Northeastern University

Boston, MA • Private 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
258
/261
▼ -5 FROM 2025

GRADE
F
F FROM 2025

CONTROVERSIES
1
0 FROM 2026

Overview

Northeastern University ranks 258 out of 261 schools in the 2027 College Free Speech Rankings with a score of 50 and an F speech climate grade.

Northeastern ranks in the bottom 25 for "Administrative Support," indicating little trust that officials will defend speech. It also tumbled 144 places from last year into the bottom 25 for "Comfort Expressing Ideas," meaning students feel more constrained when sharing views on controversial topics. The data shows no top 50 strengths.

Northeastern 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. Given its weak showing on "Administrative Support," administrators should respond clearly and forcefully to defend free speech whenever censorship occurs or is demanded.

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



47% of students say they have self-censored on campus at least once or twice a month.



77% of students say shouting down a speaker to prevent them from speaking on campus is acceptable, at least in rare cases.



34% of students say using violence to stop someone from speaking on campus is acceptable, at least in rare cases.

7.67 : 1

There are roughly 7.67 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−

▼ DECREASE

DISRUPTIVE CONDUCT

C+

▲ INCREASE

OPENNESS

C

▼ DECREASE

SELF-CENSORSHIP

D

— NO CHANGE

ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT

F

▼ DECREASE

POLITICAL TOLERANCE

F

▲ INCREASE

SCHOLARS UNDER FIRE

0

STUDENTS UNDER FIRE

0

DEPLATFORMINGS

1