

The University of North Carolina Chapel Hill

Chapel Hill, 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

31 ▼
/261

▼ -12 FROM 2025

GRADE

C-

C- FROM 2025

CONTROVERSIES

2

1 FROM 2026

Overview

The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill ranks 31 out of 261 schools in the 2027 College Free Speech Rankings with a score of 71 and a C- speech climate grade. The campus earns a “green light” Spotlight rating and is part of the University of North Carolina System, which has affirmed the pro-free speech Chicago Statement and a statement on institutional neutrality.

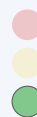
UNC ranks in the top 50 for “Political Tolerance,” showing comparatively greater student willingness to host speakers across the ideological spectrum. However, it lands in the bottom 25 for “Self-Censorship” and “Administrative Support,” meaning students frequently stay silent and doubt officials will defend speech.

Given its weak showing on “Administrative Support,” administrators should respond to any instance of censorship, or demand for it, with a clear defense of free expression.

[View the Full Spotlight Rating](#)

Spotlight Rating

Green



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

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



52% of students say they have self-censored on campus at least once or twice a month.



74% of students say shouting down a speaker to prevent them from speaking on campus is acceptable, at least in rare cases.



33% of students say using violence to stop someone from speaking on campus is acceptable, at least in rare cases.

4.86 : 1

There are roughly 4.86 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

D+

— NO CHANGE

SELF-CENSORSHIP

D-

— NO CHANGE

ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT

F

▲ INCREASE

POLITICAL TOLERANCE

F

— NO CHANGE

SCHOLARS UNDER FIRE

0

STUDENTS UNDER FIRE

1

DEPLATFORMINGS

1