

Barnard College

New York, NY • 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

257 ▼

/257

▼ -10 FROM 2024

GRADE

F

— F FROM 2024

SPEECH CONTROVERSIES

5

2 FROM 2025

Overview

Barnard College's dead last rank is the result of numerous free speech controversies and the students' perceptions of free speech on campus. Survey data place Barnard near the bottom in five of six key areas. It ranks dead last for both "Comfort Expressing Ideas" and "Administrative Support," with the latter being the worst score in College Free Speech Rankings history. It also lands in the bottom 25 for "Political Tolerance" and "Self-Censorship," and the bottom 50 for "Disruptive Conduct."

Barnard's dismal performance reflects a climate where free expression is neither protected nor prioritized. To rebuild trust, Barnard must overhaul its restrictive speech codes to earn a "green light" Spotlight rating, adopt the Chicago Statement, and commit to institutional neutrality. It should also embed robust First Amendment education into orientation so students understand their rights — and the line between protected speech and unlawful conduct.

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



61% of students say they have self-censored on campus at least once or twice a month.



78% of students say shouting down a speaker to prevent them from speaking on campus is acceptable, at least in rare cases.



33% of students say using violence to stop someone from speaking on campus is acceptable, at least in rare cases.

13.94:1

There are roughly 13.94 liberal students for every one conservative student.

Institutional Neutrality

NOT ADOPTED



Chicago Statement for Free Speech

NOT ADOPTED



SCORE DEEP DIVE

COMFORT EXPRESSING IDEAS

F

▼ DECREASE

DISRUPTIVE CONDUCT

C

▼ DECREASE

OPENNESS

C

▼ DECREASE

SELF-CENSORSHIP

F

▼ DECREASE

ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT

F

▼ DECREASE

POLITICAL TOLERANCE

F

▼ DECREASE

SCHOLARS UNDER FIRE

0

STUDENTS UNDER FIRE

2

DEPLATFORMINGS

3