

University of California, Santa Barbara

Santa Barbara, CA • Public 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

152 ▲

/261

▲ 9 FROM 2025

GRADE

F

F FROM 2025

CONTROVERSIES

0

0 FROM 2026

Overview

University of California, Santa Barbara ranks 152 out of 261 schools in the 2027 College Free Speech Rankings with a score of 59 and an F speech climate grade.

UCSB ranks in the top 50 for “Self-Censorship,” indicating students report comparatively less hesitancy to speak. The data shows no bottom 50 weaknesses.

UCSB maintains a “yellow light” Spotlight rating. It should revise its student policies to earn a “green light” Spotlight rating and adopt the pro-free speech Chicago Statement and an official commitment to institutional neutrality. UCSB should respond clearly and forcefully to defend free speech whenever censorship occurs or is demanded. Doing so will demonstrate the university’s commitment to free speech and build community trust that the administration will defend expressive rights.

[View the Full Spotlight Rating](#)

Spotlight Rating

Yellow

FIRE’s Spotlight database annually rates regulations on student expression based on the extent to which they restrict free speech.

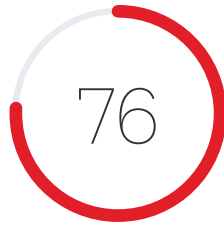
If you are a school administrator and would like to discuss your rating, reach out to speechcodes@fire.org.

Visit our website, rankings.fire.org, for more information.

HIGHLIGHTS



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



76% of students say shouting down a speaker to prevent them from speaking on campus is acceptable, at least in rare cases.



29% of students say using violence to stop someone from speaking on campus is acceptable, at least in rare cases.

11.55 : 1

There are roughly 11.55 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

▲ INCREASE

DISRUPTIVE CONDUCT

C+

▲ INCREASE

OPENNESS

C

▲ INCREASE

SELF-CENSORSHIP

D

▲ INCREASE

ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT

F

▲ INCREASE

POLITICAL TOLERANCE

F

▼ DECREASE

SCHOLARS UNDER FIRE

O

STUDENTS UNDER FIRE

O

DEPLATFORMINGS

O