

Appalachian State University

Boone, NC • 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

8

/261

0 FROM 2025

GRADE

C

C FROM 2025

CONTROVERSIES

0

0 FROM 2026

Overview

Appalachian State University ranks 8 out of 261 schools in the 2027 College Free Speech Rankings with a score of 76 and a C speech climate grade. The campus earns a “green light” Spotlight rating. Appalachian State is part of the University of North Carolina System, which has affirmed the pro-free speech Chicago Statement and adopted a commitment to institutional neutrality.

Appalachian State ranks in the top 25 for “Administrative Support,” suggesting students trust the administration to defend free speech.

Appalachian State should respond clearly and forcefully whenever censorship occurs or is demanded. Doing so will demonstrate the university’s commitment to free speech and maintain 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

Green



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

HIGHLIGHTS



38% of students say they have self-censored on campus at least once or twice a month.



75% of students say shouting down a speaker to prevent them from speaking on campus is acceptable, at least in rare cases.



32% of students say using violence to stop someone from speaking on campus is acceptable, at least in rare cases.

2.58 : 1

There are roughly 2.58 liberal students for every one conservative student.

Institutional Neutrality

ADOPTED



Chicago Statement for Free Speech

ADOPTED



SCORE DEEP DIVE

COMFORT EXPRESSING IDEAS

D

▲ INCREASE

DISRUPTIVE CONDUCT

C+

▲ INCREASE

OPENNESS

C-

— NO CHANGE

SELF-CENSORSHIP

D

▲ INCREASE

ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT

D

▲ INCREASE

POLITICAL TOLERANCE

F

▲ INCREASE

SCHOLARS UNDER FIRE

O

STUDENTS UNDER FIRE

O

DEPLATFORMINGS

O