

# University of Kentucky

Lexington, KY • 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

182 ▲

/257

▲ -10 FROM 2024

## GRADE

F

— F FROM 2024

## SPEECH CONTROVERSIES

1

0 FROM 2025

## Overview

University of Kentucky ranks 182 out of 257 schools in the 2026 College Free Speech Rankings with a score of 55, an F speech climate grade.

Student perceptions place UK in the top 50 for perceived “Administrative Support,” but in the bottom 50 for “Self-Censorship,” indicating many students feel pressure to keep opinions to themselves. The university’s student policies earn a “yellow light” Spotlight rating, and UK has not adopted the Chicago Statement or a statement on institutional neutrality.

UK could improve by revising its written speech policies to earn a “green light” Spotlight rating, as well as adopting the Chicago Statement and an official commitment to institutional neutrality.

### 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](mailto:speechcodes@thefire.org).

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

## HIGHLIGHTS



44% of students say they have self-censored on campus at least once or twice a month.



65% of students say shouting down a speaker to prevent them from speaking on campus is acceptable, at least in rare cases.



39% of students say using violence to stop someone from speaking on campus is acceptable, at least in rare cases.

2.28:1

There are roughly 2.28 conservative students for every one liberal student.

### Institutional Neutrality

NOT ADOPTED



### Chicago Statement for Free Speech

NOT ADOPTED



## SCORE DEEP DIVE

### COMFORT EXPRESSING IDEAS

D

▲ INCREASE

### DISRUPTIVE CONDUCT

C+

▼ DECREASE

### OPENNESS

C-

▲ INCREASE

### SELF-CENSORSHIP

F

▼ DECREASE

### ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT

D-

▲ INCREASE

### POLITICAL TOLERANCE

F

▼ DECREASE

### SCHOLARS UNDER FIRE

0

### STUDENTS UNDER FIRE

0

### DEPLATFORMINGS

1