

DePauw University

Greencastle, IN • 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

18 ▲

/257

▲ 18 FROM 2024

GRADE

C-

▲ D FROM 2024

SPEECH CONTROVERSIES

0

— 0 FROM 2025

Overview

DePauw University ranks 18 out of 257 in the 2026 College Free Speech Rankings. Its score climbed 6 points to 71, a C- speech climate grade. The school earns a “green light” Spotlight rating and endorses the Chicago Statement, keeping policy penalties minimal.

Student sentiment has shifted sharply since last year. After ranking in the bottom 25 for “Comfort Expressing Ideas” last year, DePauw ranks the top 25 this year — one of the survey’s largest swings recorded.

DePauw could cement progress by adopting an official commitment to institutional neutrality.

Spotlight Rating

Green



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



45% of students say they have self-censored on campus at least once or twice a month.



65% of students say shouting down a speaker to prevent them from speaking on campus is acceptable, at least in rare cases.



26% of students say using violence to stop someone from speaking on campus is acceptable, at least in rare cases.

2.24:1

There are roughly 2.24 liberal students for every one conservative student.

Institutional Neutrality

NOT ADOPTED



Chicago Statement for Free Speech

ADOPTED



SCORE DEEP DIVE

COMFORT EXPRESSING IDEAS

D+

▲ INCREASE

DISRUPTIVE CONDUCT

B-

▲ INCREASE

OPENNESS

D+

▲ INCREASE

SELF-CENSORSHIP

D-

▲ INCREASE

ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT

F

▲ INCREASE

POLITICAL TOLERANCE

F

▼ DECREASE

SCHOLARS UNDER FIRE

0

STUDENTS UNDER FIRE

0

DEPLATFORMINGS

0