

2024 FIRE Faculty Survey: Topline Results

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

	Freq	%
Not at all clear	752	12.6
Not very clear	1382	23.2
Somewhat clear	2060	34.6
Very clear	1307	22.0
Extremely clear	446	7.5
Total	5947	100.0

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

	Freq	%
Not at all likely	430	7.3
Not very likely	1192	20.2
Somewhat likely	2419	40.9
Very likely	1449	24.5
Extremely likely	420	7.1
Total	5910	100.0

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

	Freq	%
Never	894	15.1
Rarely	1251	21.1
Occasionally	2193	37.0
Fairly often, a couple times week	986	16.6
Very often, nearly every day	600	10.1
Total	5924	100.0

How worried, if at all, are you about damaging your reputation because someone misunderstands something you have said or done?

	Freq	%
Not at all worried	559	9.5
Not too worried	1376	23.5
Slightly worried	1588	27.1
Somewhat worried	1383	23.6
Very worried	950	16.2
Total	5856	100.0

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

	Freq	%
Not at all worried	1776	30.4
Not too worried	1834	31.4
Slightly worried	909	15.5
Somewhat worried	792	13.5
Very worried	536	9.2
Total	5847	100.0

How much pressure do you feel to avoid discussing controversial topics in your classes?

	Freq	%
No pressure at all	1826	31.4
Some pressure	2164	37.2
A good deal of pressure	952	16.3
A great deal of pressure	881	15.1
Total	5823	100.0

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.

How often do you to self-censor ... [Presented in randomized order]

... during conversations with other faculty on campus?

	Freq	%
Never	849	14.9
Rarely	1777	31.2
Occasionally, once or twice a month	1538	27.0
Fairly often, a couple times a week	987	17.3
Very often, nearly every day	545	9.6
Total	5696	100.0

... during conversations with administrators on campus?

	Freq	%
Never	861	15.3
Rarely	1822	32.3
Occasionally, once or twice a month	1468	26.0
Fairly often, a couple times a week	828	14.7
Very often, nearly every day	665	11.8
Total	5644	100.0

... during conversations with your students?

	Freq	%
Never	665	11.7
Rarely	1735	30.5
Occasionally, once or twice a month	1680	29.5
Fairly often, a couple times a week	1018	17.9
Very often, nearly every day	589	10.4
Total	5687	100.0

... during classroom discussions?

	Freq	%
Never	716	12.6
Rarely	1712	30.2
Occasionally, once or twice a month	1680	29.6
Fairly often, a couple times a week	962	17.0
Very often, nearly every day	597	10.5
Total	5667	100.0

How likely, if at all, are you to self-censor in... [Presented in randomized order]

... research topics investigated?

	Freq	%
Not at all likely	3466	61.4
Somewhat likely	1043	18.5
Likely	475	8.4
Very likely	343	6.1
Extremely likely	315	5.6
Total	5642	100.0

... academic publications?

	Freq	%
Not at all likely	2841	50.5
Somewhat likely	1281	22.8
Likely	601	10.7
Very likely	433	7.7
Extremely likely	474	8.4
Total	5630	100.0

... publications, talks, interviews, or lectures directed to a general audience?

	Freq	%
Not at all likely	1560	27.6
Somewhat likely	1807	31.9
Likely	902	15.9
Very likely	723	12.8
Extremely likely	665	11.8
Total	5657	100.0

... email or over social media or other online settings?

	Freq	%
Not at all likely	896	15.8
Somewhat likely	1618	28.5
Likely	1069	18.9
Very likely	964	17.0
Extremely likely	1121	19.8
Total	5668	100.0

... classroom lectures and discussions?

	Freq	%
Not at all likely	1276	22.5
Somewhat likely	1992	35.1
Likely	929	16.4
Very likely	752	13.3
Extremely likely	723	12.7
Total	5672	100.0

How acceptable, if at all, 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.

	Freq	%
Never acceptable	3469	61.7
Rarely acceptable	1245	22.1
Sometimes acceptable	602	10.7
Often acceptable	183	3.3
Always acceptable	124	2.2
Total	5623	100.0

Blocking others from attending a campus speech.

	Freq	%
Never acceptable	4448	79.1
Rarely acceptable	733	13.0
Sometimes acceptable	292	5.2
Often acceptable	94	1.7
Always acceptable	57	1.0
Total	5624	100.0

Using violence to stop a campus speech.

	Freq	%
Never acceptable	5325	94.7
Rarely acceptable	201	3.6
Sometimes acceptable	57	1.0
Often acceptable	25	0.4
Always acceptable	17	0.3
Total	5625	100.0

How acceptable would you say it is for faculty 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.

	Freq	%
Never acceptable	4207	74.7
Rarely	958	17.0
Sometimes acceptable	337	6.0
Often acceptable	75	1.3
Always acceptable	56	1.0
Total	5633	100.0

Blocking others from attending a campus speech.

