

# JESUIT COLLEGES HAVE A FREE SPEECH PROBLEM

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The Foundation for Individual Rights and Expression (FIRE) periodically does a study of some colleges and universities, rating them on their tolerance for free speech. The 2025 report on 251 schools found that the University of Virginia ranked #1 and Harvard ranked #251.

Jesuit schools generally do poorly, and the latest study is no exception. Fordham ranked 234, Marquette was 235 and Georgetown came in at 240. Other Jesuit institutions did better: Creighton was 144, Boston College placed 189 and Loyola of Chicago ranked 209.

Other Catholic institutions of higher education did not fare very well. The University of Notre Dame placed 167, Villanova was 185, the University of Dayton registered 192, DePaul was 201, and Duquesne placed 222.

It is striking that Georgetown, year in and year out, is the least tolerant of free speech of any Catholic college or university. It is also home to two pro-abortion clubs, one at the undergraduate level and one in the law school.

There was a time, perhaps 50 years ago, when Jesuit schools were considered the cream of the crop. No more. They may still have a good reputation, but from a free speech perspective it is largely unearned. While there are many other academic indices that are important, if free speech is not valued, it raises serious questions about the extent to which indoctrination, not education, is the norm.

Parents of high school students looking at a Catholic school upon graduation may want to consult the FIRE study.