

DePaul University

Chicago, IL • 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

220 ▲
/257

▲ -19 FROM 2024

GRADE

F

— F FROM 2024

SPEECH CONTROVERSIES

1

0 FROM 2025

Overview

DePaul University ranks 220 out of 257 schools in the 2026 College Free Speech Rankings. The university earned a score of 52 and an F speech climate grade. DePaul continues to earn a “yellow light” Spotlight rating, signaling speech policies that leave room for administrative discretion.

DePaul places in the bottom 25 for both “Disruptive Conduct” and “Administrative Support,” indicating that disruptive tactics remain widely accepted while confidence in leadership’s commitment to free expression is lower than other schools. The school ranks in the bottom 50 for “Political Tolerance,” suggesting many students hesitated to host controversial speakers. No area lands in the top 50, underscoring a broadly challenging climate for open dialogue.

DePaul 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.

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.

Spotlight Rating

Yellow

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

HIGHLIGHTS



52% of students say they have self-censored on campus at least once or twice a month.



75% of students say shouting down a speaker to prevent them from speaking on campus is acceptable, at least in rare cases.



41% of students say using violence to stop someone from speaking on campus is acceptable, at least in rare cases.

6.03:1

There are roughly 6.03 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

C

▼ DECREASE

OPENNESS

C

▲ INCREASE

SELF-CENSORSHIP

F

▼ DECREASE

ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT

F

▼ DECREASE

POLITICAL TOLERANCE

F

▼ DECREASE

SCHOLARS UNDER FIRE

1

STUDENTS UNDER FIRE

0

DEPLATFORMINGS

0