



Virginia

7 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

59 ▼
/261

▼ -1 FROM 2025

AVERAGE GRADE

D+

▲ INCREASED

SPEECH CONTROVERSIES

0

— 0 IN 2026

Overview

Seven Virginia 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-.

The University of Virginia ranks 9 and is the state's top school. It holds a "green light" Spotlight rating. UVA has affirmed the pro-free speech Chicago Statement and institutional neutrality. George Mason University (10) holds a green light rating and has adopted both statements.

The College of William & Mary (28) and Virginia Commonwealth University (43) retain green light ratings. Washington and Lee University (60) and Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University (89) hold "yellow light" ratings and have adopted the Chicago Statement. James Madison University (171) holds a yellow light rating and ranks in the bottom 50 for "Self-Censorship," meaning students hesitate to speak openly. Reforming written student policies and expanding commitments would improve these schools' speech climates.

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

HIGHLIGHTS



40% of students say they have self-censored on campus at least once or twice a month.



73% of students say shouting down a speaker to prevent them from speaking on campus is acceptable, at least in rare cases.



31% of students say using violence to stop someone from speaking on campus is acceptable, at least in rare cases.

3.53:1

Across Virginia, there are roughly 3.53 liberal students for every one conservative student.

SCORE DEEP DIVE

COMFORT EXPRESSING IDEAS

D

▲ INCREASED

DISRUPTIVE CONDUCT

C+

▲ INCREASED

OPENNESS

C

— NO CHANGE

SELF-CENSORSHIP

D

▲ INCREASED

ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT

F

▲ INCREASED

POLITICAL TOLERANCE

F

— NO CHANGE

SCHOLARS UNDER FIRE

O

STUDENTS UNDER FIRE

O

DEPLATFORMINGS

O

HONOR ROLL STATEMENTS

O

ATTEMPTED DISRUPTIONS

O

NEW IN 2026

O