

University of Colorado Denver

Denver, CO • Public School



College Free Speech
RANKINGS

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

96 ▼

/261

▼ -19 FROM 2025

GRADE

D

▲ D- FROM 2025

CONTROVERSIES

0

0 FROM 2026

Overview

University of Colorado Denver ranks 96 out of 261 schools in the 2027 College Free Speech Rankings with a score of 63 and a D speech climate grade.

CU Denver ranks in the top 50 for “Comfort Expressing Ideas,” meaning students feel comfortable sharing views on controversial topics. The data shows no bottom 50 weaknesses.

CU Denver is part of the University of Colorado System, which has affirmed the pro-free speech Chicago Statement. However, the campus retains a “yellow light” Spotlight rating. CU Denver should revise its student policies to earn a “green light” Spotlight rating and adopt an official commitment to institutional neutrality. It 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



31% of students say they have self-censored on campus at least once or twice a month.



69% of students say shouting down a speaker to prevent them from speaking on campus is acceptable, at least in rare cases.



26% of students say using violence to stop someone from speaking on campus is acceptable, at least in rare cases.

6.09 : 1

There are roughly 6.09 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+

— NO CHANGE

OPENNESS

C-

▲ INCREASE

SELF-CENSORSHIP

D

— NO CHANGE

ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT

D-

▲ INCREASE

POLITICAL TOLERANCE

F

▼ DECREASE

SCHOLARS UNDER FIRE

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STUDENTS UNDER FIRE

O

DEPLATFORMINGS

O