



Wisconsin

4 schools ranked



College Free Speech
RANKINGS

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.

AVERAGE RANK

111 ▲
/257

▲ 43 FROM 2024

AVERAGE GRADE

F

▼ DECREASED

SPEECH CONTROVERSIES

5

— 2 FROM 2025

Overview

Four Wisconsin schools are ranked in the 2026 College Free Speech Rankings. The state's average speech-climate grade is F, matching the national average.

The University of Wisconsin–Eau Claire ranks 52 overall and is the top-ranked school in the state. UW–Milwaukee and UW–Madison follow at 61 and 101, respectively. All three schools hold “yellow light” ratings in FIRE’s Spotlight database, meaning their written policies threaten student expression. The University of Wisconsin System Board of Regents has adopted both the pro-free speech Chicago Statement and a statement on institutional neutrality, applying to each UW System campus in the rankings.

Marquette University ranks 230 and holds a “red light” rating, meaning its written policies clearly and substantially restrict protected expression. It has not adopted either statement. Replacing restrictive speech codes and expanding administrative commitments would help improve the climate for free speech on Wisconsin’s campuses.

If you have questions, reach out to fire@thefire.org or visit us at <https://rankings.thefire.org/>.



HIGHLIGHTS



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



73% 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.

1.86:1

Across Wisconsin, there are roughly 1.86 liberal students for every one conservative student.

SCORE DEEP DIVE

COMFORT EXPRESSING IDEAS

D-

▲ INCREASED

DISRUPTIVE CONDUCT

C

▼ DECREASED

OPENNESS

D+

— NO CHANGE

SELF-CENSORSHIP

F

▼ DECREASED

ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT

F

▲ INCREASED

POLITICAL TOLERANCE

F

▼ DECREASED

SCHOLARS UNDER FIRE

0

STUDENTS UNDER FIRE

2

DEPLATFORMINGS

3

HONOR ROLL STATEMENTS

0

ATTEMPTED DISRUPTIONS

0

NEW IN 2025

1