

# JESUIT-RUN SCHOOLS BADLY NEED REFORMS

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Jesuit-run colleges and universities have a reputation of intolerance for free speech and a tolerance for pro-abortion clubs on campus. They are in serious need of reform.

In September, the latest report on free speech on college campuses was published by the Foundation for Individual Rights and Expression (FIRE), "2024 College Free Speech Rankings."

For the last several years, four Jesuit-run schools have ranked among the worst in the nation when it comes to respecting freedom of speech: Georgetown University, Fordham University, Boston College and Marquette University. They are still at the bottom of the barrel.

The latest FIRE survey of 248 colleges and universities lists five Catholic schools that achieved a "Poor" rating; the only non-Jesuit school is Duquesne University. Boston College (#229), Marquette (#230), Duquesne (#241), Fordham (#244) and Georgetown (#245) made for an embarrassing cluster of Catholic schools. Georgetown even earned a "Very Poor" rating.

The most intolerant institution of higher education in the nation, coming in last at #248, was Harvard University: it actually earned the lowest score possible, 0.00, meriting the tag, "Abysmal." Why would anyone who has a serious interest in academic excellence go to such a close-minded school? Graduates may land a good job, but can they think for themselves?

Some of the key findings in this year's report are

disconcerting, if not disgusting.

The schools in the bottom five, which includes Fordham and Georgetown, are not only intolerant of controversial ideas on campus, they succeeded in censoring speech 81 percent of the time.

What subjects set off the speech police the most? Abortion is #1. God forbid a student accepts the findings of science, and agrees with the teachings of the Catholic Church, that life begins at conception. Such speech simply cannot be tolerated by those who fancy themselves as “open-minded.”

Turning to the overall data on the 248 schools, as usual it's the left-wing students—they are dogmatically obedient to their professors—who are the most intolerant. “Student opposition to allowing controversial conservative speakers on campus ranged from 57% to 72%, depending on the speaker. In contrast, student opposition to controversial liberal speakers ranged from 29% to 43%.”

Incredibly, 45% of today's college students believe that it is okay to block other students from attending a speech—this is up from 37% last year. More than a quarter, 27%, say it is acceptable to engage in violence to stop a speech they don't like—it's up from 20% last year.

Have our colleges become hotbeds of fascism? Some are moving very quickly in that direction.

Importantly, there are some schools that respect free speech. The top five are: Michigan Technological University, Auburn University, University of New Hampshire, Oregon State University and Florida State University.

It might be worthwhile for the alumni of the Jesuit-run schools cited near the bottom of the free-speech rankings to demand that their school officials meet with administrators of the top five schools—all of which are public universities—to

find out what they are doing right.

If these schools are intolerant of free speech in general, they are quite tolerant of pro-abortion speech.

For example, the Law Schools at Boston College, Fordham and Georgetown all have chapters of If/When/How. While its name is deceptive, its goal is not. "Law Students for Reproductive Justice [its previous name] trains and mobilizes law students and new lawyers across the country to foster legal expertise and support for the realization of reproductive justice."

Georgetown is so committed to abortion rights that it has a longstanding undergraduate student club, H\*yas for Choice. It is a "queer affirming" group that provides "safer sex supplies, including condoms, dental dams, lube and emergency contraception on Georgetown University's campus—all of which are provided free of charge and without judgment."

It does not matter that H\*yas for Choice is not endorsed by the school and does not receive funding: It is allowed to operate on campus. If a chapter of the Klan were to seek the same status it would be summarily rejected. That's because the Jesuits who run Georgetown are infinitely more upset about racism than they are the killing of innocent children.

Many of those who send their children to Georgetown say they don't approve of the pro-abortion clubs, but when asked why they do so anyway they reply that their children are likely to land a good job upon graduation. As if they couldn't do that from a Catholic college or university that does not compromise its mission.

Unfortunately, most Catholic institutions of higher learning have strayed from its mission, though none as badly as the Jesuit-run schools. It is up to the parents of high school students weighing which college to choose to become more vigilant about the true Catholic nature of these schools. It is also incumbent on the alumni to let school administrators

know of their concerns.

Too many Catholic colleges and universities are guilty of false advertising. They talk the Catholic talk to the parents of prospective students, but their deeds are quite different.