

Franklin & Marshall College

Lancaster, PA • 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

119 ▼

/257

▼ -1 FROM 2024

GRADE

F

— F FROM 2024

SPEECH CONTROVERSIES

2

1 FROM 2025

Overview

Franklin and Marshall College ranks 119 out of 257 schools in the 2026 College Free Speech Rankings with a score of 58, an F speech climate grade. This year's total reflects another penalty after administrators disabled Instagram comments that criticized the school, adding to the penalty incurred by last year's attempted disruption of a talk by former University of Pennsylvania swimmer Paula Scanlan.

The college has adopted the Chicago Statement, but its "yellow light" Spotlight rating and the absence of an institutional neutrality policy continue to dampen its overall score. Recurrent penalties for censoring or obstructing expression reinforce students' poor perceptions across most survey measures, leaving the school without a single top-50 showing.

Franklin & Marshall could make immediate progress by revising its written policies to earn a "green light" Spotlight rating and formally 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.

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

HIGHLIGHTS



55% 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.



30% of students say using violence to stop someone from speaking on campus is acceptable, at least in rare cases.

3.12:1

There are roughly 3.12 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

C

▼ DECREASE

OPENNESS

C-

▼ DECREASE

SELF-CENSORSHIP

D-

▼ DECREASE

ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT

F

▲ INCREASE

POLITICAL TOLERANCE

F

▼ DECREASE

SCHOLARS UNDER FIRE

0

STUDENTS UNDER FIRE

1

DEPLATFORMINGS

1