

# Boston University

Boston, 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

111 ▲

/257

▲ 51 FROM 2024

## GRADE

F

— F FROM 2024

## SPEECH CONTROVERSIES

1

— 1 FROM 2025

## Overview

Boston University ranks 111 out of 257 schools in the 2026 College Free Speech Rankings with a score of 58, an F speech climate grade. The university has a “yellow light” Spotlight rating. Its score was tempered by a 2025 incident in which administrators blocked a student-government email about a Palestine divestment referendum, drawing a modest penalty.

Student perceptions are middling except for a top 25 placement for “Openness,” signaling a greater willingness to engage across controversial topics than in previous years. BU could lift its standing by revising restrictive speech policies to earn a “green light” Spotlight rating and by adopting 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.

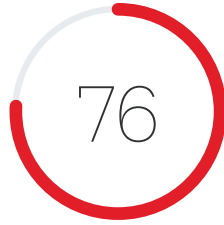
If you are a school administrator and would like to discuss your rating, reach out to [speechcodes@thefire.org](mailto:speechcodes@thefire.org).

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

## HIGHLIGHTS



42% of students say they have self-censored on campus at least once or twice a month.



76% of students say shouting down a speaker to prevent them from speaking on campus is acceptable, at least in rare cases.



33% of students say using violence to stop someone from speaking on campus is acceptable, at least in rare cases.

3.91:1

There are roughly 3.91 liberal students for every one conservative student.

### Institutional Neutrality

NOT ADOPTED



### Chicago Statement for Free Speech

ADOPTED



## SCORE DEEP DIVE

### COMFORT EXPRESSING IDEAS

D-

▼ DECREASE

### DISRUPTIVE CONDUCT

C

▲ INCREASE

### OPENNESS

C+

▲ INCREASE

### SELF-CENSORSHIP

D-

▼ DECREASE

### ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT

F

▲ INCREASE

### POLITICAL TOLERANCE

F

▼ DECREASE

### SCHOLARS UNDER FIRE

0

### STUDENTS UNDER FIRE

1

### DEPLATFORMINGS

0