

Furman University

Greenville, SC • 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

195 ▼

/257

▼ 26 FROM 2024

GRADE

F

— F FROM 2024

SPEECH CONTROVERSIES

1

0 FROM 2025

Overview

Furman University ranks 195 out of 257 schools in the 2026 College Free Speech Rankings with a score of 54, an F speech climate grade. The school adopted the Chicago Statement in 2024, though a “red light” Spotlight rating and a historical speech controversy penalty continue to drag on its overall score.

Student perceptions in 2025 place Furman in the top 50 for both “Administrative Support” for free expression and “Disruptive Conduct,” although the latter slid from the top 10 a year ago. At the same time, the university ranks in the bottom 50 for “Openness” to discussing controversial topics, underscoring persistent discomfort with viewpoint diversity.

Furman could make meaningful gains by revising its speech policies to replace the “red light” Spotlight rating with a “green light” and by adopting an official commitment to institutional neutrality.

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



46% 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.



15% of students say using violence to stop someone from speaking on campus is acceptable, at least in rare cases.

2.15:1

There are roughly 2.15 liberal students for every one conservative student.

Institutional Neutrality

NOT ADOPTED



Chicago Statement for Free Speech

ADOPTED



SCORE DEEP DIVE

COMFORT EXPRESSING IDEAS

D

▲ INCREASE

DISRUPTIVE CONDUCT

B-

▼ DECREASE

OPENNESS

D+

▲ INCREASE

SELF-CENSORSHIP

D-

▼ DECREASE

ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT

D-

▲ INCREASE

POLITICAL TOLERANCE

F

▼ DECREASE

SCHOLARS UNDER FIRE

1

STUDENTS UNDER FIRE

0

DEPLATFORMINGS

0