

2025 College Free Speech Rankings Northwestern University

238

OVERALL
RANK

POOR

SPEECH
CLIMATE

RED

SPOTLIGHT
RATING



FIRE
Foundation for Individual
Rights and Expression

Executive Summary **1**

Full Report **2**

How Comfortable Are Northwestern Students Expressing Their Views on Controversial Topics? **2**

How Often Are Northwestern Students Self-Censoring on Campus? **3**

What Topics Are Difficult for Northwestern Students to Have Conversations About? **4**

Which Speakers Do Northwestern Students Consider Controversial? **5**

What kinds of Disruptive Conduct Do Northwestern Students Consider Acceptable? **6**

How Is Northwestern’s Administrative Stance on Freedom of Speech Perceived? **7**

A ‘Red Light’ School with a Lot of Controversy **7**

How Can Northwestern Improve? **9**

Methodology **10**

Free Speech Rankings **11**

Student Perceptions **11**

Campus Behavioral Metrics **12**

Overall Score **14**

Topline Results **16**

Executive Summary

FOR THE FIFTH YEAR IN A ROW, the Foundation for Individual Rights and Expression (FIRE), a nonprofit organization committed to defending and sustaining the individual rights of all Americans to free speech and free thought, and College Pulse surveyed college undergraduates about their perceptions and experiences regarding free speech on their campuses.

This year's survey includes 58,807 student respondents from 257 colleges and universities. Students who were enrolled in four-year degree programs were surveyed via the College Pulse mobile app and web portal from January 25 through June 17, 2024.

The College Free Speech Rankings are available online and are presented in an interactive dashboard (rankings.thefire.org) that allows for easy comparison between institutions.

Northwestern University was one of the 257 schools surveyed. Key findings from this school include:

- A ranking of 238 overall, with an overall score of 29.04 and a “Poor” speech climate.
- Northwestern performs well on “Openness” (32) and “Tolerance for Liberal Speakers” (44) but performs poorly on “Tolerance for Conservative Speakers” (187) and “Tolerance Difference” (218).
- Northwestern is middling on “Disruptive Conduct” (142) and “Self-Censorship” (163).
- Northwestern’s “Comfort Expressing Ideas” (231) and “Administrative Support” (217) rankings have dropped considerably since last year, when it ranked 134 and 160, respectively.
- Northwestern was involved in five different controversies over free expression in the last five years — including removing an Emeritus professor from its website in response to his controversial op-ed and investigating controversial (but protected) leaflets passed out at a campus protest — and did not respond in a speech-protective manner to any of the controversies.
- Maintaining speech policies that earn it a “red light” rating from FIRE. If Northwestern had “green light” speech policies, it would rank 110 in this year’s College Free Speech Rankings with a score of 49.04.

Full Report

IN 2020, FIRE, in collaboration with College Pulse and RealClearEducation, launched a first-of-its-kind tool to help high school students and their parents identify which colleges promote and protect the free exchange of ideas: the College Free Speech Rankings. The response to the rankings report and corresponding online tool was overwhelmingly positive.

This year FIRE and College Pulse surveyed 257 schools, ranking 251 of them.¹ Northwestern University, with a score of 29.04, has a “Poor” speech climate and ranks 238 overall in the 2025 College Free Speech Rankings.

This represents a slight improvement from last year’s rankings, when Northwestern ranked 242.

Northwestern’s scores on most of the survey-based components remained relatively steady. Northwestern’s rankings on “Tolerance for Liberal Speakers” improved slightly (44 compared to 51 last year) and its “Tolerance for Conservative Speakers” dropped slightly (187 compared to 185 last year). Northwestern additionally remained steady on “Openness” (32 compared to 31 last year) but saw a sharp decline on “Comfort Expressing Ideas” (231 compared to 134 last year) and “Administrative Support” (217 compared to 160 last year). However, Northwestern improved on “Disruptive Conduct” (142 compared to 225 last year).

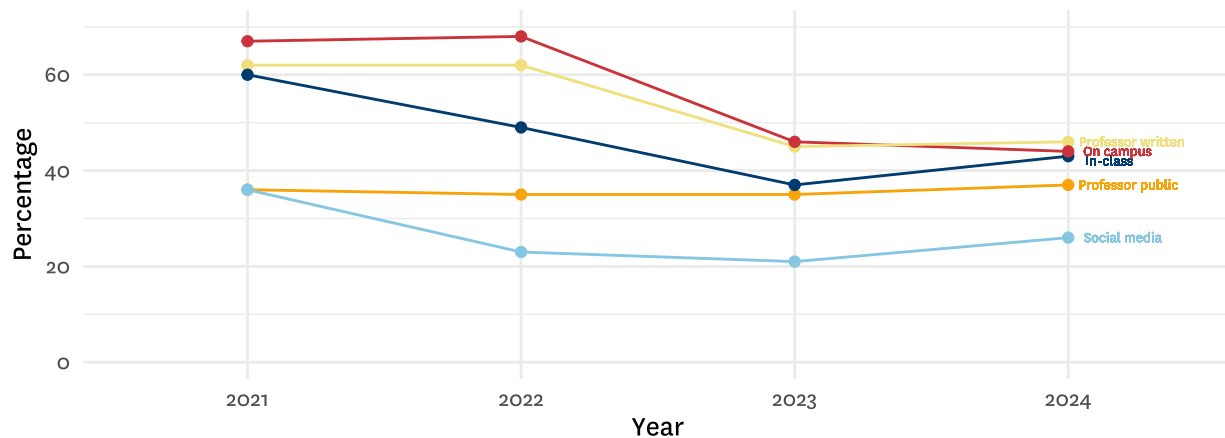
Among peer institutions, Northwestern ranked ahead of the University of Pennsylvania (248), but behind Cornell University (215), Stanford University (218), Emory University (154), Massachusetts Institute of Technology (164), and Duke University (27).

HOW COMFORTABLE ARE NORTHWESTERN STUDENTS EXPRESSING THEIR VIEWS ON CONTROVERSIAL TOPICS?

Northwestern students are particularly uncomfortable expressing their views on controversial topics as evidenced by Northwestern’s ranking of 231 on the “Comfort Expressing Ideas” component, a precipitous drop compared to 134 last year. While students at other campuses report higher levels of comfort this year compared to last, Northwestern students report low levels of comfort similar to last year across all scenarios.

¹ Six of the schools surveyed received a “Warning” rating from FIRE for their speech policies. An overall score was calculated separately for these schools, comparing them only to each other.

FIGURE 1 Students Who Feel “Very” or “Somewhat” Comfortable Expressing Views by Context (%)



Compared to students nationally, fewer Northwestern students expressed comfort expressing their ideas and views in each of the campus and classroom settings asked about. Nationally, 39% of students were “somewhat” or “very” comfortable expressing their views on a controversial political topic publicly with a professor, 50% in a written assignment, 47% during an in-class discussion, 50% to other students in a common campus space, and 34% to other students on social media.

HOW OFTEN ARE NORTHWESTERN STUDENTS SELF-CENSORING ON CAMPUS?

Northwestern ranked 163 on the “Self-Censorship” component.

Before being presented with key questions on self-censorship, participants were provided with the following, which defined self-censorship as:

Refraining from sharing certain views because you fear social (e.g., exclusion from social events), professional (e.g., losing job or promotion), legal (e.g., prosecution or fine), or violent (e.g., assault) consequences, whether in person or remotely (e.g., by phone or online), and whether the consequences come from state or non-state sources.”

