

The University of Alabama Tuscaloosa

Tuscaloosa, AL • 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

89 ▼

/257

▼ -20 FROM 2024

GRADE

D -

— D- FROM 2024

SPEECH CONTROVERSIES

2

1 FROM 2025

Overview

The University of Alabama ranks 89 of 257 schools in the 2026 College Free Speech Rankings, a D- speech climate grade. A five-point penalty dragged its score down after administrators initially denied recognition to a Young Americans for Freedom chapter when the group refused to adopt school-required language in its constitution. The University of Alabama system officially adopted a statement on institutional neutrality — which applies to the Tuscaloosa campus. Its policies still earn them a “yellow light” Spotlight rating.

Alabama places in the top 50 for “Administrative Support,” suggesting students trust the administration to protect free speech at a greater rate than most schools.

Alabama could improve by revising its speech codes to earn a “green light” Spotlight rating and by applying viewpoint-neutral criteria for approving and funding student organizations.

Spotlight Rating

Yellow



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

If you are a school administrator and would like to discuss your rating, reach out to speechcodes@thefire.org.

Visit our website: <https://rankings.thefire.org/> for more information.

HIGHLIGHTS



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



55% of students say shouting down a speaker to prevent them from speaking on campus is acceptable, at least in rare cases.



34% of students say using violence to stop someone from speaking on campus is acceptable, at least in rare cases.

1.75:1

There are roughly 1.75 conservative students for every one liberal student.

Institutional Neutrality

ADOPTED



Chicago Statement for Free Speech

ADOPTED



SCORE DEEP DIVE

COMFORT EXPRESSING IDEAS

D

▼ DECREASE

DISRUPTIVE CONDUCT

B-

▲ INCREASE

OPENNESS

C-

▲ INCREASE

SELF-CENSORSHIP

D-

▲ INCREASE

ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT

D-

▼ DECREASE

POLITICAL TOLERANCE

F

▼ DECREASE

SCHOLARS UNDER FIRE

1

STUDENTS UNDER FIRE

1

DEPLATFORMINGS

0