

Towson University

Towson, MD • 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

104 ▼
/257

▼ -51 FROM 2024

GRADE

F

▼ D- FROM 2024

SPEECH CONTROVERSIES

0

— 0 FROM 2025

Overview

Towson University ranks 104 out of 257 schools in the 2026 College Free Speech Rankings. Its score of 59 receives an F speech climate grade. The university retains a “yellow light” Spotlight rating, and the University System of Maryland adopted the Chicago Statement, benefiting Towson.

Student perceptions place Towson in the top 50 for both “Comfort Expressing Ideas” and “Openness” to dialogue, although each category slipped from the top 25 a year ago. At the same time, the campus ranks in the bottom 25 for “Disruptive Conduct,” suggesting widespread acceptance of shout-downs and other obstructive tactics.

Towson could improve by revising its written speech policies to earn a “green light” Spotlight rating, adopting an official commitment to institutional neutrality, and educating students on when expression crosses into unprotected conduct.

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



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



80% of students say shouting down a speaker to prevent them from speaking on campus is acceptable, at least in rare cases.



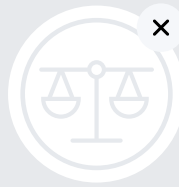
49% of students say using violence to stop someone from speaking on campus is acceptable, at least in rare cases.

1.68:1

There are roughly 1.68 liberal students for every one conservative student.

Institutional Neutrality

NOT ADOPTED



Chicago Statement for Free Speech

ADOPTED



SCORE DEEP DIVE

COMFORT EXPRESSING IDEAS

D

▼ DECREASE

DISRUPTIVE CONDUCT

D+

▼ DECREASE

OPENNESS

C+

▼ DECREASE

SELF-CENSORSHIP

D-

▼ DECREASE

ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT

F

▼ DECREASE

POLITICAL TOLERANCE

F

▼ DECREASE

SCHOLARS UNDER FIRE

0

STUDENTS UNDER FIRE

0

DEPLATFORMINGS

0