

University of Missouri - St. Louis

St. Louis, MO • 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

11 ▲
/257

▲ 44 FROM 2024

GRADE

C

▲ D FROM 2024

SPEECH CONTROVERSIES

0

— 0 FROM 2025

Overview

University of Missouri–St. Louis ranks 11 out of 257 schools in the 2026 College Free Speech Rankings. UMSL’s score climbed to 73, a 10-point gain that lifted its speech climate grade to a C. The jump coincided with UMSL upgrading its Spotlight rating from “yellow light” to “green light,” adding valuable policy points without any new speech-related incidents.

Student perceptions place UMSL in the top 25 for “Comfort” discussing controversial ideas and in the top 50 for both “Political Tolerance” and perceived “Administrative Support,” suggesting wide latitude for open debate compared to other schools. The picture is less rosy elsewhere: UMSL ranks in the bottom 50 for “Openness” to specific hot-button topics.

UMSL could rise further by adopting institutional neutrality and by creating programs that encourage students to voice their views without fear of backlash.

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



42% of students say they have self-censored on campus at least once or twice a month.



57% of students say shouting down a speaker to prevent them from speaking on campus is acceptable, at least in rare cases.



32% of students say using violence to stop someone from speaking on campus is acceptable, at least in rare cases.

1.2:1

There are roughly 1.20 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

B-

▼ DECREASE

OPENNESS

D+

▼ DECREASE

SELF-CENSORSHIP

F

▼ DECREASE

ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT

D-

▲ INCREASE

POLITICAL TOLERANCE

F

▼ DECREASE

SCHOLARS UNDER FIRE

0

STUDENTS UNDER FIRE

0

DEPLATFORMINGS

0