

# Berea College

Berea, KY • 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

172 ▼  
/257

▼ -26 FROM 2024

## GRADE

F

— F FROM 2024

## SPEECH CONTROVERSIES

0

— 0 FROM 2025

## Overview

Berea College ranks 172 out of 257 schools in the 2026 College Free Speech Rankings with a score of 56, an F speech climate grade. The college still earns a “yellow light” Spotlight rating, with no adoption of the Chicago Statement or official commitment to institutional neutrality.

Student perceptions place Berea in the top 50 for “Comfort Expressing ideas,” a sharp rise from outside the top 150 last year. That bright spot is tempered by serious weaknesses: the school lands in the bottom 25 for “Self-Censorship” and the bottom 50 for “Political Tolerance” of speakers, suggesting many students silence themselves and resist hearing opposing views.

Berea 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

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



61% 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.



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

6.66:1

There are roughly 6.66 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+

▲ INCREASE

### OPENNESS

D+

▲ INCREASE

### SELF-CENSORSHIP

F

▼ DECREASE

### ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT

F

▲ INCREASE

### POLITICAL TOLERANCE

F

▼ DECREASE

### SCHOLARS UNDER FIRE

O

### STUDENTS UNDER FIRE

O

### DEPLATFORMINGS

O