Case Western Reserve University

Cleveland, OH • 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
121 ▲
/261
▲ 42 FROM 2025

GRADE
D-
▲ F FROM 2025

CONTROVERSIES
0
0 FROM 2026

Overview

Case Western Reserve University ranks 121 out of 261 schools in the 2027 College Free Speech Rankings with a score of 60 and a D- speech climate grade, climbing 42 places after earning an F last year.

CWRU ranks in the top 50 for "Openness," meaning students generally feel able to talk about controversial topics. However, it lands in the bottom 25 for "Administrative Support," indicating little trust that officials will defend speech.

CWRU's board has affirmed the pro-free speech Chicago Statement, but the school retains a "yellow light" Spotlight rating. It should revise student policies to earn a "green light" Spotlight rating and adopt an official commitment to institutional neutrality. Given its weak showing on "Administrative Support," administrators should clearly and forcefully defend free speech whenever censorship occurs or is demanded.

Spotlight Rating
Yellow

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.



62% of students say shouting down a speaker to prevent them from speaking on campus is acceptable, at least in rare cases.



29% of students say using violence to stop someone from speaking on campus is acceptable, at least in rare cases.

5.61 : 1

There are roughly 5.61 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+

▲ INCREASE

OPENNESS

C+

▲ INCREASE

SELF-CENSORSHIP

D

▼ DECREASE

ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT

F

▲ INCREASE

POLITICAL TOLERANCE

F

▼ DECREASE

SCHOLARS UNDER FIRE

0

STUDENTS UNDER FIRE

0

DEPLATFORMINGS

0