

Rice University

Houston, TX • 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

235 ▼
/257

▼ -70 FROM 2024

GRADE

F

— F FROM 2024

SPEECH CONTROVERSIES

0

— 0 FROM 2025

Overview

Rice University ranks 235 out of 257 schools in the 2026 College Free Speech Rankings. The university earned a score of 51, an F speech climate grade. The school earns a “red light” Spotlight rating.

Student perceptions place Rice in the top 25 for lower levels of “Self-Censorship,” yet the university ranks in the bottom 25 for “Comfort Expressing Ideas” and in the bottom 50 for both “Administrative Support” for free speech and acceptance of “Disruptive Conduct,” highlighting a campus where open expression feels risky and institutional backing appears weak.

Rice could make substantial progress by revising its speech regulations to attain a “green light” Spotlight rating and by formally adopting the Chicago Statement and an official commitment to institutional neutrality.

Spotlight Rating

Red



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



47% of students say they have self-censored on campus at least once or twice a month.



81% of students say shouting down a speaker to prevent them from speaking on campus is acceptable, at least in rare cases.



35% of students say using violence to stop someone from speaking on campus is acceptable, at least in rare cases.

3.94:1

There are roughly 3.94 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

▲ INCREASE

OPENNESS

C

▼ DECREASE

SELF-CENSORSHIP

D

▼ DECREASE

ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT

F

▼ DECREASE

POLITICAL TOLERANCE

F

▼ DECREASE

SCHOLARS UNDER FIRE

O

STUDENTS UNDER FIRE

O

DEPLATFORMINGS

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