

Middlebury College

Middlebury, VT • 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

249 ▼

/257

▼ -72 FROM 2024

GRADE

F

— F FROM 2024

SPEECH CONTROVERSIES

1

0 FROM 2025

Overview

Middlebury College ranks 249 out of 257 schools in the 2026 College Free Speech Rankings. The college earned a score of 48, and an F speech climate grade. It continues to earn a “red light” Spotlight rating.

Student perceptions are bleak. Middlebury ranks in the bottom 50 nationwide for “Comfort Expressing Ideas,” and is mediocre for the other areas, underscoring a campus atmosphere where many students hesitate to speak openly.

Middlebury could begin reversing course by overhauling restrictive speech codes to earn a “green light” Spotlight rating, as well as formally adopting the Chicago Statement and 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



43% of students say they have self-censored on campus at least once or twice a month.



81% of students say shouting down a speaker to prevent them from speaking on campus is acceptable, at least in rare cases.



26% of students say using violence to stop someone from speaking on campus is acceptable, at least in rare cases.

5.48:1

There are roughly 5.48 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-

▼ DECREASE

DISRUPTIVE CONDUCT

C+

▼ DECREASE

OPENNESS

D+

▼ DECREASE

SELF-CENSORSHIP

D-

▼ DECREASE

ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT

F

▼ DECREASE

POLITICAL TOLERANCE

F

▲ INCREASE

SCHOLARS UNDER FIRE

0

STUDENTS UNDER FIRE

1

DEPLATFORMINGS

0