

Harvard University

Cambridge, MA • 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

71 
/261

 174 FROM 2025

GRADE

D

 F FROM 2025

CONTROVERSIES

2

0 FROM 2026

Overview

Harvard University ranks 71 out of 261 schools in the 2027 College Free Speech Rankings with a score of 64 and a D speech climate grade, leaping 174 places from last year.

It ranks in the top 25 for “Political Tolerance,” showing comparatively greater student willingness to host controversial speakers. Its “Comfort Expressing Ideas” rank jumped 134 places from last year, indicating more comfort sharing views on controversial topics.

Harvard adopted an official commitment to institutional neutrality but retains 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. Harvard 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](#)

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.

Spotlight Rating

Yellow 

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

HIGHLIGHTS



42% of students say they have self-censored on campus at least once or twice a month.



71% 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.

6.76 : 1

There are roughly 6.76 liberal students for every one conservative student.

Institutional Neutrality

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

▲ INCREASE

SCHOLARS UNDER FIRE

0

STUDENTS UNDER FIRE

1

DEPLATFORMINGS

1