

Wellesley College

Wellesley, MA • 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

225 ▼

/257

▼ -83 FROM 2024

GRADE

F

— F FROM 2024

SPEECH CONTROVERSIES

0

— 0 FROM 2025

Overview

Wellesley College ranks 225 in the 2026 College Free Speech Rankings with a score of 52, marking an 83-place slide from last year. Its policies still earn a “yellow light” Spotlight rating.

Student perceptions place Wellesley in the top 50 for both “Self-Censorship” and “Openness” to discussing controversial topics, suggesting more students feel free to speak compared to other schools. Those bright spots are overshadowed by severe weaknesses: the college lands in the bottom 25 for “Comfort Expressing Ideas,” “Political Tolerance,” “Disruptive Conduct,” and “Administrative Support.”

Wellesley could improve by revising its written speech policies to earn a “green light” Spotlight rating, as well as adopting the Chicago Statement and 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



41% of students say they have self-censored on campus at least once or twice a month.



87% of students say shouting down a speaker to prevent them from speaking on campus is acceptable, at least in rare cases.



38% of students say using violence to stop someone from speaking on campus is acceptable, at least in rare cases.

21.17:1

There are roughly 21.17 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

▼ DECREASE

OPENNESS

C

▲ INCREASE

SELF-CENSORSHIP

D

▲ INCREASE

ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT

F

▼ DECREASE

POLITICAL TOLERANCE

F

▼ DECREASE

SCHOLARS UNDER FIRE

0

STUDENTS UNDER FIRE

0

DEPLATFORMINGS

0