

Bard College

Annandale-On-Hudson, NY • 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

159 ▼

/257

▼ -86 FROM 2024

GRADE

F

— F FROM 2024

SPEECH CONTROVERSIES

0

— 0 FROM 2025

Overview

Bard College ranks 159 out of 257 schools in the 2026 College Free Speech Rankings. The college earned a score of 56 — an F speech climate grade. Its policies still carry a “yellow light” Spotlight rating, and the administration has yet to adopt the Chicago Statement or institutional neutrality.

Student responses paint a mixed picture. Bard places in the top 25 for “Comfort Expressing Ideas,” “Openness,” and “Self-censorship,” hinting at an environment willing to talk. Yet the same student responses rank the college in the bottom 25 for “Political Tolerance” and “Disruptive Conduct,” suggesting limited patience for controversial outside speakers.

Bard could improve by revising its 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.

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

HIGHLIGHTS



25% of students say they have self-censored on campus at least once or twice a month.



82% 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.

28.51:1

There are roughly 28.51 liberal students for every one conservative student.

Institutional Neutrality

NOT ADOPTED



Chicago Statement for Free Speech

NOT ADOPTED



SCORE DEEP DIVE

COMFORT EXPRESSING IDEAS

C-

▲ INCREASE

DISRUPTIVE CONDUCT

C-

▼ DECREASE

OPENNESS

B-

▲ INCREASE

SELF-CENSORSHIP

D

▲ INCREASE

ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT

F

▼ DECREASE

POLITICAL TOLERANCE

F

▼ DECREASE

SCHOLARS UNDER FIRE

O

STUDENTS UNDER FIRE

O

DEPLATFORMINGS

O