	Freq	%
Never acceptable	4828	85.8
Rarely	533	9.5
Sometimes acceptable	174	3.1
Often acceptable	50	0.9
Always acceptable	40	0.7
Total	5625	100.0

Using violence to stop a campus speech.

	Freq	%
Never acceptable	5410	96.2
Rarely	152	2.7
Sometimes acceptable	33	0.6
Often acceptable	15	0.3
Always acceptable	15	0.3
Total	5625	100.0

Some faculty 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? (select all that apply)

Topic	N	% selecting option
Abortion	2116	37.8%
Academic freedom	1350	24.1%
Affirmative action	2644	47.3%
China	1034	18.5%
Climate change	1174	21.0%
Crime	986	17.6%
Economic inequality	1160	20.7%
Freedom of speech	1503	26.9%
Gay rights	1581	28.3%
Gender inequality	2060	36.8%
Gun control	1705	30.5%
Hate speech	1941	34.7%
The Israeli-Palestinian conflict	3909	69.9%
Police misconduct	1738	31.1%
Racial inequality	2842	50.8%
Religion	1873	33.5%
Sexual assault	1324	23.7%
Transgender rights	2711	48.5%
The Presidential election	2305	41.2%
None of the above	704	12.6%

Which of the following statements comes closer to your view?

	Freq	%
Colleges/universities should be free to take positions on political and social issues, even if some students and faculty disagree.	1861	33.6%
Colleges/universities should not take positions on political and social issues.	3681	66.4%
Total	5542	100.0%

Which of the following statements comes closer to your view?

	Freq	%
Official faculty units (e.g., departments) should be free to take positions on political and social issues, even if some in the unit disagree.	1639	29.6%
Official faculty units (e.g., departments) should not take positions on political and social issues.	3892	70.4%
Total	5531	100.0%

Which of the following statements best expresses your opinion on the academic freedom of professors?

University professors should be free to express any of their ideas or convictions in the classroom . . .

	Freq	%
University professors should not be free to express their ideas or convictions in the classroom.	195	3.5
On any subject, as long as it's consistent with what is widely accepted within their field of expertise.	220	4.0
On any subject, as long as it's within their field of expertise.	2265	41.0
On any subject, as long as it's presented respectfully.	2396	43.3
On any subject.	454	8.2
Total	5530	100.0

University professors should be free to express any of their ideas or convictions outside of the classroom . . .

	Freq	%
University professors should not be free to express their ideas or convictions outside of the classroom.	26	0.5
On any subject, as long as it's consistent with what is widely accepted within their field of expertise.	47	0.8
On any subject, as long as it's within their field of expertise.	357	6.4
On any subject, as long as it's presented respectfully.	2470	44.4
On any subject.	2664	47.9
Total	5564	100.0

In your opinion, how secure is academic freedom on your campus today?

	Freq	%
Not at all secure	695	12.4
Not very secure	1317	23.5
Somewhat secure	2073	37.0
Very secure	1276	22.8
Completely secure	235	4.2
Total	5596	100.0

Some universities require applicants for faculty positions to submit statements pledging commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion before being considered for a job. How justifiable, if at all, is this requirement in the university hiring process?

	Freq	%
This is never justifiable	1883	34.1
This is rarely justifiable	863	15.6
This is sometimes justifiable	875	15.9
This is often justifiable	908	16.5
This is always justifiable	989	17.9
Total	5518	100.0

How acceptable, if at all, is it for universities to require faculty commitments to diversity, equity, and inclusion in order to be considered for promotion/tenure?

	Freq	%
Never acceptable	2088	37.9
Rarely acceptable	799	14.5
Sometimes acceptable	915	16.6
Often acceptable	816	14.8
Always acceptable	888	16.1
Total	5506	100.0

Have you ever been disciplined for your research?

	Freq	%
Yes	89	1.6
No, but I have been threatened with discipline	149	2.7
No, I have not been disciplined or threatened with discipline	4748	85.2
Not applicable	587	10.5
Total	5573	100.0

Have you ever been disciplined for your teaching?

	Freq	%
Yes	184	3.3
No, but I have been threatened with discipline	307	5.5
No, I have not been disciplined or threatened with discipline	4888	87.8
Not applicable	188	3.4
Total	5567	100.0

Have you ever been disciplined for your talks outside of the classroom to an academic audience?

	Freq	%
Yes	68	1.2
No, but I have been threatened with discipline	119	2.1
No, I have not been disciplined or threatened with discipline	5096	91.6
Not applicable	283	5.1
Total	5566	100.0

Have you ever been disciplined for speech outside the university purview (e.g. publications, talks, or writing directed to a general audience)?

	Freq	%
Yes	89	1.6
No, but I have been threatened with discipline	165	3.0
No, I have not been disciplined or threatened with discipline	5010	89.9
Not applicable	309	5.5
Total	5573	100.0

How often, if at all, does your college administration pressure you to avoid researching controversial topics?

