Southern Illinois University - Carbondale

Carbondale, IL • 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
239
/261
▼ -16 FROM 2025

GRADE
F
F FROM 2025

CONTROVERSIES
0
0 FROM 2026

Overview

Southern Illinois University - Carbondale ranks 239 out of 261 schools in the 2027 College Free Speech Rankings with a score of 54 and an F speech climate grade.

SIU ranks in the top 50 for "Comfort Expressing Ideas," indicating students are comfortable sharing views on controversial topics. However, it lands in the bottom 50 for "Disruptive Conduct," signaling student acceptance of non-peaceful forms of protest.

SIU retains a "red light" Spotlight rating. It should revise student policies to earn a "green light" Spotlight rating and adopt the pro-free speech Chicago Statement and an official commitment to institutional neutrality. SIU 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.

Spotlight Rating
Red

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

View the Full Spotlight Rating

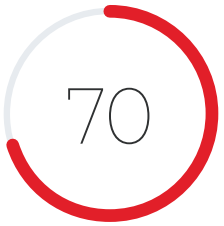
If you are a school administrator and would like to discuss your rating, reach out to speechcodes@fire.org.

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

HIGHLIGHTS



39% of students say they have self-censored on campus at least once or twice a month.



70% of students say shouting down a speaker to prevent them from speaking on campus is acceptable, at least in rare cases.



39% of students say using violence to stop someone from speaking on campus is acceptable, at least in rare cases.

1.55 : 1

There are roughly 1.55 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

D+

— NO CHANGE

SELF-CENSORSHIP

D-

▲ INCREASE

ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT

F

▲ INCREASE

POLITICAL TOLERANCE

F

— NO CHANGE

SCHOLARS UNDER FIRE

0

STUDENTS UNDER FIRE

0

DEPLATFORMINGS

0