

Virginia Commonwealth University

Richmond, VA • 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

43 ▲

/261

▲ 36 FROM 2025

GRADE

D+

▲ D- FROM 2025

CONTROVERSIES

0

0 FROM 2026

Overview

Virginia Commonwealth University ranks 43 out of 261 schools in the 2027 College Free Speech Rankings with a score of 68 and a D+ speech climate grade, climbing 36 places and gaining 6 points from last year.

VCU ranks in the bottom 25 for “Disruptive Conduct,” showing student acceptance of non-peaceful forms of protest. It also lands in the bottom 50 for “Administrative Support,” indicating students doubt the administration will defend free speech. The data shows no top 50 strengths.

VCU maintains a “green light” Spotlight rating. It should adopt the pro-free speech Chicago Statement and an official commitment to institutional neutrality. Given its weak showing on “Administrative Support,” administrators 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

Green



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

HIGHLIGHTS



41% of students say they have self-censored on campus at least once or twice a month.



77% of students say shouting down a speaker to prevent them from speaking on campus is acceptable, at least in rare cases.



38% of students say using violence to stop someone from speaking on campus is acceptable, at least in rare cases.

6.64 : 1

There are roughly 6.64 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

— NO CHANGE

SELF-CENSORSHIP

D

▲ INCREASE

ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT

F

▲ INCREASE

POLITICAL TOLERANCE

F

▲ INCREASE

SCHOLARS UNDER FIRE

O

STUDENTS UNDER FIRE

O

DEPLATFORMINGS

O