This definition was followed by three questions asking about self-censorship during conversations with other students on campus, conversations with professors, and self-censorship during classroom discussions. Northwestern students who self-censor “a couple of times a week” or more include:

- 24% during conversations with other students on campus compared to 24% of students nationally
- 16% during conversations with professors compared to 25% of students nationally
- 22% during classroom discussions compared to 26% of students nationally

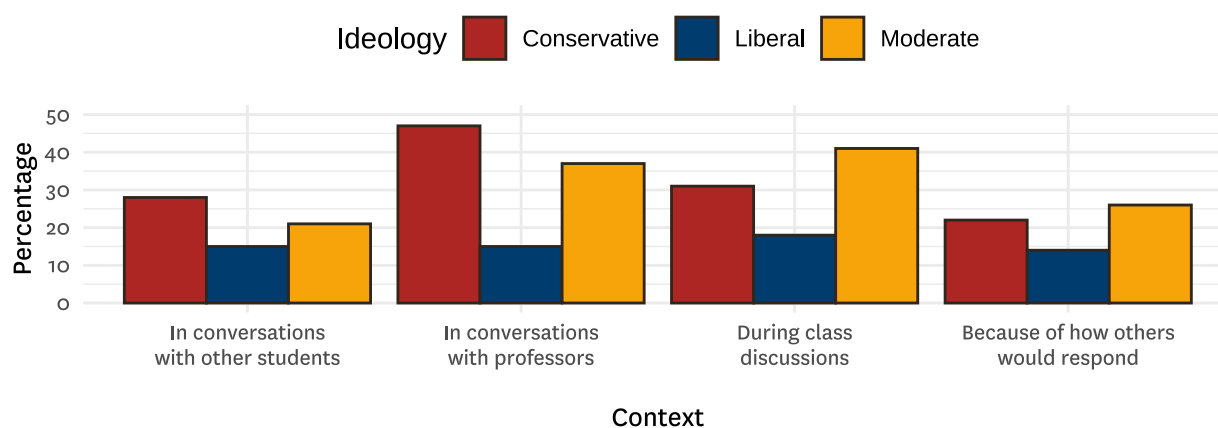
Earlier in the survey, Northwestern students were provided with a general question of self-censorship without a definition, and were asked:

“On your campus, how often have you felt that you could not express your opinion on a subject because of how students, a professor, or the administration would respond?”

Responses to this question, which do not factor into the rankings, are noted here for comparison. Nineteen percent of Northwestern students reported they self-censor “a couple of times a week” or more because of how students, a professor, or the administration would respond, compared to 17% of students nationally.

When considering the prevalence of self-censorship, it’s worth considering the political composition of Northwestern students. Among those sampled, 62% identify as liberal, 14% moderate, 16% conservative, and 8% something else. Narrowing in, 23% of the sample identify as “very liberal,” which outnumbers the total percentage of Northwestern students right of center. Across each of the four questions on self-censorship, substantially larger percentages of moderate and conservative students at Northwestern reported frequently self-censoring. For example, 47% of conservative Northwestern students reported self-censoring “a couple of times a week” or more during classroom discussions compared to 15% of liberal Northwestern students.

FIGURE 2 Students that Self-Censor “a Couple Times a Week” or More, by Ideology



WHAT TOPICS ARE DIFFICULT FOR NORTHWESTERN STUDENTS TO HAVE CONVERSATIONS ABOUT?

Northwestern’s ranking on the “Openness” component has for the second year in a row been its best ranked component, at 32. On almost every topic, only a minority of Northwestern students expressed difficulty having an open and honest conversation about the topics assessed. This positively contributed to Northwestern’s ranking on this component.

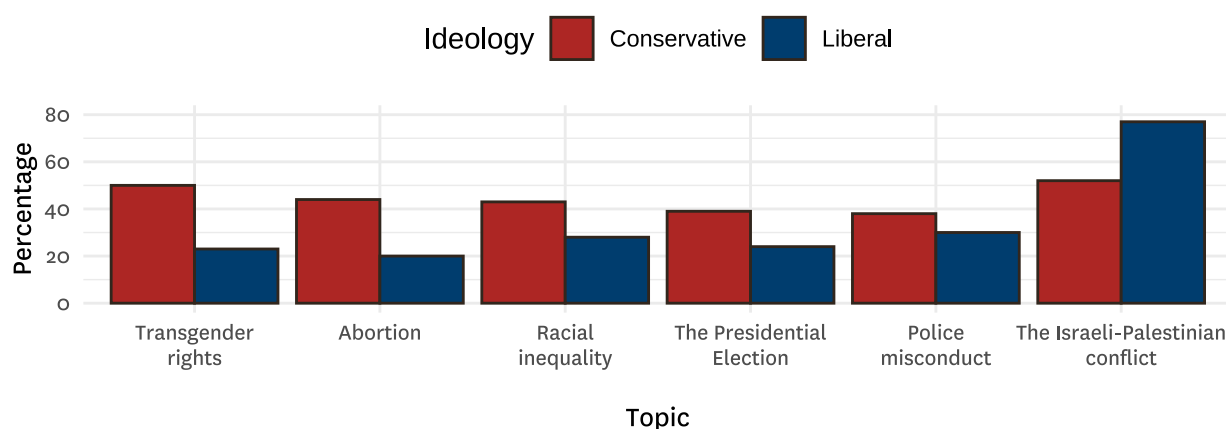
Similar to students nationwide, a large proportion of Northwestern students — 70% — identified the Israeli-Palestinian conflict as a topic difficult to have an open and honest conversation about. Last year, a large proportion of Northwestern students (43%) already identified this as a difficult topic, which at the

time was unusual. Even though this year a majority of students (55%) nationwide also identified this as a difficult topic, Northwestern continues to stand out given the even larger percentage of its students who indicated this.

No other topic at Northwestern was identified by a majority of students as difficult to have an open and honest conversation about. The next two most difficult were police misconduct (30%) and racial inequality (29%). However, on two topics percentages did go up slightly. Specifically, last year 18% of Northwestern students expressed difficulty having an open and honest conversation about transgender rights, and 17% said this about freedom of speech. These numbers rose to 28% and 25% respectively.

Similar to the “Self-Censorship” component, when considering the ideological makeup of Northwestern students, it’s possible that the small percentages of Northwestern students expressing difficulty having an open and honest conversation about the assessed topics is because a consensus already exists on campus about these topics, in large part due to the majority (62%) of Northwestern students identifying as liberal. For many of the topics assessed, a substantially larger percentage of conservative students expressed difficulty discussing the topic. Though for one topic — the Israeli-Palestinian conflict — a larger proportion of liberal Northwestern students expressed difficulty discussing it than did conservative Northwestern students.

FIGURE 3 Students Who Find These Topics Difficult to Talk About (%), by Ideology



WHICH SPEAKERS DO NORTHWESTERN STUDENTS CONSIDER CONTROVERSIAL?

Northwestern ranked 44 on “Tolerance for Liberal Speakers,” 187 on “Tolerance for Conservative Speakers,” and 112 on “Mean Tolerance.” As the rankings show, Northwestern students are biased toward allowing controversial liberal speakers on campus compared to conservative ones, as evidenced by the ranking of 218 on the “Tolerance Difference” component.

Northwestern students were presented with eight different previously expressed ideas (three liberal, three conservative, and two related to Israeli-Palestinian conflict, which did not impact the rankings) in a random order. The percentage of Northwestern students who said they would “probably” or “definitely”

allow each of the three controversial liberal speakers ranged from 52% (“The police are just as racist as the Ku Klux Klan”) to 65% (“Children should be able to transition without parental consent”). While majorities of students nationally supported allowing all three controversial liberal speakers on campus, they did not give the same level of support as Northwestern students — support by students nationally ranged from 47% (“The police are just as racist as the Ku Klux Klan”) to 56% (“Children should be able to transition without parental consent”).

