# Clemson University

*Clemson, SC • Public 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**

42 ▼

/261

▼ -29 FROM 2025

**GRADE**

D+

▼ C- FROM 2025

**CONTROVERSIES**

2

0 FROM 2026

## Overview

Clemson University ranks 42 out of 261 schools in the 2027 College Free Speech Rankings with a score of 68 and a D+ speech climate grade.

Clemson tumbled 170 places after ranking in the top 25 last year for "Administrative Support," indicating lower student trust. It fell more than 100 places into the bottom 50 for "Comfort Expressing Ideas" and "Openness," showing student discomfort sharing views on controversial topics and that contentious topics feel off-limits. The data shows no top 50 strengths.

Clemson earns a "green light" Spotlight rating, and its board has affirmed the pro-free speech Chicago Statement. It should adopt an official commitment to institutional neutrality and respond clearly and forcefully to defend free speech whenever censorship occurs or is demanded. Doing so will demonstrate the university's commitment to free speech and build community trust that the administration will defend expressive rights.

**Spotlight Rating**

Green



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




48% of students say they have self-censored on campus at least once or twice a month.




67% of students say shouting down a speaker to prevent them from speaking on campus is acceptable, at least in rare cases.




30% of students say using violence to stop someone from speaking on campus is acceptable, at least in rare cases.

1.44 : 1

There are roughly 1.44 conservative students for every one liberal student.

### Institutional Neutrality

NOT ADOPTED



### Chicago Statement for Free Speech

ADOPTED



## SCORE DEEP DIVE

**COMFORT EXPRESSING IDEAS**

D

▼ DECREASE

**DISRUPTIVE CONDUCT**

B−

▲ INCREASE

**OPENNESS**

D+

▼ DECREASE

**SELF-CENSORSHIP**

D

▲ INCREASE

**ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT**

F

▼ DECREASE

**POLITICAL TOLERANCE**

F

▲ INCREASE

**SCHOLARS UNDER FIRE**

2

**STUDENTS UNDER FIRE**

0

**DEPLATFORMINGS**

0