Lehigh University

Bethlehem, PA • 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
128 ▲
/261
▲ 14 FROM 2025

GRADE
D-
▲ F FROM 2025

CONTROVERSIES
3
3 FROM 2026

Overview

Lehigh University ranks 128 out of 261 schools in the 2027 College Free Speech Rankings with a score of 60 and a D- speech climate grade. Its score was penalized this year after administrators suspended Greek life social events and directed students to remove online content about a controversial image.

Lehigh ranks in the top 50 for "Disruptive Conduct," showing lower student acceptance of non-peaceful forms of protest.

Despite adopting the pro-free speech Chicago Statement, the university 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. Lehigh should respond clearly and forcefully to defend free speech whenever censorship occurs or is demanded. Doing so will demonstrate the university's commitment to free expression and build community trust that the administration will defend expressive rights.

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



41% 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.



26% of students say using violence to stop someone from speaking on campus is acceptable, at least in rare cases.

2.24 : 1

There are roughly 2.24 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
B–
— NO CHANGE

OPENNESS
C
▲ INCREASE

SELF-CENSORSHIP
D
▲ INCREASE

ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT
F
▲ INCREASE

POLITICAL TOLERANCE
F
▲ INCREASE

SCHOLARS UNDER FIRE
0

STUDENTS UNDER FIRE
3

DEPLATFORMINGS
0