

The Ohio State University

Columbus, OH • 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

174 ▼

/261

▼ -50 FROM 2025

GRADE

F

F FROM 2025

CONTROVERSIES

2

1 FROM 2026

Overview

The Ohio State University ranks 174 out of 261 schools in the 2027 College Free Speech Rankings with a score of 58 and an F speech climate grade. OSU was penalized for two speech controversies, including the disruption of a campus event.

While OSU's board has affirmed the pro-free speech Chicago Statement and institutional neutrality, the university retains a "yellow light" Spotlight rating. OSU is in the bottom 25 for "Administrative Support," indicating little trust that officials will defend speech. It lands in the bottom 50 for "Comfort Expressing Ideas" and "Openness," indicating students feel uncomfortable sharing views and that many contentious topics feel off-limits.

OSU should revise its student policies to earn a "green light" Spotlight rating. Given its weak showing on "Administrative Support," administrators should clearly and forcefully defend free expression whenever censorship occurs or is demanded.

[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

Yellow



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

HIGHLIGHTS



44% 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.

2.28 : 1

There are roughly 2.28 liberal students for every one conservative student.

Institutional Neutrality

ADOPTED



Chicago Statement for Free Speech

ADOPTED



SCORE DEEP DIVE

COMFORT EXPRESSING IDEAS

D -

— NO CHANGE

DISRUPTIVE CONDUCT

C

▼ DECREASE

OPENNESS

D +

— NO CHANGE

SELF-CENSORSHIP

D

▲ INCREASE

ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT

F

▼ DECREASE

POLITICAL TOLERANCE

F

— NO CHANGE

SCHOLARS UNDER FIRE

0

STUDENTS UNDER FIRE

1

DEPLATFORMINGS

1