

Middlebury College

Middlebury, VT • 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

245 ▲

/261

▲ 4 FROM 2025

GRADE

F

F FROM 2025

CONTROVERSIES

2

1 FROM 2026

Overview

Middlebury College ranks 245 out of 261 schools in the 2027 College Free Speech Rankings with a score of 53 and an F speech climate grade. It was penalized after protesters disrupted a visiting scholar's talk this year using sustained noisemaking.

Middlebury jumped 105 places from last year into the top 50 for "Self-Censorship" this year, indicating students report less hesitancy to speak. It also jumped 140 places into the top 50 for "Openness," meaning fewer contentious topics feel off-limits to students.

The campus maintains a "red light" Spotlight rating. Middlebury should revise student policies to earn a "green light" Spotlight rating, adopt the pro-free speech Chicago Statement, and adopt an official commitment to institutional neutrality. Given this year's disruption, it should respond clearly and forcefully to defend free speech 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

Red



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

HIGHLIGHTS



29% of students say they have self-censored on campus at least once or twice a month.



72% of students say shouting down a speaker to prevent them from speaking on campus is acceptable, at least in rare cases.



23% of students say using violence to stop someone from speaking on campus is acceptable, at least in rare cases.

5.05 : 1

There are roughly 5.05 liberal students for every one conservative student.

Institutional Neutrality

NOT ADOPTED



Chicago Statement for Free Speech

NOT ADOPTED



SCORE DEEP DIVE

COMFORT EXPRESSING IDEAS

D

▲ INCREASE

DISRUPTIVE CONDUCT

C+

▲ INCREASE

OPENNESS

C+

▲ INCREASE

SELF-CENSORSHIP

D

▲ INCREASE

ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT

F

▼ DECREASE

POLITICAL TOLERANCE

F

— NO CHANGE

SCHOLARS UNDER FIRE

1

STUDENTS UNDER FIRE

1

DEPLATFORMINGS

0