Similar to last year, Northwestern ranked relatively poor on “Tolerance for Conservative Speakers” compared to most of the other schools surveyed. The percentage of Northwestern students who say they would “probably” or “definitely” allow each of the three controversial conservative speakers on campus ranged from 26% (“Black Lives Matter is a hate group”) to 42% (“Abortion should be completely illegal”). Northwestern students’ intolerance for controversial conservative speakers is somewhat evident when its students are compared to students nationally, as larger proportions of students nationally would allow all three of the controversial conservative speakers on campus. Support by students nationally for the three controversial conservative speakers ranged from 32% (“Black Lives Matter is a hate group” and “Transgender people have a mental disorder”) to 45% (“Abortion should be completely illegal”).

The strong preference toward controversial liberal speakers over controversial conservative speakers is reflected in Northwestern’s poor ranking on the “Tolerance Difference” component — 218. The strong favoritism toward allowing controversial liberal speakers on campus might stem, again, from the ideological makeup of the Northwestern student body.

Finally, this year we also asked about tolerance toward two controversial speakers on Israeli-Palestinian conflict-related topics. For a speaker expressing that “collateral damage in Gaza is justified for the sake of Israeli security,” 31% of Northwestern students say they would “probably” or “definitely” allow this controversial speaker (compared to 41% of students nationally). For a speaker expressing “from the river to the sea, Palestine will be free,” 76% of Northwestern students say they would “probably” or “definitely” allow this speaker (compared to 71% of students nationally). Thus, there also appears to be a clear demarcation in the type of controversial speaker Northwestern students would be accepting of related to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

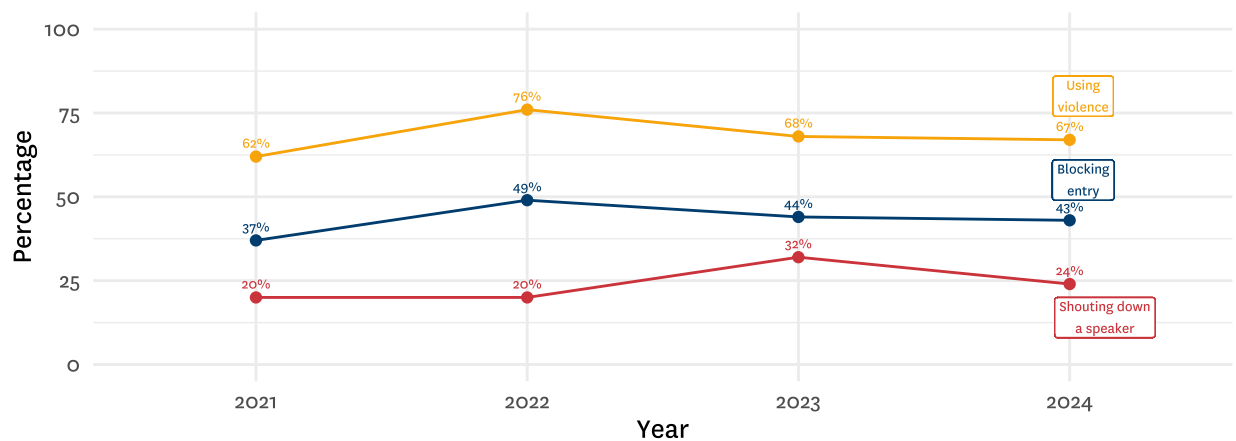
WHAT KINDS OF DISRUPTIVE CONDUCT DO NORTHWESTERN STUDENTS CONSIDER ACCEPTABLE?

Northwestern ranks 142 on the “Disruptive Conduct” component. While this ranking is still somewhat poor, it reflects a substantial improvement from a ranking of 225 last year.

As can be seen in the figure below, percentages this year compared to last year remain relatively similar for violence and blocking entry, and dropped for shoutdowns. Northwestern’s improvement on this component likely stems more from increasing numbers of students at other institutions endorsing these forms of illiberal protest rather than decreasing numbers of Northwestern students endorsing these forms of illiberal protest. This year, only 24% of Northwestern students say shoutdowns are “never” acceptable, a decline from the 32% of Northwestern students who said that last year. For blocking entry, 43% of Northwestern students say blocking entry to an event is “never” acceptable compared to 44% last year. For violence, two thirds of Northwestern students say this was “never” acceptable compared to 68% last year.

Compared to students nationally, fewer Northwestern students indicate these forms of disruptive conduct are “never” acceptable. Nationally, 32% of students say “shouting down a speaker to prevent them from speaking on campus” is “never” acceptable, 48% say “blocking other students from attending a campus speech” is “never” acceptable, and 68% say “using violence to stop a campus speech” is “never” acceptable. All of these percentages for students nationally experienced notable drops since last year.

FIGURE 4 Students Who Say a Disruptive Conduct is Never Acceptable (%)



HOW IS NORTHWESTERN’S ADMINISTRATIVE STANCE ON FREEDOM OF SPEECH PERCEIVED?

Northwestern ranks 217 on the “Administrative Support” component, a relatively significant drop from its poor ranking of 160 on this component last year.

Only 22% percent of Northwestern students say that their administration’s protection of free speech on campus is “very” or “extremely” clear — a notable decline from 34% last year — though another 47% say that it is “somewhat” clear. When it comes to whether the administration will defend a speaker’s rights during a controversy, only 14% of Northwestern students say this is “very” or “extremely” likely — compared to 31% last year — though another 52% say that it is “somewhat” likely. Overall, these low numbers reflect Northwestern students’ limited confidence in the administration on their campus to protect and defend free speech.

A ‘RED LIGHT’ SCHOOL WITH A LOT OF CONTROVERSY

FIRE awards Northwestern’s regulations on student expression our worst, “red light” rating, flagging one policy that clearly and substantially restricts student expression and four policies that earn a “yellow light” rating for posing either impermissibly vague or clear but narrow restrictions on protected speech. Northwestern earns a red light rating for maintaining a harassment policy that egregiously fails to track the legal standard for peer harassment in an educational setting. In addition to a poor definition of harassment, the policy includes a list of examples of harassment that includes “offensive jokes,” the use

of “stereotypes,” and “name calling” related to a protected class. While each of these behaviors could be part of a pattern of conduct that could rise to the level of peer harassment, these behaviors, in themselves, are typically protected under First Amendment standards. Northwestern must revise this and their other policies to reduce the chilling effect they impose on the campus speech climate.

Over the past five years, Northwestern has been involved in five different controversies over free expression, one each year — and did not react in a speech-protective manner in any of them. In December 2020, Northwestern removed Emeritus Professor Joseph Epstein from its English department website after he published an op-ed critical of Jill Biden’s use of the title “Dr.” because she is not a medical doctor. After fierce backlash, the university removed Epstein from its website and released a statement criticizing his views while purporting to support academic freedom and freedom of expression.

Then, in 2021, Northwestern suspended all Interfraternity Council social events and chapter-sponsored recruitment activities in response to serious accusations against two fraternities on campus. Initially, the ban was set to expire after three weeks, but it was extended twice, ending on January 3, 2022. While only two fraternities faced serious accusations, Northwestern punished all ten recognized fraternities with the ban.

The next year, Northwestern’s Associated Student Government approved a policy that would allow senators to close meetings to the media in order to create a “safer” environment for student activists. The university did nothing to rectify the student government’s actions and protect student journalists’ right to access on campus.

