

Mississippi State University

Mississippi State, MS • 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

34 ▼
/257

▼ -24 FROM 2024

GRADE

D+

▼ C- FROM 2024

SPEECH CONTROVERSIES

0

— 0 FROM 2025

Overview

Mississippi State University ranks 34 in the 2026 College Free Speech Rankings, earning a score of 68 and a D+ speech climate grade. The university continues to earn a “green light” Spotlight rating for its written policies.

Student perceptions place MSU in the top 25 for “Administrative Support” and in the top 50 for “Political Tolerance” toward controversial speakers. However, the campus ranks in the bottom 25 for “Self-Censorship” and “Openness” to discussing specific issues, indicating many felt pressure to stay silent and avoid contentious conversations.

MSU could strengthen its overall climate by formally adopting the Chicago Statement and an official commitment to institutional neutrality – steps that would underscore its commitment to free and open inquiry.

Spotlight Rating

Green



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.



71% of students say shouting down a speaker to prevent them from speaking on campus is acceptable, at least in rare cases.



35% of students say using violence to stop someone from speaking on campus is acceptable, at least in rare cases.

1.47:1

There are roughly 1.47 conservative students for every one liberal 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

D

▼ DECREASE

SELF-CENSORSHIP

F

▼ DECREASE

ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT

D

▲ INCREASE

POLITICAL TOLERANCE

F

▼ DECREASE

SCHOLARS UNDER FIRE

O

STUDENTS UNDER FIRE

O

DEPLATFORMINGS

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