

Boston College

Chestnut Hill, MA • Private 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

251 ▼
/257

▼ -62 FROM 2024

GRADE

F

— F FROM 2024

SPEECH CONTROVERSIES

1

— 1 FROM 2025

Overview

Boston College ranks 251 out of 257 schools in the 2026 College Free Speech Rankings with a score of 48, an F speech climate grade. A penalty tied to administrators' restrictions on a pro-Palestinian demonstration weighed on this year's score. The university continues to carry a "red light" Spotlight rating and has not adopted the Chicago Statement or an official commitment to institutional neutrality.

Student perceptions place BC in the bottom 25 for "Comfort Expressing Ideas," "Self-Censorship," and "Administrative Support," and in the bottom 50 for "Openness."

Boston College could improve by revising its written speech codes to earn at least a "yellow light" Spotlight rating and formally endorsing the Chicago Statement.

Spotlight Rating

Red



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



58% 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.



32% of students say using violence to stop someone from speaking on campus is acceptable, at least in rare cases.

1.66:1

There are roughly 1.66 liberal students for every one conservative student.

Institutional Neutrality

NOT ADOPTED



Chicago Statement for Free Speech

NOT ADOPTED



SCORE DEEP DIVE

COMFORT EXPRESSING IDEAS

F

▼ DECREASE

DISRUPTIVE CONDUCT

C+

▼ DECREASE

OPENNESS

D

▲ INCREASE

SELF-CENSORSHIP

F

▼ DECREASE

ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT

F

▼ DECREASE

POLITICAL TOLERANCE

F

▼ DECREASE

SCHOLARS UNDER FIRE

0

STUDENTS UNDER FIRE

1

DEPLATFORMINGS

0