

# Southeast Missouri State University

Cape Girardeau, 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

170

/257

## GRADE

F

## SPEECH CONTROVERSIES

0

## Overview

Southeast Missouri State University ranks 170 out of 257 schools in the 2026 College Free Speech Rankings. The university posts an overall score of 56 and an F speech climate grade while earning a “yellow light” Spotlight rating on its written policies.

Student responses place SEMO in the bottom 25 nationwide on “Openness,” reflecting strong reluctance to engage with controversial issues.

SEMO could improve by revising its written speech policies to earn a “green light” Spotlight rating, adopting a free speech statement based on the Chicago Statement, and adopting 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](mailto:speechcodes@thefire.org).

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

HIGHLIGHTS



44% of students say they have self-censored on campus at least once or twice a month.



63% of students say shouting down a speaker to prevent them from speaking on campus is acceptable, at least in rare cases.



31% of students say using violence to stop someone from speaking on campus is acceptable, at least in rare cases.

1.41:1

There are roughly 1.41 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

DISRUPTIVE CONDUCT

C+

OPENNESS

D-

SELF-CENSORSHIP

D-

ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT

F

POLITICAL TOLERANCE

F

SCHOLARS UNDER FIRE

0

STUDENTS UNDER FIRE

0

DEPLATFORMINGS

0