

University of Massachusetts

Amherst, MA • 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

162 ▲

/257

▲ -56 FROM 2024

GRADE

F

— F FROM 2024

SPEECH CONTROVERSIES

0

— 0 FROM 2025

Overview

University of Massachusetts Amherst ranks 162 out of 257 schools in the 2026 College Free Speech Rankings, earning a score of 56 and earning the campus an F speech climate grade. The university still earns a “yellow light” Spotlight rating with no adoption of the Chicago Statement or an official commitment to institutional neutrality.

Students offer mixed signals. UMass Amherst places in the top 25 on “Self-Censorship,” indicating fewer feel compelled to keep quiet compared to other schools. Yet it simultaneously places in the bottom 50 for “Administrative Support” of free expression, underscoring persistent distrust of institutional backing.

UMass Amherst could improve by revising its written speech policies to earn a “green light” Spotlight rating, adopting a free speech statement based on the Chicago Statement, and 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.

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

HIGHLIGHTS



43% of students say they have self-censored on campus at least once or twice a month.



75% of students say shouting down a speaker to prevent them from speaking on campus is acceptable, at least in rare cases.



35% of students say using violence to stop someone from speaking on campus is acceptable, at least in rare cases.

3.82:1

There are roughly 3.82 liberal students for every one conservative student.

Institutional Neutrality

NOT ADOPTED



Chicago Statement for Free Speech

NOT ADOPTED



SCORE DEEP DIVE

COMFORT EXPRESSING IDEAS

D-

▼ DECREASE

DISRUPTIVE CONDUCT

C

▲ INCREASE

OPENNESS

C

▼ DECREASE

SELF-CENSORSHIP

D

▼ DECREASE

ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT

F

▼ DECREASE

POLITICAL TOLERANCE

F

▲ INCREASE

SCHOLARS UNDER FIRE

O

STUDENTS UNDER FIRE

O

DEPLATFORMINGS

O