

Portland State University

Portland, OR • 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

208 ▲

/257

▲ -14 FROM 2024

GRADE

F

— F FROM 2024

SPEECH CONTROVERSIES

1

— 1 FROM 2025

Overview

Portland State University ranks 208 out of 257 schools in the 2026 College Free Speech Rankings with a score of 54, an F speech climate grade. The university retains a “red light” Spotlight rating for restrictive policies. Even so, administrators in 2025 allowed a Turning Point USA event to proceed despite calls for cancellation and publicly affirmed free expression values, earning a small bonus that modestly boosted the score.

Student perceptions offer one clear highlight: PSU places in the top 10 nationally for “Self-Censorship,” suggesting comparatively few feel compelled to stay silent. No other area breaks into the top 50, leaving the broader speech climate weak.

PSU could make meaningful progress by overhauling its speech codes to earn a “green light” Spotlight rating and by formally adopting the Chicago Statement to affirm its commitment to free expression.

Spotlight Rating

Red



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



28% 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.



37% of students say using violence to stop someone from speaking on campus is acceptable, at least in rare cases.

3.85:1

There are roughly 3.85 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

C

▼ DECREASE

OPENNESS

C

▲ INCREASE

SELF-CENSORSHIP

D

▲ INCREASE

ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT

F

▲ INCREASE

POLITICAL TOLERANCE

F

▼ DECREASE

SCHOLARS UNDER FIRE

0

STUDENTS UNDER FIRE

1

DEPLATFORMINGS

0