In 2023, Northwestern’s student chapters of the College Republicans and Young Americans for Freedom invited political commentator James Lindsay to speak on campus. Students objected to Lindsay speaking, calling him a conspiracy theorist, neo-fascist, anti-LGBTQ+ activist, and antisemite. After numerous students emailed the president’s office to complain about Lindsay’s appearance, the President did not bar him from speaking on campus, stating that while many of Lindsay’s views are “antithetical to Northwestern’s values” the university “upholds the principles of academic freedom and open discourse.”

Unfortunately, following Lindsay’s appearance, Northwestern’s student government got involved, voting to freeze funding for the College Republicans and YAF because it claimed the flyers used to promote the event violated Northwestern’s policy prohibiting discrimination and harassment. After FIRE wrote to the student government in May 2023 explaining that it could not cut off funding because of the flyers, funding was restored within two weeks.

This past Spring, Students for Justice in Palestine, Educators for Justice in Palestine, Jewish Voices for Peace, Fossil Free Northwestern, and Students Organizing for Labor Rights held a protest during which a leaflet was distributed accusing the university of supporting genocide by “funneling Jewish students into Hillel.” A Northwestern spokesperson told the media that it was investigating whether the statements about Hillel in the leaflet violate the university’s Code of Conduct or discrimination and harassment policies.

Northwestern was penalized for each of the five situations because, in each case, the university did not adequately defend expressive freedoms on campus.

HOW CAN NORTHWESTERN IMPROVE?

The easiest thing Northwestern can do to improve its ranking in next year's College Free Speech Rankings is to revise its "red" and "yellow light" speech policies. For example, if Northwestern had "green light" speech policies, it would rank 110 in this year's College Free Speech Rankings. Publicizing its policy changes, specifically to students, could also increase students' trust in the administration's support of free expression on campus. This could, in turn, improve the university's support survey ranking, which is currently one of its worst components in the rankings.

Improving and publicizing the university policies could also be a helpful way to indicate to students which activities and behaviors are acceptable forms of protest and which are not, which could potentially lead to fewer campus disruptions and might change the culture of the university toward less acceptance of violence and shoutdowns. The university can also teach students more directly that disruptions will not be tolerated or why disruptions are bad for free expression to improve its "Administrative Support" and "Disruptive Conduct" rankings.

Additionally, to improve its ranking, Northwestern could increase its support for those involved in speech controversies. If Northwestern had supported each individual or group targeted in a speech controversy by defending free expression without expressing disagreement for the viewpoint expressed, then the university would have benefited from its responses rather than been penalized for them.

Methodology

THE COLLEGE FREE SPEECH RANKINGS SURVEY was developed by FIRE and administered by College Pulse. No donors to the project took part in designing or conducting the survey. The survey was fielded from January 25 through June 17, 2024. These data come from a sample of 58,807 undergraduates who were then enrolled full-time in four-year degree programs at one of a list of 258 colleges and universities in the United States. The margin of error for the U.S. undergraduate population is +/- 0.4 of a percentage point, and the margin of error for college student sub-demographics ranges from 2-5 percentage points.

The initial sample was drawn from College Pulse’s American College Student Panel™, which includes more than 850,000 verified undergraduate students and recent alumni from schools within a range of more than 1,500 two- and four-year colleges and universities in all 50 states. Panel members were recruited by a number of methods to help ensure student diversity in the panel population. These methods include web advertising, permission-based email campaigns, and partnerships with university-affiliated organizations. To ensure the panel reflects the diverse backgrounds and experiences of the American college population, College Pulse recruited panelists from a wide variety of institutions. The panel includes students attending large public universities, small private colleges, online universities, historically Black colleges such as Howard University, women’s colleges such as Smith College, and religiously-affiliated colleges such as Brigham Young University.

College Pulse uses a two-stage validation process to ensure that all its surveys include only students currently enrolled in two-year or four-year colleges or universities. Students are required to provide an “.edu” email address to join the panel and, for this survey, had to acknowledge that they are currently enrolled full-time in a four-year degree program. All invitations to complete surveys were sent using the student’s “.edu” email address or through a notification in the College Pulse app, available on iOS and Android platforms.

College Pulse applies a post-stratification adjustment based on demographic distributions from multiple data sources, including the Current Population Survey (CPS), the National Postsecondary Student Aid Study (NPSAS), and the Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS). The “weight” rebalances the sample based on a number of important benchmark attributes, such as race, gender, class year, voter registration status, and financial aid status. The sample weighting is accomplished using an iterative proportional fitting (IFP) process that simultaneously balances the distributions of all variables to produce a representative sample of four year undergraduate students in the United States.

This year College Pulse introduced a similar post-stratification adjustment based on demographic distributions from multiple data sources, including the Current Population Survey (CPS), the National Postsecondary Student Aid Study (NPSAS), and the Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS). The “school universe weight” rebalances the sample based on a number of important benchmark attributes, such as race, gender, class year, voter registration status, and financial aid status. The sample weighting is accomplished using an iterative proportional fitting (IFP) process that simultaneously balances the distributions of all variables to produce a representative sample of four year undergraduate students from the 257 colleges and universities surveyed.

College Pulse also applies a post-stratification adjustment based on demographic distributions from the Current Population Survey (CPS), the National Postsecondary Student Aid Study (NPSAS), and the Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS). This “school weight” rebalances the sample from each individual school surveyed based on a number of important benchmark attributes, such as race, gender, class year, voter registration status, and financial aid status. The sample weighting is accomplished using an iterative proportional fitting (IPF) process that simultaneously balances the distributions of all variables to produce a representative sample of students at each individual school.

All weights are trimmed to prevent individual interviews from having too much influence on the final results and to ensure over-sampled population groups do not completely lose their voice.

The use of these weights in statistical analysis ensures that the demographic characteristics of the sample closely approximate the demographic characteristics of the target populations. Even with these adjustments, surveys may be subject to error or bias due to question wording, context, and order effects.

For further information, please see: <https://collegepulse.com/methodology>.

FREE SPEECH RANKINGS

The College Free Speech Rankings are based on a composite score of 14 components, seven of which assess student perceptions of different aspects of the speech climate on their campus. The other seven assess behavior by administrators, faculty, and students regarding free expression on campus. Higher scores indicate a better campus climate for free speech and expression.

Student Perceptions

The student perception components include:

- **Comfort Expressing Ideas:** Students were asked how comfortable they feel expressing their views on controversial topics in five different campus settings (e.g., “in class,” or “in the dining hall”). Options ranged from “very uncomfortable” to “very comfortable.” Responses were coded so that higher scores indicate greater comfort expressing ideas. The maximum number of points is 20.
- **Self-Censorship:** Students were provided with a definition of self-censorship and then asked how often they self-censored in three different settings on campus (e.g., “in a classroom discussion”). Responses were coded so that higher scores indicate self-censoring less often. The maximum number of points is 15.²
- **Tolerance for Liberal Speakers:** Students were asked whether three speakers espousing views potentially offensive to conservatives (e.g., “The police are just as racist as the Klu[sic] Klux Klan.”) should be allowed on campus, regardless of whether they personally agree with the speaker’s message. Options ranged from “definitely should not allow this speaker” to “definitely should allow

² The self-censorship component was introduced this year and is a composite score of responses to the three questions that are presented after self-censorship is defined. In previous years other questions were used to measure self-censorship and they were factored into the “Comfort Expressing Ideas” component.

this speaker” and were coded so that higher scores indicate more tolerance of the speaker (i.e., more support for allowing the speaker on campus). The maximum number of points is 12.

