East Carolina University

Greenville, NC • Public 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
15
/261
▼ -1 FROM 2025

GRADE
C
▲ C- FROM 2025

CONTROVERSIES
0
0 FROM 2026

Overview

East Carolina University ranks 15 out of 261 schools in the 2027 College Free Speech Rankings with a score of 74 and a C speech climate grade.

ECU ranks in the bottom 25 for "Openness," meaning many contentious topics feel off-limits to students. It also lands in the bottom 50 for "Self-Censorship," indicating students frequently stay silent. The data shows no counterbalancing top 50 strengths.

The campus earns a "green light" Spotlight rating. ECU is part of the University of North Carolina System, which has affirmed the pro-free speech Chicago Statement and a statement on institutional neutrality. ECU should respond clearly and forcefully 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.

Spotlight Rating

Green



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



39% of students say they have self-censored on campus at least once or twice a month.



69% of students say shouting down a speaker to prevent them from speaking on campus is acceptable, at least in rare cases.



38% of students say using violence to stop someone from speaking on campus is acceptable, at least in rare cases.

1.1 : 1

There are roughly 1.1 conservative students for every one liberal student.

Institutional Neutrality

ADOPTED



Chicago Statement for Free Speech

ADOPTED



SCORE DEEP DIVE

COMFORT EXPRESSING IDEAS

D

▲ INCREASE

DISRUPTIVE CONDUCT

C+

— NO CHANGE

OPENNESS

D

▼ DECREASE

SELF-CENSORSHIP

D–

▲ INCREASE

ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT

D–

▲ INCREASE

POLITICAL TOLERANCE

F

▼ DECREASE

SCHOLARS UNDER FIRE

0

STUDENTS UNDER FIRE

0

DEPLATFORMINGS

0