

National Speech Index: July 2024 Topline Results

When it comes to whether people are able to freely express their views do you think things in America are heading in the RIGHT or WRONG direction?

Response	Frequency	Percent
Heading in the RIGHT direction	313	31
Heading in the WRONG direction	687	69

The First Amendment became part of the U.S. Constitution more than 225 years ago. This is what it says: “Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion or prohibiting the free exercise thereof, or abridging the freedom of speech or of the press, or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the government for a redress of grievances.”

Based on your own thoughts about the First Amendment, can you tell us what you think about the following statement: “The First Amendment goes too far in the rights it guarantees.”

Response	Frequency	Percent
Does not describe my thoughts at all	465	47
Slightly describes my thoughts	95	9
Somewhat describes my thoughts	161	16
Mostly describes my thoughts	161	16
Describes my thoughts completely	118	12

How secure do you think the right to freedom of speech is in America today?

Response	Frequency	Percent
Not at all secure	115	12
Not very secure	301	30
Somewhat secure	362	36
Very secure	168	17
Completely secure	54	5

How worried, if at all, are you about losing your job because someone complains about something you have said?

Response	Frequency	Percent
Not at all worried	383	38
Not too worried	233	23
Slightly worried	182	18
Somewhat worried	133	13
Very worried	69	7

Think specifically about your life and all the interactions you have had in the past month. How often have you watched what you said – that is, possibly censored your comments, questions, or words?

Response	Frequency	Percent
Never	169	17
Rarely, once or twice	241	24
Occasionally, a handful of times	355	36
Fairly often, a couple times a week	154	15
Very often, nearly every day	80	8

How often, if at all, do you encounter speech online that is intended to be ...

	Never	Rarely	Occasionally	Fairly often, a couple times a week	Very often, nearly every day
Terrifying	23	32	26	12	6
Intimidating	19	27	28	17	8
Threatening	25	31	23	13	7
Harassing	22	25	29	14	9
Annoying	11	9	23	27	30
Disturbing	15	20	31	19	14
Indecent	19	26	27	18	10

How much, if at all, do you trust the government to make fair decisions about what speech is considered ...

	Do not trust at all	Trust a little	Trust somewhat	Trust very much	Trust completely
Terrifying	35	27	27	8	3
Intimidating	36	27	26	7	3
Threatening	33	25	26	12	4
Harassing	36	26	25	9	4
Annoying	44	25	22	6	3
Disturbing	37	26	26	9	3
Indecent	38	26	24	9	3

How much, if at all, do you support or oppose the student protests being held on college and university campuses responding to Israel's actions in Gaza?

Response	Frequency	Percent
Strongly oppose the protests	259	26
Somewhat oppose the protests	143	14
Neither support nor oppose the protests	317	32
Somewhat support the protests	153	15
Strongly support the protests	128	13

Should colleges and universities have police arrest student protesters opposing the Israel-Hamas war in Gaza or should colleges allow the protests to continue as a matter of free speech?

Response	Frequency	Percent
Colleges and universities should have police arrest protesters.	282	28
Colleges and universities should allow the protests to continue.	379	38
Not sure	338	34

How comfortable, if at all, would you be with the United States limiting the free speech of people rallying in support of Hamas?

Response	Frequency	Percent
Not at all comfortable	318	32
Not very comfortable	380	38
Somewhat comfortable	207	21
Very comfortable	95	9