- **Tolerance for Conservative Speakers:** Students were also asked whether three speakers espousing views potentially offensive to liberals (e.g., “Black Lives Matter is a hate group”) should be allowed on campus, regardless of whether they personally agree with the speaker’s message. Scoring was performed in the same manner as it was for the “Tolerance for Liberal Speakers” subcomponent, and the maximum number of points is 12.
- **Disruptive Conduct:** Students were asked how acceptable it is to engage in different methods of protest against a campus speaker, including “shouting down a speaker or trying to prevent them from speaking on campus,” “blocking other students from attending a campus speech,” and “using violence to stop a campus speech.” Options ranged from “always acceptable” to “never acceptable” and were coded so that higher scores indicate less acceptance of disruptive conduct. The maximum number of points is 12.
- **Administrative Support:** Students were asked how clear it is their administration protects free speech on campus and how likely the administration would be to defend a speaker’s right to express their views if a controversy over speech occurred on campus. For the administrative clarity question, options range from “not at all clear” to “extremely clear,” and for the administrative controversy question, options range from “not at all likely” to “extremely likely.” Options were coded so that higher scores indicate greater clarity and a greater likelihood of defending a speaker’s rights. The maximum number of points is 10.
- **Openness:** Finally, students were asked which of 20 issues (e.g., “abortion,” “freedom of speech,” “gun control,” and “racial inequality”), if any, are difficult to have open conversations about on campus. Responses were coded so that higher scores indicate fewer issues being selected. The maximum number of points is 20.

Two additional constructs, “Mean Tolerance” and “Tolerance Difference,” were computed from the “Tolerance for Liberal/Conservative Speaker” components. “Tolerance Difference” was calculated by subtracting “Tolerance for Conservative Speakers” from “Tolerance for Liberal Speakers” and then taking the absolute value (so that a bias in favor of either side would be treated the same).

Campus Behavioral Metrics

Schools received bonus points — described in more detail below — for unequivocally supporting free expression in response to speech controversies by taking the following actions indicative of a positive campus climate for free speech:

- Supporting free expression during a deplatforming campaign, as recorded in FIRE’s Campus Deplatforming database.³

³ A full list of all the deplatforming incidents that impacted the 2025 College Free Speech Rankings is available here: <https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1i5h8y1M4GFv5FQzyx6LZqHj1oOa1YQJOYvozCqAzE8/edit?gid=1964386004#gid=1964386004>. The full Campus Deplatforming database is available on FIRE’s website at <https://www.thefire.org/research-learn/campus-deplatforming-database>.

- Supporting a scholar whose speech rights were threatened during a free speech controversy, as recorded in FIRE's Scholars Under Fire database.⁴
- Supporting students and student groups, as recorded in the 2025 College Free Speech Rankings behavioral metrics documentation that is available online.⁵

Schools were penalized — described in more detail below — for taking the following actions indicative of poor campus climate for free speech:

- Successfully deplatforming a speaker, as recorded in FIRE's Campus Deplatforming database.
- Sanctioning a scholar (e.g., placing under investigation, suspending, or terminating a scholar), as recorded in FIRE's Scholars Under Fire database.
- Sanctioning a student or student groups, as recorded in the 2025 College Free Speech Rankings behavioral metrics documentation that is available online.

To be included in this year's rankings, an incident that resulted in a bonus or penalty had to have been recorded by June 15, 2024, and had to have been fully assessed by FIRE's research staff, who determined whether the incident warranted inclusion.

In response to the encampment protests, FIRE and College Pulse reopened the 2025 College Free Speech Rankings survey on any campus with an encampment. This allowed us to collect survey data from students while the encampments were taking place.⁶ That means that this year's College Free Speech Rankings provide a treasure trove of data on the evolving state of free expression at American colleges and universities.

FIRE's Spotlight ratings — our ratings of the written policies governing student speech at nearly 500 institutions of higher education in the United States — also factored into each school's overall score. Three substantive ratings are possible: “red light,” “yellow light,” and “green light.” A “red light” rating indicates that the institution has at least one policy that both clearly and substantially restricts freedom of speech. A “yellow light” rating indicates that an institution maintains at least one policy that places a clear restriction on a more limited amount of protected expression, or one that, by virtue of vague wording, could too easily be used to restrict protected expression. A “green light” rating indicates that an institution maintains no policies that seriously threaten speech, although this rating does not indicate whether a college actively supports free expression.⁷

4 A full list of all the scholar sanction attempts that impacted the 2025 College Free Speech Rankings is available here: <https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1i5h8y1M4GFv5FQzyx6LLZqHj1oOa1YQJOYvozCqAzE8/edit?gid=1204583933#gid=1204583933>. The full Scholars Under Fire database is available on FIRE's website at <https://www.thefire.org/research-learn/scholars-under-fire>.

5 All data reported in this section reflect the Students Under Fire database as of June 15, 2024. A full list of all the student sanction attempts that impacted the 2025 College Free Speech Rankings is available here: <https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1i5h8y1M4GFv5FQzyx6LLZqHj1oOa1YQJOYvozCqAzE8/edit?gid=472255842#gid=472255842>. The full Students Under Fire database is currently internal to FIRE but will be released in full in early 2025.

6 Schools were not penalized for how they handled the encampment protests. As this report demonstrates, the impact of the encampment protests on the campus speech climate is captured by responses to survey questions that ask students about their confidence in that their college administration protects speech rights on campus; their comfort expressing controversial political views; and, their frequency of self-censorship. Deplatformings that occurred during the encampment protests were also still included in the calculation of the 2025 College Free Speech Rankings.

7 See: Using FIRE's Spotlight Database. Available online: <https://www.thefire.org/research-learn/using-fires-spotlight-database>.

Finally, a fourth rating, “Warning,” is assigned to a private college or university when its policies clearly and consistently state that it prioritizes other values over a commitment to free speech. “Warning” schools, therefore, were not ranked, and their overall scores are presented separately in this report.⁸

For this year’s rankings, the cutoff date for assessing a school’s speech code policies was June 15, 2024. Any changes to a school’s Spotlight rating that occurred since then will be reflected in the 2026 College Free Speech Rankings.

Overall Score

To create an overall score for each college, we first summed the following student subcomponents: “Comfort Expressing Ideas,” “Self-Censorship,” “Mean Tolerance,” “Disruptive Conduct,” “Administrative Support,” and “Openness.” Then, we subtracted the “Tolerance Difference.” By including the “Mean Tolerance” (as opposed to including “Tolerance for Liberal Speakers” and “Tolerance for Conservative Speakers” separately) and subtracting the “Tolerance Difference,” the score accounted for the possibility that ideologically homogeneous student bodies may result in a campus that *appears* to have a strong culture of free expression but is actually hostile to the views of an ideological minority — whose views students may almost never encounter on campus.

Then, to further account for the speech climate on an individual campus, we incorporated behavioral components. A school earned two bonus points each time it unequivocally defended free expression during a campus speech controversy — a rating of “High Honors” for its public response to a speech controversy. For instance, when the student government at Arizona State University opposed a registered student group’s invitation to Mohammed el-Kurd to speak on campus, and other members of the campus community petitioned the university to disinvite el-Kurd, a university spokesperson responded:

The university is committed to a safe environment where the free exchange of ideas can take place . . . As a public university, ASU adheres to the First Amendment and strives to ensure the fullest degree of intellectual freedom and free expression. All individuals and groups on campus have the right to express their opinions, whatever those opinions may be, as long as they do not violate the student code of conduct, student organization policies, and do not infringe on another student’s individual rights.

el-Kurd spoke successfully on campus, and we awarded ASU two bonus points.

