

University of Notre Dame

Notre Dame, 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

238 ▼

/257

▼ -71 FROM 2024

GRADE

F

— F FROM 2024

SPEECH CONTROVERSIES

1

— 1 FROM 2025

Overview

University of Notre Dame ranks 238 out of 257 schools in the 2026 College Free Speech Rankings with a score of 50, an F speech climate grade. The decline coincided with a 3-point penalty after the administration canceled Eman Abdelhadi's keynote address on Palestine.

Student perceptions place Notre Dame in the top 50 on "Disruptive Conduct," suggesting relatively low support for shouting down or blocking speakers. Yet scores drastically declined for "Self-Censorship" and "Political Tolerance." The university's "red light" Spotlight rating is an additional factor to Notre Dame's poor speech climate grade.

Notre Dame 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



46% of students say they have self-censored on campus at least once or twice a month.



69% of students say shouting down a speaker to prevent them from speaking on campus is acceptable, at least in rare cases.



24% of students say using violence to stop someone from speaking on campus is acceptable, at least in rare cases.

1.1:1

There are roughly 1.10 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

B-

▼ DECREASE

OPENNESS

D+

▼ DECREASE

SELF-CENSORSHIP

D-

▼ DECREASE

ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT

F

▲ INCREASE

POLITICAL TOLERANCE

F

▼ DECREASE

SCHOLARS UNDER FIRE

0

STUDENTS UNDER FIRE

0

DEPLATFORMINGS

1