

Lehigh University

Bethlehem, 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

142 ▲
/257

▲ -30 FROM 2024

GRADE

F

— F FROM 2024

SPEECH CONTROVERSIES

0

— 0 FROM 2025

Overview

Lehigh University ranks 142 out of 257 schools in the 2026 College Free Speech Rankings with a score of 57, an F speech climate grade. The school improved its written speech policies enough to move from a “red light” to a “yellow light” Spotlight rating. Policy gains helped, but student perceptions lag.

Students place Lehigh in the top 50 on “Disruptive Conduct,” reflecting a comparatively strong rejection of shout-downs and blockades. Yet the campus ranks in the bottom 50 for “Comfort Expressing Ideas.”

Adopting the Chicago Statement and an official commitment to institutional neutrality, as well as fully revising remaining restrictive policies to earn a “green light” Spotlight rating would help close that gap.

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



41% of students say they have self-censored on campus at least once or twice a month.



65% of students say shouting down a speaker to prevent them from speaking on campus is acceptable, at least in rare cases.



28% of students say using violence to stop someone from speaking on campus is acceptable, at least in rare cases.

2.13:1

There are roughly 2.13 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

B-

▲ INCREASE

OPENNESS

C

▲ INCREASE

SELF-CENSORSHIP

F

▼ DECREASE

ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT

F

▼ DECREASE

POLITICAL TOLERANCE

F

▼ DECREASE

SCHOLARS UNDER FIRE

0

STUDENTS UNDER FIRE

0

DEPLATFORMINGS

0