

The California Institute of Technology

Pasadena, CA • Private School



The most comprehensive guide to free speech on campus — anywhere

Because a true university education requires freedom of expression.

The College Free Speech Rankings are based on student surveys, campus policies, and recent speech-related controversies.

OVERALL RANK

171 ▲

/257

▲ -60 FROM 2024

GRADE

F

— F FROM 2024

SPEECH CONTROVERSIES

0

— 0 FROM 2025

Overview

The California Institute of Technology ranks 171 out of 257 schools in the 2026 College Free Speech Rankings. Caltech earned a score of 56 and an F speech climate grade after tumbling 60 places from last year.

Caltech ranks 1 for “Openness” and places in the top 25 for “Comfort Expressing Ideas” and “Disruptive Conduct.” Even with those positives, the university’s “red light” Spotlight rating and lack of adoption of the Chicago Statement or a statement on institutional neutrality continue to drag down its overall standing.

Caltech could improve by revising its written speech policies to earn a “green light” Spotlight rating, adopting a free speech statement based on the Chicago Statement, and adopting an official commitment to institutional neutrality.

Spotlight Rating

Red



FIRE’s Spotlight database annually rates regulations on student expression based on the extent to which they restrict free speech.

If you are a school administrator and would like to discuss your rating, reach out to speechcodes@thefire.org.

Visit our website: <https://rankings.thefire.org/> for more information.

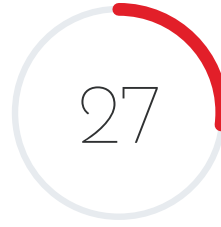
HIGHLIGHTS



42% of students say they have self-censored on campus at least once or twice a month.



54% of students say shouting down a speaker to prevent them from speaking on campus is acceptable, at least in rare cases.



27% of students say using violence to stop someone from speaking on campus is acceptable, at least in rare cases.

2.51:1

There are roughly 2.51 liberal students for every one conservative student.

Institutional Neutrality

NOT ADOPTED



Chicago Statement for Free Speech

NOT ADOPTED



SCORE DEEP DIVE

COMFORT EXPRESSING IDEAS

D+

▲ INCREASE

DISRUPTIVE CONDUCT

B

▲ INCREASE

OPENNESS

B

▲ INCREASE

SELF-CENSORSHIP

D-

▼ DECREASE

ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT

F

▲ INCREASE

POLITICAL TOLERANCE

F

▲ INCREASE

SCHOLARS UNDER FIRE

0

STUDENTS UNDER FIRE

0

DEPLATFORMINGS

0