



South Dakota

1 school ranked



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.

AVERAGE RANK

108 ▲

/257

▲ 6 FROM 2024

AVERAGE GRADE

F

— NO CHANGE

SPEECH CONTROVERSIES

0

— 0 FROM 2025

Overview

One South Dakota school is ranked in the 2026 College Free Speech Rankings. Dakota State University ranks 108 overall and earns an F speech-climate grade.

DSU performs relatively well on “Administrative Support” and “Disruptive Conduct,” suggesting students believe administrators would defend free speech and are less likely to approve of efforts to shout down a speaker. It holds a “red light” rating in FIRE’s Spotlight database, meaning its written policies clearly and substantially restrict protected expression. The South Dakota Board of Regents has adopted the pro-free speech Chicago Statement, which applies to Dakota State, but the school has not adopted a statement on institutional neutrality.

Reforming restrictive policies and reinforcing campus-level commitments to free expression could help DSU improve its free-speech climate.

If you have questions, reach out to fire@thefire.org or visit us at <https://rankings.thefire.org/>.

HIGHLIGHTS



25% of students say they have self-censored on campus at least once or twice a month.



63% 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.

1.05:1

Across South Dakota, there are roughly 1.05 liberal students for every one conservative student.

SCORE DEEP DIVE

COMFORT EXPRESSING IDEAS

D

▲ INCREASED

DISRUPTIVE CONDUCT

B-

▲ INCREASED

OPENNESS

C-

▲ INCREASED

SELF-CENSORSHIP

F

▼ DECREASED

ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT

D

▲ INCREASED

POLITICAL TOLERANCE

F

▲ INCREASED

SCHOLARS UNDER FIRE

0

STUDENTS UNDER FIRE

0

DEPLATFORMINGS

0

HONOR ROLL STATEMENTS

0

ATTEMPTED DISRUPTIONS

0

NEW IN 2025

0