

Denison University

Granville, OH • 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

88

/261

▼ -7 FROM 2025

GRADE

D

▲ D- FROM 2025

CONTROVERSIES

0

0 FROM 2026

Overview

Denison University ranks 88 out of 261 schools in the 2027 College Free Speech Rankings with a score of 63 and a D speech climate grade.

Denison ranks in the top 50 for “Self-Censorship,” indicating comparatively less hesitancy to speak. The data shows no bottom 50 weaknesses.

Denison’s faculty senate has affirmed the pro-free speech Chicago Statement, but the university retains a “yellow light” Spotlight rating. Denison should revise its student policies to earn a “green light” Spotlight rating and adopt an official commitment to institutional neutrality. It should respond clearly and forcefully whenever censorship occurs or is demanded. Doing so will demonstrate its commitment to free expression and help build community trust that the administration will defend expressive rights.

[View the Full Spotlight Rating](#)

Spotlight Rating

Yellow



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



36% of students say they have self-censored on campus at least once or twice a month.



65% 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.

4.07:1

There are roughly 4.07 liberal students for every one conservative student.

Institutional Neutrality

NOT ADOPTED



Chicago Statement for Free Speech

ADOPTED



SCORE DEEP DIVE

COMFORT EXPRESSING IDEAS

D

— NO CHANGE

DISRUPTIVE CONDUCT

B-

▼ DECREASE

OPENNESS

C-

▲ INCREASE

SELF-CENSORSHIP

D

— NO CHANGE

ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT

F

▲ INCREASE

POLITICAL TOLERANCE

F

▲ INCREASE

SCHOLARS UNDER FIRE

O

STUDENTS UNDER FIRE

O

DEPLATFORMINGS

O