A school earned one bonus point for responding to a speech controversy by making a public statement that strongly defends the First Amendment but is not as full-throated a defense as a “High Honors” statement. These statements received the rating of “Honors.” For instance, at New York University, NYU Law Students for Palestine and Jewish Law Students for a Free Palestine called for the cancellation of an event featuring Robert Howse and Michal Cotler-Wunsh, because Cotler-Wunsh supports the occupation of Palestine. The event was co-sponsored by a student group, NYU’s Jewish Law Students Association, as well as the president’s office and the Bronfman Center for Jewish Life. NYU did not cancel the event, and protesters interrupted Cotler-Wunsh several times during his remarks before voluntarily leaving, allowing the event to resume and conclude successfully. The dean of the law school said the following in response:

⁸ The Spotlight Database is available on FIRE’s website: <https://www.thefire.org/resources/spotlight/>.

The principles of free speech and inquiry are complemented by debate, challenge and protest . . . While dissent may be vigorous, it must not interfere with the speaker’s ability to communicate — which is exactly why, should those interrupters not have left on their own accord, they would be subject to discipline.

We awarded one point for this response, which occurred in 2024, then we set this bonus to decrease by one-quarter of a point for each year that passes.

We also applied penalties when a school sanctioned a scholar, student, or student group, or deplatformed a speaker.

A school lost up to five points each time it sanctioned (e.g., investigated, suspended, or terminated) a scholar. When the sanction did not result in termination the school received a penalty of one point, which we set to decrease by one-quarter of a point each year: This meant penalizing a school a full point for sanctioning a scholar in 2024, three-quarters of a point for sanctioning a scholar in 2023, half a point for sanctioning a scholar in 2022, and one-quarter of a point for sanctioning a scholar in 2021. However, if the administration terminated the scholar, we subtracted three points, and if that scholar was tenured, we subtracted five points. We applied full penalties for termination for four years, then set them to decline by one-quarter of a point each year. So, a penalty for termination that occurred in 2020 has just now started to decay.

A school lost up to three points for sanctioning students or student groups. When the sanction did not result in expulsion, the revocation of acceptance, the denial or revoking of recognition, suspension, or termination of a student’s campus employment (e.g. as a resident assistant) the school received a penalty of one point. Like with scholar sanctions that did not result in termination, we set these penalties to decrease by one-quarter of a point each year. If a school suspended a student or terminated their campus employment, we penalized it two points. We also set these penalties to decrease by one-quarter of a point each year. However, if a school denied or revoked a student group’s recognition, expelled a student, or revoked their acceptance, it was penalized three points. We applied these penalties in full for four years, and then set them to decline by one-quarter of a point each year.

Regarding deplatforming attempts, a school was penalized one point if an invited speaker withdrew because of the controversy caused by their upcoming appearance on campus or if an event was postponed in response to a controversy. We set this penalty to decrease by a quarter of a point each year. Schools where an attempted disruption occurred received a penalty of two points. We applied this penalty for four years, then set it to decrease by one-quarter of a point each year. Schools with deplatforming attempts that resulted in event cancellations, preemptive rejections of speakers, removal of artwork on display, the revocation of a speaker’s invitation, or a substantial event disruption were penalized three points. We applied these penalties in full for four years, then set them to decline by one-quarter of a point each year.

After we applied bonuses and penalties, we standardized each school’s score by group — “Warning” schools and other schools — making the average score in each group 50.00 and the standard deviation 10.00. Following standardization, we added one standard deviation to the final score of colleges who received a “green light” rating for their speech codes. We also subtracted half a standard deviation from the final score of colleges that received a “yellow light” rating, one standard deviation from the final score of schools that received a “red light” rating, and two standard deviations from schools that received a “Warning” rating.

$$\text{Overall Score} = (50 + (Z_{\text{Raw Overall Score}})(10)) + \text{FIRE Rating}$$

Topline Results

How clear is it to you that your college administration protects free speech on campus?

| Response | Frequency | Percent |
|------------------|-----------|---------|
| Not at all clear | 19 | 7 |
| Not very clear | 69 | 24 |
| Somewhat clear | 133 | 47 |
| Very clear | 57 | 20 |
| Extremely clear | 5 | 2 |

If a controversy over offensive speech were to occur on your campus, how likely is it that the administration would defend the speaker's right to express their views?

| Response | Frequency | Percent |
|-------------------|-----------|---------|
| Not at all likely | 18 | 6 |
| Not very likely | 78 | 27 |
| Somewhat likely | 146 | 52 |
| Very likely | 35 | 12 |
| Extremely likely | 6 | 2 |

How comfortable would you feel doing the following on your campus? [Presented in randomized order]
Publicly disagreeing with a professor about a controversial political topic.

| Response | Frequency | Percent |
|------------------------|-----------|---------|
| Very uncomfortable | 78 | 28 |
| Somewhat uncomfortable | 113 | 40 |
| Somewhat comfortable | 70 | 25 |
| Very comfortable | 22 | 8 |

Expressing disagreement with one of your professors about a controversial political topic in a written assignment.

| Response | Frequency | Percent |
|------------------------|-----------|---------|
| Very uncomfortable | 50 | 18 |
| Somewhat uncomfortable | 108 | 38 |
| Somewhat comfortable | 91 | 32 |
| Very comfortable | 34 | 12 |

Expressing your views on a controversial political topic during an in-class discussion.

| Response | Frequency | Percent |
|------------------------|-----------|---------|
| Very uncomfortable | 71 | 25 |
| Somewhat uncomfortable | 131 | 46 |
| Somewhat comfortable | 63 | 22 |
| Very comfortable | 19 | 7 |

Expressing your views on a controversial political topic to other students during a discussion in a common campus space such as a quad, dining hall, or lounge.

| Response | Frequency | Percent |
|------------------------|-----------|---------|
| Very uncomfortable | 54 | 19 |
| Somewhat uncomfortable | 112 | 39 |
| Somewhat comfortable | 85 | 30 |
| Very comfortable | 33 | 12 |

Expressing an unpopular political opinion to your fellow students on a social media account tied to your name.

| Response | Frequency | Percent |
|------------------------|-----------|---------|
| Very uncomfortable | 118 | 42 |
| Somewhat uncomfortable | 100 | 35 |
| Somewhat comfortable | 49 | 17 |
| Very comfortable | 16 | 6 |

On your campus, how often have you felt that you could not express your opinion on a subject because of how students, a professor, or the administration would respond?

| Response | Frequency | Percent |
|-------------------------------------|-----------|---------|
| Never | 36 | 13 |
| Rarely | 114 | 40 |
| Occasionally, once or twice a month | 81 | 29 |
| Fairly often, a couple times a week | 42 | 15 |
| Very often, nearly every day | 11 | 4 |

This next series of questions asks you about self-censorship in different settings. For the purpose of these questions, self-censorship is defined as follows:

Refraining from sharing certain views because you fear social (e.g., exclusion from social events), professional (e.g., losing job or promotion), legal (e.g., prosecution or fine), or violent (e.g., assault) consequences, whether in person or remotely (e.g., by phone or online), and whether the consequences come from state or non-state sources. [Presented in randomized order]

How often do you self-censor during conversations with other students on campus?

| Response | Frequency | Percent |
|-------------------------------------|-----------|---------|
| Never | 12 | 4 |
| Rarely | 91 | 32 |
| Occasionally, once or twice a month | 112 | 40 |
| Fairly often, a couple times a week | 59 | 21 |
| Very often, nearly every day | 9 | 3 |

How often do you self-censor during conversations with your professors?

| Response | Frequency | Percent |
|-------------------------------------|-----------|---------|
| Never | 17 | 6 |
| Rarely | 93 | 33 |
| Occasionally, once or twice a month | 126 | 45 |
| Fairly often, a couple times a week | 41 | 14 |
| Very often, nearly every day | 6 | 2 |

How often do you self-censor during classroom discussions?

