

University of Maine

Orono, ME • 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

94 ▼

/257

▼ 9 FROM 2024

GRADE

F

▼ D- FROM 2024

SPEECH CONTROVERSIES

0

— 0 FROM 2025

Overview

University of Maine ranks 94 out of 257 schools in the 2026 College Free Speech Rankings with a score of 59, an F speech climate grade. UMaine continues to carry a “yellow light” Spotlight rating, and the University of Maine System has adopted the Chicago Statement, showing at least a written commitment to free expression.

Student sentiment tells a different story. Student responses place the campus in the bottom 50 for “Self-Censorship,” “Disruptive Conduct,” and “Openness,” signaling frequent silence on controversial issues, broad tolerance for shutting speakers down, and limited willingness to hear opposing views.

UMaine could begin reversing course by revising its speech codes to earn a “green light” Spotlight rating and by 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.

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.



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



43% of students say using violence to stop someone from speaking on campus is acceptable, at least in rare cases.

1.59:1

There are roughly 1.59 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

C

▼ DECREASE

OPENNESS

D+

▼ DECREASE

SELF-CENSORSHIP

F

▼ DECREASE

ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT

F

▲ INCREASE

POLITICAL TOLERANCE

F

▲ INCREASE

SCHOLARS UNDER FIRE

O

STUDENTS UNDER FIRE

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DEPLATFORMINGS

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