

Central Michigan University

Mount Pleasant, MI • 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

188 ▲

/257

▲ 44 FROM 2024

GRADE

F

— F FROM 2024

SPEECH CONTROVERSIES

1

0 FROM 2025

Overview

Central Michigan University ranks 188 out of 257 schools in the 2026 College Free Speech Rankings with a score of 55. The university climbed 44 places from last year, has an F speech climate grade, and earns a “yellow light” Spotlight rating, signaling unresolved policy barriers to expression.

Student perceptions remain mixed. CMU ranks in the top 50 on “Disruptive Conduct,” suggesting comparatively low support for shout-downs or blockades. At the same time, the university places in the bottom 50 for “Self-Censorship,” “Political Tolerance,” and “Openness,” indicating that many hesitated to voice opinions and were reluctant to welcome controversial speakers.

CMU 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



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



67% of students say shouting down a speaker to prevent them from speaking on campus is acceptable, at least in rare cases.



23% of students say using violence to stop someone from speaking on campus is acceptable, at least in rare cases.

4.49:1

There are roughly 4.49 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

▲ INCREASE

DISRUPTIVE CONDUCT

B-

▲ INCREASE

OPENNESS

D+

▲ INCREASE

SELF-CENSORSHIP

F

▼ DECREASE

ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT

F

▲ INCREASE

POLITICAL TOLERANCE

F

▼ DECREASE

SCHOLARS UNDER FIRE

0

STUDENTS UNDER FIRE

1

DEPLATFORMINGS

0