| Response | Frequency | Percent |
|-------------------------------------|-----------|---------|
| Never | 16 | 6 |
| Rarely | 87 | 31 |
| Occasionally, once or twice a month | 116 | 41 |
| Fairly often, a couple times a week | 49 | 17 |
| Very often, nearly every day | 15 | 5 |

How acceptable would you say it is for students to engage in the following action to protest a campus speaker?
[Presented in randomized order]

Shouting down a speaker to prevent them from speaking on campus.

| Response | Frequency | Percent |
|----------------------|-----------|---------|
| Always acceptable | 20 | 7 |
| Sometimes acceptable | 102 | 36 |
| Rarely acceptable | 93 | 33 |
| Never acceptable | 68 | 24 |

Blocking other students from attending a campus speech.

| Response | Frequency | Percent |
|----------------------|-----------|---------|
| Always acceptable | 3 | 1 |
| Sometimes acceptable | 46 | 16 |
| Rarely acceptable | 112 | 40 |
| Never acceptable | 121 | 43 |

Using violence to stop a campus speech.

| Response | Frequency | Percent |
|----------------------|-----------|---------|
| Always acceptable | 6 | 2 |
| Sometimes acceptable | 23 | 8 |
| Rarely acceptable | 66 | 23 |
| Never acceptable | 189 | 67 |

Student groups often invite speakers to campus to express their views on a range of topics. Regardless of your own views on the topic, should your school **ALLOW** or **NOT ALLOW** a speaker on campus who promotes the following idea? [Presented in randomized order]

Transgender people have a mental disorder.

| Response | Frequency | Percent |
|--|-----------|---------|
| Definitely should not allow this speaker | 131 | 46 |
| Probably should not allow this speaker | 72 | 26 |
| Probably should allow this speaker | 55 | 19 |
| Definitely should allow this speaker | 21 | 8 |

Abortion should be completely illegal.

| Response | Frequency | Percent |
|--|-----------|---------|
| Definitely should not allow this speaker | 82 | 29 |
| Probably should not allow this speaker | 81 | 29 |
| Probably should allow this speaker | 86 | 30 |
| Definitely should allow this speaker | 33 | 12 |

Black Lives Matter is a hate group.

| Response | Frequency | Percent |
|--|-----------|---------|
| Definitely should not allow this speaker | 117 | 41 |
| Probably should not allow this speaker | 93 | 33 |
| Probably should allow this speaker | 51 | 18 |
| Definitely should allow this speaker | 22 | 8 |

The Catholic church is a pedophilic institution.

| Response | Frequency | Percent |
|--|-----------|---------|
| Definitely should not allow this speaker | 36 | 13 |
| Probably should not allow this speaker | 84 | 30 |
| Probably should allow this speaker | 119 | 42 |
| Definitely should allow this speaker | 44 | 15 |

The police are just as racist as the Klu Klux Klan.

| Response | Frequency | Percent |
|--|-----------|---------|
| Definitely should not allow this speaker | 35 | 12 |
| Probably should not allow this speaker | 99 | 35 |
| Probably should allow this speaker | 103 | 36 |
| Definitely should allow this speaker | 46 | 16 |

Children should be able to transition without parental consent.

| Response | Frequency | Percent |
|--|-----------|---------|
| Definitely should not allow this speaker | 16 | 6 |
| Probably should not allow this speaker | 78 | 28 |
| Probably should allow this speaker | 125 | 44 |
| Definitely should allow this speaker | 60 | 21 |

Collateral damage in Gaza is justified for the sake of Israeli security.

| Response | Frequency | Percent |
|--|-----------|---------|
| Definitely should not allow this speaker | 75 | 27 |
| Probably should not allow this speaker | 121 | 43 |
| Probably should allow this speaker | 55 | 19 |
| Definitely should allow this speaker | 32 | 11 |

From the river to the sea, Palestine will be free.

| Response | Frequency | Percent |
|--|-----------|---------|
| Definitely should not allow this speaker | 12 | 4 |
| Probably should not allow this speaker | 53 | 19 |
| Probably should allow this speaker | 123 | 43 |
| Definitely should allow this speaker | 94 | 33 |

Some students say it can be difficult to have conversations about certain issues on campus. Which of the following issues, if any, would you say are difficult to have an open and honest conversation about on your campus? [Presented in randomized order with none of the above always listed last]

Abortion

| Response | Frequency | Percent |
|----------|-----------|---------|
| No | 208 | 74 |
| Yes | 71 | 25 |

Affirmative action

| Response | Frequency | Percent |
|----------|-----------|---------|
| No | 209 | 74 |
| Yes | 70 | 25 |

China

| Response | Frequency | Percent |
|----------|-----------|---------|
| No | 255 | 90 |
| Yes | 24 | 9 |

Climate change

| Response | Frequency | Percent |
|----------|-----------|---------|
| No | 260 | 92 |
| Yes | 19 | 7 |

Crime

| Response | Frequency | Percent |
|----------|-----------|---------|
| No | 247 | 87 |
| Yes | 32 | 11 |

Economic inequality

| Response | Frequency | Percent |
|----------|-----------|---------|
| No | 213 | 75 |
| Yes | 66 | 23 |

Freedom of speech

| Response | Frequency | Percent |
|----------|-----------|---------|
| No | 209 | 74 |
| Yes | 70 | 25 |

Gay rights

| Response | Frequency | Percent |
|----------|-----------|---------|
| No | 242 | 85 |
| Yes | 37 | 13 |

Gender inequality

| Response | Frequency | Percent |
|----------|-----------|---------|
| No | 247 | 87 |
| Yes | 32 | 11 |

Gun control

| Response | Frequency | Percent |
|----------|-----------|---------|
| No | 221 | 78 |
| Yes | 58 | 20 |

Hate speech

| Response | Frequency | Percent |
|----------|-----------|---------|
| No | 203 | 72 |
| Yes | 76 | 27 |

Immigration

| Response | Frequency | Percent |
|----------|-----------|---------|
| No | 229 | 81 |
| Yes | 50 | 18 |

The Israeli/Palestinian conflict

| Response | Frequency | Percent |
|----------|-----------|---------|
| No | 82 | 29 |
| Yes | 197 | 70 |

The Presidential Election

| Response | Frequency | Percent |
|----------|-----------|---------|
| No | 203 | 72 |
| Yes | 76 | 27 |

Police misconduct

| Response | Frequency | Percent |
|----------|-----------|---------|
| No | 194 | 69 |
| Yes | 85 | 30 |

Racial inequality

| Response | Frequency | Percent |
|----------|-----------|---------|
| No | 198 | 70 |
| Yes | 81 | 29 |

Religion

| Response | Frequency | Percent |
|----------|-----------|---------|
| No | 207 | 73 |
| Yes | 72 | 25 |

Sexual assault

| Response | Frequency | Percent |
|----------|-----------|---------|
| No | 213 | 75 |
| Yes | 66 | 23 |

The Supreme Court

| Response | Frequency | Percent |
|----------|-----------|---------|
| No | 248 | 88 |
| Yes | 31 | 11 |

Transgender rights

| Response | Frequency | Percent |
|----------|-----------|---------|
| No | 200 | 71 |
| Yes | 79 | 28 |

None of the above

| Response | Frequency | Percent |
|----------|-----------|---------|
| No | 249 | 88 |
| Yes | 30 | 11 |

Which of the following groups on your campus should be able to register as student organizations and receive student activity fees? [Presented in randomized order with none of the above always listed last]

Asian student groups

| Response | Frequency | Percent |
|----------|-----------|---------|
| No | 65 | 23 |
| Yes | 213 | 75 |

