

Northern Arizona University

Flagstaff, AZ • 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

31 ▼
/257

▼ -3 FROM 2024

GRADE

D+

— D+ FROM 2024

SPEECH CONTROVERSIES

1

0 FROM 2025

Overview

Northern Arizona University ranks 31 out of 257 schools in the 2026 College Free Speech Rankings. The university posts a score of 68, which earns a D+ speech climate grade. Strong written policies continue to help: NAU earns a “green light” Spotlight rating and has adopted the Chicago Statement, but these formal commitments have not yet translated into a healthier speech climate.

NAU places in the bottom 25 for both “Self-Censorship” and “Openness,” indicating that many students feel pressure to keep quiet on controversial issues and shy away from tough conversations.

NAU could strengthen its overall climate by adopting an official commitment to institutional neutrality and by developing programs that promote constructive, viewpoint-diverse dialogue, giving students greater confidence to speak their minds.

Spotlight Rating

Green



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



51% 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.



24% of students say using violence to stop someone from speaking on campus is acceptable, at least in rare cases.

2.56:1

There are roughly 2.56 liberal students for every one conservative student.

Institutional Neutrality

NOT ADOPTED



Chicago Statement for Free Speech

ADOPTED



SCORE DEEP DIVE

COMFORT EXPRESSING IDEAS

D

▲ INCREASE

DISRUPTIVE CONDUCT

B-

▼ DECREASE

OPENNESS

D

▼ DECREASE

SELF-CENSORSHIP

F

▼ DECREASE

ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT

F

▲ INCREASE

POLITICAL TOLERANCE

F

▼ DECREASE

SCHOLARS UNDER FIRE

0

STUDENTS UNDER FIRE

0

DEPLATFORMINGS

1