



Colorado

10 schools 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

115 ▼
/261

▼ -17 FROM 2025

AVERAGE GRADE

D

▲ INCREASED

SPEECH CONTROVERSIES

4

— 1 IN 2026

Overview

This year FIRE added four additional Colorado schools to the rankings. Ten Colorado schools are ranked in the 2027 College Free Speech Rankings. The state's average speech climate grade is D, compared to the national average of D-.

Colorado Mesa University ranks 19 overall and is the top-ranked school in the state. It earns a “green light” rating in FIRE’s Spotlight database and ranks second nationally for “Administrative Support,” indicating students trust leaders to defend speech. The University of Colorado Boulder follows at 23, also holding a green light rating. CU Boulder adopted a statement on institutional neutrality, and the University of Colorado affirmed the pro-free speech Chicago Statement.

Most remaining campuses hold “yellow light” ratings. Fort Lewis College and Adams State University rank lowest at 182 and 225, respectively, and maintain “red light” ratings. Revising restrictive student policies and adopting formal commitments would help improve these schools’ speech climates.

If you have questions, reach out to fire@fire.org or visit us at rankings.fire.org/.

HIGHLIGHTS



37% of students say they have self-censored on campus at least once or twice a month.



68% of students say shouting down a speaker to prevent them from speaking on campus is acceptable, at least in rare cases.



28% of students say using violence to stop someone from speaking on campus is acceptable, at least in rare cases.

2.59:1

Across Colorado, there are roughly 2.59 liberal students for every one conservative student.

SCORE DEEP DIVE

COMFORT EXPRESSING IDEAS

D+

▲ INCREASED

DISRUPTIVE CONDUCT

C+

▼ DECREASED

OPENNESS

C-

▲ INCREASED

SELF-CENSORSHIP

D

▲ INCREASED

ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT

D-

▲ INCREASED

POLITICAL TOLERANCE

F

— NO CHANGE

SCHOLARS UNDER FIRE

0

STUDENTS UNDER FIRE

2

DEPLATFORMINGS

2

HONOR ROLL STATEMENTS

0

ATTEMPTED DISRUPTIONS

0

NEW IN 2026

1