Black or African American student groups

| Response | Frequency | Percent |
|----------|-----------|---------|
| No | 66 | 23 |
| Yes | 212 | 75 |

Hispanic/Latino student groups

| Response | Frequency | Percent |
|----------|-----------|---------|
| No | 63 | 22 |
| Yes | 215 | 76 |

Sororities or fraternities

| Response | Frequency | Percent |
|----------|-----------|---------|
| No | 99 | 35 |
| Yes | 179 | 63 |

LGBTQ+ student groups

| Response | Frequency | Percent |
|----------|-----------|---------|
| No | 70 | 25 |
| Yes | 209 | 74 |

Christian student groups

| Response | Frequency | Percent |
|----------|-----------|---------|
| No | 69 | 24 |
| Yes | 209 | 74 |

Jewish student groups

| Response | Frequency | Percent |
|----------|-----------|---------|
| No | 65 | 23 |
| Yes | 214 | 75 |

Muslim/Islamic student groups.

| Response | Frequency | Percent |
|----------|-----------|---------|
| No | 64 | 23 |
| Yes | 214 | 76 |

Hindu student groups.

| Response | Frequency | Percent |
|----------|-----------|---------|
| No | 57 | 20 |
| Yes | 222 | 78 |

Atheist/agnostic/secular student groups

| Response | Frequency | Percent |
|----------|-----------|---------|
| No | 65 | 23 |
| Yes | 213 | 75 |

Republican student groups

| Response | Frequency | Percent |
|----------|-----------|---------|
| No | 88 | 31 |
| Yes | 191 | 67 |

Democratic student groups.

| Response | Frequency | Percent |
|----------|-----------|---------|
| No | 75 | 27 |
| Yes | 203 | 72 |

Politically conservative student groups

| Response | Frequency | Percent |
|----------|-----------|---------|
| No | 92 | 33 |
| Yes | 186 | 66 |

Politically liberal student groups

| Response | Frequency | Percent |
|----------|-----------|---------|
| No | 75 | 26 |
| Yes | 204 | 72 |

Black Lives Matter student groups

| Response | Frequency | Percent |
|----------|-----------|---------|
| No | 69 | 24 |
| Yes | 209 | 74 |

Pro-Israeli student groups

| Response | Frequency | Percent |
|----------|-----------|---------|
| No | 118 | 42 |
| Yes | 161 | 57 |

Pro-Palestinian student groups

| Response | Frequency | Percent |
|----------|-----------|---------|
| No | 81 | 29 |
| Yes | 197 | 70 |

Other student groups

| Response | Frequency | Percent |
|----------|-----------|---------|
| No | 112 | 39 |
| Yes | 167 | 59 |

None of the above

| Response | Frequency | Percent |
|----------|-----------|---------|
| No | 258 | 91 |
| Yes | 21 | 7 |

How often, if at all, do you hide your political beliefs from your professors in an attempt to get a better grade?

| Response | Frequency | Percent |
|-------------------------------------|-----------|---------|
| Never | 88 | 31 |
| Rarely | 109 | 38 |
| Occasionally | 58 | 20 |
| Fairly often, a couple times a week | 16 | 6 |
| Very often, nearly every day | 9 | 3 |

Have you ever been involved in publicly calling out, punishing, or “canceling” someone or a group for inappropriate statements or actions?

| Response | Frequency | Percent |
|----------|-----------|---------|
| Yes | 41 | 14 |
| No | 237 | 84 |

Thinking of the last incident where someone was publicly called out, punished, or “canceled” for their statements or actions, would you say the consequence or impact on the person was...

| Response | Frequency | Percent |
|-------------|-----------|---------|
| Too lenient | 33 | 12 |
| About right | 136 | 48 |
| Too harsh | 108 | 38 |

How often, if ever, have you personally been offended by perspectives shared by peers or classmates when in the classroom?

| Response | Frequency | Percent |
|-------------------------------------|-----------|---------|
| Never | 43 | 15 |
| Rarely | 127 | 45 |
| Occasionally | 91 | 32 |
| Fairly often, a couple times a week | 14 | 5 |
| Very often, nearly every day | 4 | 1 |

From what you know about the situation in the Middle East, do your sympathies lie more with the Israelis or more with the Palestinians?

| Response | Frequency | Percent |
|--------------|-----------|---------|
| Israelis | 27 | 9 |
| Palestinians | 167 | 59 |
| Both equally | 38 | 13 |
| Neither | 15 | 5 |
| Don't know | 33 | 12 |

Regardless of your overall feelings toward the Israelis and the Palestinians, who do you think is more responsible for the 2023 outbreak of violence in the Middle East: Israel or Hamas?

| Response | Frequency | Percent |
|--------------|-----------|---------|
| Israel | 90 | 32 |
| Hamas | 65 | 23 |
| Both equally | 55 | 19 |
| Don't know | 68 | 24 |

How often do you attend church or religious services?

| Response | Frequency | Percent |
|-----------------------|-----------|---------|
| Never | 87 | 31 |
| Less than once a year | 37 | 13 |
| Once or twice a year | 40 | 14 |
| Several times a year | 48 | 17 |
| Once a month | 14 | 5 |
| 2-3 times a month | 15 | 5 |
| About weekly | 17 | 6 |
| Weekly | 11 | 4 |
| Several times a week | 8 | 3 |

Are you currently a member of the armed services?

| Response | Frequency | Percent |
|----------|-----------|---------|
| Yes | 2 | 1 |
| No | 276 | 97 |

Are you a veteran of the armed services?

| Response | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent |
|----------|-----------|---------|---------------|
| Yes | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| No | 277 | 98 | 100 |

How often would you say that you feel anxious?

| Response | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent |
|------------------------------------|-----------|---------|---------------|
| Never | 7 | 3 | 14 |
| Less than half the time | 17 | 6 | 33 |
| About half the time | 14 | 5 | 26 |
| Most of the time, nearly every day | 12 | 4 | 22 |
| Always | 3 | 1 | 5 |

How often would you say that you feel lonely or isolated?

| Response | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent |
|------------------------------------|-----------|---------|---------------|
| Never | 9 | 3 | 22 |
| Less than half the time | 22 | 8 | 53 |
| About half the time | 4 | 2 | 11 |
| Most of the time, nearly every day | 5 | 2 | 12 |
| Always | 1 | 0 | 3 |

How often would you say that you feel like you have no time for yourself?

| Response | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent |
|------------------------------------|-----------|---------|---------------|
| Never | 5 | 2 | 8 |
| Less than half the time | 13 | 5 | 23 |
| About half the time | 21 | 7 | 37 |
| Most of the time, nearly every day | 13 | 5 | 23 |
| Always | 5 | 2 | 9 |

How often would you say that you feel depressed?

| Response | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent |
|------------------------------------|-----------|---------|---------------|
| Never | 12 | 4 | 16 |
| Less than half the time | 36 | 13 | 50 |
| About half the time | 16 | 6 | 22 |
| Most of the time, nearly every day | 5 | 2 | 7 |
| Always | 3 | 1 | 4 |

How often would you say that you feel stressed, frustrated, or overwhelmed?

| Response | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent |
|------------------------------------|-----------|---------|---------------|
| Never | 2 | 1 | 4 |
| Less than half the time | 14 | 5 | 25 |
| About half the time | 14 | 5 | 25 |
| Most of the time, nearly every day | 24 | 8 | 43 |
| Always | 2 | 1 | 3 |



510 Walnut Street
Suite 900
Philadelphia, PA 19106
T: 215.717.3473
www.thefire.org

**DOWNLOAD THE 2025 COLLEGE
FREE SPEECH RANKINGS REPORT**

rankings.thefire.org



@thefireorg