

# Denison University

Granville, OH • 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

81 

/257

 -14 FROM 2024

## GRADE

D -

— D- FROM 2024

## SPEECH CONTROVERSIES

0

— 0 FROM 2025

## Overview

Denison University ranks 81 in the 2026 College Free Speech Rankings with a score of 60, a D- speech climate grade. The school continues to carry a “yellow light” Spotlight rating. The school has adopted the Chicago Statement, but it has not adopted an official commitment to institutional neutrality.

Student perceptions place Denison in the top 50 on both “Self-Censorship” and “Disruptive Conduct,” indicating fewer students hide their views and more students reject shout-downs or similar tactics compared to other schools. However, Denison has a bottom-50 finish on “Political Tolerance,” suggesting more students are reluctant to welcome controversial speakers from across the ideological spectrum.

Denison could strengthen its free speech climate by revising its remaining restrictive policies to earn a “green light” Spotlight rating and by officially committing 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



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



70% of students say shouting down a speaker to prevent them from speaking on campus is acceptable, at least in rare cases.



27% of students say using violence to stop someone from speaking on campus is acceptable, at least in rare cases.

5.59:1

There are roughly 5.59 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

C-

▼ DECREASE

SELF-CENSORSHIP

D

▼ DECREASE

ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT

F

▼ DECREASE

POLITICAL TOLERANCE

F

▼ DECREASE

SCHOLARS UNDER FIRE

0

STUDENTS UNDER FIRE

0

DEPLATFORMINGS

0