

Michigan State University

East Lansing, MI • 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

60 ▲

/257

▲ 115 FROM 2024

GRADE

D -

— D- FROM 2024

SPEECH CONTROVERSIES

0

— 0 FROM 2025

Overview

Michigan State University ranks 60 out of 257 schools in the 2026 College Free Speech Rankings with a score of 62 and a speech climate grade of D-. Its Spotlight rating remains a “yellow light.”

Despite improvements, student perceptions place MSU in the bottom 50 for “Disruptive Conduct,” indicating considerable acceptance of tactics that shut down speakers.

MSU could continue improving by revising its written speech policies to earn a “green light” Spotlight rating and reaffirming the Chicago Statement.

Spotlight Rating

Yellow



FIRE’s Spotlight database annually rates regulations on student expression based on the extent to which they restrict free speech.

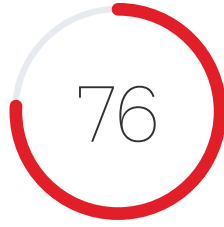
If you are a school administrator and would like to discuss your rating, reach out to speechcodes@thefire.org.

Visit our website: <https://rankings.thefire.org/> for more information.

HIGHLIGHTS



38% of students say they have self-censored on campus at least once or twice a month.



76% 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.

1.5:1

There are roughly 1.50 liberal students for every one conservative student.

Institutional Neutrality

ADOPTED



Chicago Statement for Free Speech

ADOPTED



SCORE DEEP DIVE

COMFORT EXPRESSING IDEAS

D

▲ INCREASE

DISRUPTIVE CONDUCT

C

▼ DECREASE

OPENNESS

C

▲ INCREASE

SELF-CENSORSHIP

D-

▼ DECREASE

ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT

F

▼ DECREASE

POLITICAL TOLERANCE

F

▼ DECREASE

SCHOLARS UNDER FIRE

0

STUDENTS UNDER FIRE

0

DEPLATFORMINGS

0