

# San Diego State University

San Diego, 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

165 ▼  
/257

▼ -94 FROM 2024

## GRADE

F

— F FROM 2024

## SPEECH CONTROVERSIES

0

— 0 FROM 2025

## Overview

San Diego State University ranks 165 out of 257 schools in the 2026 College Free Speech Rankings with a score of 56, an F speech climate grade. The university slid 94 places from last year's 71.

Student feedback paints a challenging picture with SDSU placing in the bottom 50 for "Comfort Expressing Ideas," indicating widespread reluctance to share controversial views. The school does not have any offsetting strengths in the top 50 for other areas, and it still earns a "yellow light" Spotlight rating, signaling policies that chill speech.

SDSU could start reversing course 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

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



40% of students say they have self-censored on campus at least once or twice a month.



71% of students say shouting down a speaker to prevent them from speaking on campus is acceptable, at least in rare cases.



33% of students say using violence to stop someone from speaking on campus is acceptable, at least in rare cases.

2.62:1

There are roughly 2.62 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+

▲ INCREASE

OPENNESS

C-

▼ DECREASE

SELF-CENSORSHIP

D-

▼ DECREASE

ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT

F

▼ DECREASE

POLITICAL TOLERANCE

F

▼ DECREASE

SCHOLARS UNDER FIRE

0

STUDENTS UNDER FIRE

0

DEPLATFORMINGS

0