

# University of California, Santa Barbara

Santa Barbara, CA • Public 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

161 ▼

/257

▼ -68 FROM 2024

## GRADE

F

— F FROM 2024

## SPEECH CONTROVERSIES

0

— 0 FROM 2025

## Overview

University of California, Santa Barbara ranks 161 out of 257 schools in the 2026 College Free Speech Rankings with a score of 56, an F speech climate grade. UCSB retains a “yellow light” Spotlight rating.

UCSB places in the top 50 for “Self-Censorship,” indicating fewer respondents feel pressure to keep quiet compared to other schools.

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

### Spotlight Rating

Yellow



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

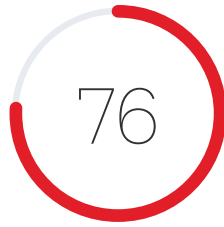
If you are a school administrator and would like to discuss your rating, reach out to [speechcodes@thefire.org](mailto:speechcodes@thefire.org).

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

HIGHLIGHTS



34% of students say they have self-censored on campus at least once or twice a month.



76% of students say shouting down a speaker to prevent them from speaking on campus is acceptable, at least in rare cases.



34% of students say using violence to stop someone from speaking on campus is acceptable, at least in rare cases.

7.34:1

There are roughly 7.34 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-

▼ DECREASE

DISRUPTIVE CONDUCT

C

▼ DECREASE

OPENNESS

C-

▼ DECREASE

SELF-CENSORSHIP

D

▼ DECREASE

ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT

F

▲ INCREASE

POLITICAL TOLERANCE

F

▼ DECREASE

SCHOLARS UNDER FIRE

O

STUDENTS UNDER FIRE

O

DEPLATFORMINGS

O