

# Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute

Troy, 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

137 ▲  
/257

▲ 36 FROM 2024

## GRADE

F

— F FROM 2024

## SPEECH CONTROVERSIES

0

— 0 FROM 2025

## Overview

Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute ranks 137 out of 257 schools in the 2026 College Free Speech Rankings with a score of 57, up 5 points from last year. The school climbed 36 places and moved its Spotlight rating from “red light” to “yellow light.”

Student perceptions place RPI in the top 50 on “Self-Censorship,” indicating fewer students feel compelled to keep quiet compared to other schools.

RPI could boost its standing by revising remaining restrictive policies to secure a “green light” Spotlight rating, as well as adopting the Chicago Statement and 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.

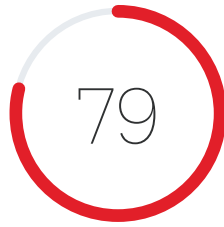
If you are a school administrator and would like to discuss your rating, reach out to [speechcodes@thefire.org](mailto:speechcodes@thefire.org).

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

HIGHLIGHTS



37% of students say they have self-censored on campus at least once or twice a month.



79% 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.

2.94:1

There are roughly 2.94 liberal students for every one conservative student.

Institutional Neutrality

NOT ADOPTED



Chicago Statement for Free Speech

NOT ADOPTED



SCORE DEEP DIVE

COMFORT EXPRESSING IDEAS

D

▼ DECREASE

DISRUPTIVE CONDUCT

C+

▼ DECREASE

OPENNESS

C

▼ DECREASE

SELF-CENSORSHIP

D

▼ DECREASE

ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT

F

▲ INCREASE

POLITICAL TOLERANCE

F

▼ DECREASE

SCHOLARS UNDER FIRE

O

STUDENTS UNDER FIRE

O

DEPLATFORMINGS

O