	Freq	%
Never	4658	84.7
Rarely	544	9.9
Occasionally	236	4.3
Fairly often, a couple times a week	25	0.5
Very often, nearly every day	36	0.7
Total	5499	100.0

How often, if at all, do other faculty members on your campus pressure you to avoid researching controversial topics?

	Freq	%
Never	4314	78.5
Rarely	675	12.3
Occasionally	434	7.9
Fairly often, a couple times a week	41	0.7
Very often, nearly every day	29	0.5
Total	5493	100.0

Have you toned down anything you have written lately because you were worried that it might cause too much controversy?

	Freq	%
Yes	1746	34.8
No	2981	59.5
I don't know	287	5.7
Total	5014	100.0

Do you generally identify with or against the culture of your department?

	Freq	%
Strongly identify against	384	7.0
Moderately identify against	942	17.1
Neutral	1307	23.7
Moderately identify with	1938	35.1
Strongly identify with	949	17.2
Total	5520	100.0

Do you feel that there is a supportive or hostile climate in your department towards people with your political beliefs?

	Freq	%
Very hostile	347	6.3
Somewhat hostile	901	16.3
Neither supportive nor hostile	1827	33.1
Somewhat supportive	1169	21.2
Very supportive	1268	23.0
Total	5512	100.0

How often, if at all, do you think other faculty would actively discriminate against you on the basis of your political beliefs?

	Freq	%
Never	1954	35.5
Rarely	1770	32.2
Occasionally	1038	18.9
Fairly often	528	9.6
All the time	207	3.8
Total	5497	100.0

How often, if at all, do you hide your political beliefs from other faculty in an attempt to keep your job?

	Freq	%
Never	2718	49.4
Rarely	1230	22.4
Occasionally, once or twice a month	710	12.9
Fairly often, a couple times a week	425	7.7
Very often, nearly every day	417	7.6
Total	5500	100.0

How much confidence, if any, do you have in U.S. colleges and universities?

	Freq	%
None at all	144	2.6
Very little	869	15.8
Some	2036	37.1
Quite a lot	1754	31.9
A great deal	692	12.6
Total	5495	100.0

Which of the following statements comes closer to your view?

	Freq	%
People should have the right to say what they believe even if they take positions that seem deeply offensive to most people.	4426	82.9%
People should have the right to say what they believe except when they want to say things that seem deeply offensive to most people.	915	17.1%
Total	5341	100.0%

Which of the following statements comes closer to your view?

	Freq	%
Speech should be legal only under certain circumstances	1812	34.0
Speech should be legal under any circumstances	3518	66.0
Total	5330	100.0

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

	Freq	%
Yes	388	7.1
No	5070	92.9
Total	5458	100.0

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...

	Freq	%
Too lenient	300	6.4
About right	1294	27.7
Too harsh	3080	65.9
Total	4674	100.0

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

	Freq	%
Israelis	1303	24.3
Palestinians	1296	24.2
Both equally	2037	38.0
Neither	409	7.6
Don't know	310	5.8
Total	5355	100.0

If an applicant seeking a position in your department is notably conservative, how often, if at all, do you believe this would adversely affect your hiring decision?

	Freq	%
Never	2368	44.1
Rarely	1441	26.8
Sometimes	905	16.9
Often	389	7.2
Always	266	5.0
Total	5369	100.0

If an applicant seeking a position in your department is notably liberal, how often, if at all, do you believe this would adversely affect your hiring decision?

	Freq	%
Never	3366	62.7
Rarely	1448	27.0
Sometimes	450	8.4
Often	72	1.3
Always	35	0.7
Total	5371	100.0

If a student asked you to be his or her mentor/advisor and you knew the student was notably conservative, how often, if at all, do you believe this would adversely affect your decision to mentor/advise the student?

	Freq	%
Never	3918	72.6
Rarely	1051	19.5
Sometimes	328	6.1
Often	68	1.3
Always	31	0.6
Total	5396	100.0

If a student asked you to be his or her mentor/advisor and you knew the student was notably liberal, how often, if at all, do you believe this would adversely affect your decision to mentor/advise the student?

	Freq	%
Never	4156	77.0
Rarely	939	17.4
Sometimes	236	4.4
Often	38	0.7
Always	25	0.5
Total	5394	100.0

How well would a liberal individual fit in your department?

	Freq	%
Very poor fit	29	0.5
Somewhat poor fit	117	2.2
Neither poor nor positive fit	1389	25.9
Somewhat positive fit	1668	31.1
Very positive fit	2158	40.3
Total	5361	100.0

How well would a conservative individual fit in your department?

	Freq	%
Very poor fit	601	11.2
Somewhat poor fit	1503	28.0
Neither poor nor positive fit	2193	40.9
Somewhat positive fit	687	12.8
Very positive fit	381	7.1
Total	5365	100.0