

Columbia University

New York, NY • 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

246 ▲

/261

▲ 10 FROM 2025

GRADE

F

F FROM 2025

CONTROVERSIES

6

3 FROM 2026

Overview

Columbia University ranks 246 out of 261 schools in the 2027 College Free Speech Rankings with a score of 53 and an F speech climate grade. It received a penalty for placing a student group on interim suspension for associating with a banned organization.

Columbia ranks in the top 25 for “Political Tolerance,” showing greater student willingness to host controversial speakers. It lands in the bottom 25 for “Administrative Support,” meaning students doubt officials will defend speech, and in the bottom 50 for “Disruptive Conduct,” signaling student acceptance of non-peaceful protest.

Columbia retains a “yellow light” Spotlight rating and has adopted the pro-free speech Chicago Statement. It should revise student policies to earn a “green light” Spotlight rating and adopt a statement on institutional neutrality. Administrators should clearly and forcefully defend free speech whenever censorship occurs or is demanded.

[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



54% of students say they have self-censored on campus at least once or twice a month.



82% of students say shouting down a speaker to prevent them from speaking on campus is acceptable, at least in rare cases.



36% of students say using violence to stop someone from speaking on campus is acceptable, at least in rare cases.

5.52 : 1

There are roughly 5.52 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

▼ DECREASE

OPENNESS

C+

▲ INCREASE

SELF-CENSORSHIP

D

▲ INCREASE

ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT

F

▲ INCREASE

POLITICAL TOLERANCE

F

▼ DECREASE

SCHOLARS UNDER FIRE

2

STUDENTS UNDER FIRE

3

DEPLATFORMINGS

1