

Case Western Reserve University

Cleveland, OH • 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

163 ▲

/257

▲ 32 FROM 2024

GRADE

F

— F FROM 2024

SPEECH CONTROVERSIES

1

— 1 FROM 2025

Overview

Case Western Reserve University ranks 163 out of 257 schools in the 2026 College Free Speech Rankings. The university scores 56, an F speech climate grade, yet it rose 32 places after its policies moved from a “red light” to a “yellow light” Spotlight rating. A 1-point penalty for administrators censoring Law Students for Justice in Palestine offset some of that gain.

Student perceptions place Case Western in the bottom 25 for both “Comfort Expressing Ideas” and perceived “Administrative Support,” highlighting entrenched cultural barriers. No area reached the top 50, leaving the school without a student-reported strength despite its adoption of the Chicago Statement.

To turn the corner, the university should revise its remaining policies to earn a “green light” Spotlight rating and formally adopt 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



49% of students say they have self-censored on campus at least once or twice a month.



77% of students say shouting down a speaker to prevent them from speaking on campus is acceptable, at least in rare cases.



41% of students say using violence to stop someone from speaking on campus is acceptable, at least in rare cases.

3.92:1

There are roughly 3.92 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

▼ DECREASE

OPENNESS

C-

▼ DECREASE

SELF-CENSORSHIP

D-

▼ DECREASE

ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT

F

▲ INCREASE

POLITICAL TOLERANCE

F

▲ INCREASE

SCHOLARS UNDER FIRE

0

STUDENTS UNDER FIRE

1

DEPLATFORMINGS

0