

Stanford University

Stanford, CA • 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

75 ▲
/257

▲ 143 FROM 2024

GRADE

D -

— D- FROM 2024

SPEECH CONTROVERSIES

3

1 FROM 2025

Overview

Stanford University ranks 75 out of 257 schools in the 2026 College Free Speech Rankings with a score of 61 and a D- speech climate grade. The school earned a 2-point penalty for a disruptive protest of a debate between economists Emmanuel Saez and Larry Summers. The university earns a “yellow light” Spotlight rating and has adopted both the Chicago Statement and a statement on institutional neutrality.

Student perceptions place Stanford in the top 25 for “Openness” to discussing controversial topics.

Stanford could make further progress by revising its speech policies to earn a “green light” Spotlight rating, educating students on when expression crosses into unprotected conduct, and by reinforcing that disruptive tactics will not be tolerated.

Spotlight Rating

Yellow



FIRE's Spotlight database annually rates regulations on student expression based on the extent to which they restrict free speech.

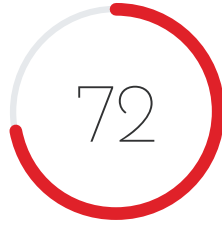
If you are a school administrator and would like to discuss your rating, reach out to speechcodes@thefire.org.

Visit our website: <https://rankings.thefire.org/> for more information.

HIGHLIGHTS



44% of students say they have self-censored on campus at least once or twice a month.



72% of students say shouting down a speaker to prevent them from speaking on campus is acceptable, at least in rare cases.



34% of students say using violence to stop someone from speaking on campus is acceptable, at least in rare cases.

5.33:1

There are roughly 5.33 liberal students for every one conservative student.

Institutional Neutrality

ADOPTED



Chicago Statement for Free Speech

ADOPTED



SCORE DEEP DIVE

COMFORT EXPRESSING IDEAS

D

▼ DECREASE

DISRUPTIVE CONDUCT

C

▲ INCREASE

OPENNESS

C+

▼ DECREASE

SELF-CENSORSHIP

D-

▲ INCREASE

ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT

F

▼ DECREASE

POLITICAL TOLERANCE

F

▼ DECREASE

SCHOLARS UNDER FIRE

0

STUDENTS UNDER FIRE

0

DEPLATFORMINGS

3