common acceptance as the name of a secular degree (e.g., “bachelor of arts,” “bachelor of science,” “master of arts,” “master of science,” “doctor of philosophy,” or a commonly recognized abbreviation for such a degree), whether appearing alone or in combination with other verbiage, shall be set forth in full when used in any academic publication, advertising, or credential of the institution so that the institutional objective of the program for its use in attainment of a degree in theology, divinity, or religious education or its institutional design primarily for career preparation in a religious vocation is apparent.

(2) Prominently displaying in relevant institutional publications a statement that the relevant degree program of study

has been declared by the appropriate state authority exempt from the requirements for licensure under provisions of North Carolina General Statutes Section (G.S.) 116-15(d) for exemption from licensure with respect to religious education.

(3) Prominently displaying in relevant institutional publications a statement that

exemption from licensure is not based upon assessment of program quality under established licensing standards.

6. Duration of exemption. Staff shall make annual inquiry of institutions conferred exemption with respect to religious education to ascertain the continuation of those

bases upon which there was conferred exemption from licensure. An exemption shall continue unless suspended or revoked by the President following the President's consideration of a corresponding recommendation from staff.

7. Pursuit of licensure. An institution shall seek licensure to conduct post-secondary activity with respect to any program of study, equivalent experience, or achievement test for which exemption from licensure has been denied for failure of the institution to satisfy these policies but which post-secondary activity the institution continues to offer or intends imminently to offer.
8. Violation of conditions. If the President determines that an institution (1) has failed to seek and obtain licensure or exemption from licensure, as required by these policies, or (2) has failed to fulfill any obligation attendant to exemption from licensure under these policies, the President may request that the Attorney General of North Carolina take appropriate action against the offending institution.
9. Effective date. These policies, as amended, are effective September 12, 1997.

Send all materials to:
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