

University of Kentucky

Lexington, KY • 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

202 ▼

/261

▼ -20 FROM 2025

GRADE

F

F FROM 2025

CONTROVERSIES

1

0 FROM 2026

Overview

The University of Kentucky ranks 202 out of 261 schools in the 2027 College Free Speech Rankings with a score of 57 and an F speech climate grade.

UK ranks in the top 50 for “Comfort Expressing Ideas,” showing students are comfortable sharing views on controversial topics. However, the campus lands in the bottom 25 for “Self-Censorship,” indicating students frequently stay silent, and “Disruptive Conduct,” signaling student acceptance of non-peaceful forms of protest.

UK earns a “yellow light” Spotlight rating. It should revise student policies to earn a “green light” Spotlight rating and adopt the pro-free speech Chicago Statement. Unfortunately we identified UK’s adoption of an official commitment to institutional neutrality after our data cutoff. If this change had been recorded prior to the rankings deadline, UK would have ranked 140.

[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



49% 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.



42% of students say using violence to stop someone from speaking on campus is acceptable, at least in rare cases.

1.91:1

There are roughly 1.91 conservative students for every one liberal student.

Institutional Neutrality

NOT ADOPTED



Chicago Statement for Free Speech

NOT ADOPTED



SCORE DEEP DIVE

COMFORT EXPRESSING IDEAS

D+

▲ INCREASE

DISRUPTIVE CONDUCT

C

▼ DECREASE

OPENNESS

D

▼ DECREASE

SELF-CENSORSHIP

F

▼ DECREASE

ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT

D-

▼ DECREASE

POLITICAL TOLERANCE

F

▲ INCREASE

SCHOLARS UNDER FIRE

0

STUDENTS UNDER FIRE

0

DEPLATFORMINGS

1