

The University of Texas at El Paso

El Paso, TX • 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

42 ▲

/257

▲ 5 FROM 2024

GRADE

D

— D FROM 2024

SPEECH CONTROVERSIES

1

— 1 FROM 2025

Overview

The University of Texas at El Paso ranks 42 in the 2026 College Free Speech Rankings with a score of 66, holding a D speech climate grade. This year the University of Texas System adopted institutional neutrality — applying to the El Paso campus, yet that progress was offset by a penalty after the university system barred drag shows on campus.

UTEP ranks 2 for “Self-Censorship” and is in the top 25 for “Comfort Expressing Ideas” and in the top 50 for “Political Tolerance.”

UTEP could improve by revising speech codes to earn a “green light” Spotlight rating and by applying viewpoint-neutral standards to all campus events.”

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



27% of students say they have self-censored on campus at least once or twice a month.



60% 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.

2.74:1

There are roughly 2.74 liberal students for every one conservative student.

Institutional Neutrality

ADOPTED



Chicago Statement for Free Speech

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

▲ INCREASE

SCHOLARS UNDER FIRE

0

STUDENTS UNDER FIRE

1

DEPLATFORMINGS

0