



Briefing Guide to Public Records Released Regarding the University of Minnesota's Revocation of its Job Offer to Dr. Raz Segal

August 6, 2026

Background

On June 5, 2024, the University of Minnesota (UMN) sent Dr. Raz Segal an offer of employment for the Stephen C. Feinstein Chair, Director of the Center for Holocaust and Genocide Studies (CHGS), and a tenured position as Associate Professor in the Department of History. The job offer was the result of a significant search process in the College of Liberal Arts (CLA).

On June 7, 2024, Professor Karen Painter and Professor Bruno Chaouat resigned from the CHGS advisory board, and [Professor Chaouat falsely accused Dr. Segal of "justifying Hamas atrocities."](#) But Dr. Segal has clearly stated multiple times—including in [October](#) and [November 2023](#)—that the Hamas-led attack on Israel on October 7th involved war crimes and mass murder. Dr. Segal has also described Israel's subsequent attack on Gaza as a genocide; and although the merits of his opinion are irrelevant to his right to state it without being retaliated against, his position is widely held today among genocide scholars, including Israeli Jewish scholars of the Holocaust. Indeed, the International Network of Genocide Scholars (IAGS) [passed a resolution](#) in August 2025 that Israel's attack on Gaza constitutes genocide. It is also a position supported by [international bodies](#), [human rights organizations](#), and even a [U.S. district court](#).

Nevertheless, Professor Chaouat's words sparked a political campaign against Dr. Segal led by the Jewish Community Relations Council (JCRC) of Minnesota and the Dakotas and donors to UMN. Within days, on June 10, 2024, in an unprecedented move, Interim UMN President Jeff Ettinger sent Dr. Segal an email [withdrawing his job offer "to allow an opportunity to determine next steps."](#)

The following documents, obtained via a public records request submitted on behalf of Dr. Segal by the Center for Constitutional Rights' Open Records Project, support the claim that UMN violated Dr. Segal's First Amendment Rights in its decision to withdraw his job offer. Furthermore, the documents show that UMN's decision was viewed as a [dangerous violation of academic freedom by UMN faculty members](#) and students, community members (including Jewish individuals and Jewish organizations), and [dozens of academics across the country](#), including leading Holocaust and Genocide Studies scholars.

The public records are arranged according to the following categories:

- **The choice of Dr. Segal by the search committee for the position of Director of the Center for Holocaust and Genocide Studies at UMN and its withdrawal:**
 - [History Dept Meeting and Straw Poll Email](#)
 - [Supportive Feedback Comments Email](#)
 - [Search Committee Feedback Email](#)
 - [Raz Segal Personal Background Email](#)
 - [Media Statements Email](#)
 - [Media Inquiries Email](#)
 - [Withdrawal of Job Offer Email](#)

- **UMN donors putting pressure on the university to revoke Dr. Segal's job offer, including threats to withdraw their funding:**
 - [Emails from several donors](#) show the pressure exerted on UMN.
 - [Another email](#), dated June 10, 2024, from Natan Paradise, Director of the Center for Jewish Studies at UMN, shows the coordination between Paradise, the JCRC, and donors in the pressure on the university to withdraw Dr. Segal's job offer.

- **Evidence to support the claim that the University of Minnesota violated Dr. Segal's First Amendment rights:**
 - [A letter from CLA Faculty Assembly Chair and Vice Chair](#), Professor J.B. Shank and Professor Michael Gallope, respectively, to CLA faculty and staff noted: "In statements made explaining his position, President Ettinger made clear that Segal's academic perspective on genocide, as well as his use of the term to offer an analysis of recent events in the war in Gaza, was the cause for his decision to rescind the job offer."

Interim UMN President [Ettinger confirmed this](#) in a "meeting on Monday with Mark Bee, current Faculty Consultative Committee (FCC) chair, Perry Leo, incoming FCC cochair, [UMN Interim President's] chief of staff Jon Steadland, Interim President Ettinger and myself [Professor Eric Van Wyk]." Ettinger admitted in the meeting that his decision was based on Dr. Segal's speech and viewpoint related to "events in the Middle East" – that is, Israel's war in Gaza – which made him, in Ettinger's view, "controversial" because of the "many objections" caused by the announcement of Dr. Segal's appointment to

the position. In other words, Ettinger decided to withdraw Dr. Segal's job offer not because of any academic or professional reasons, but because of his speech, based on his expertise, on a matter of public concern: what he said and wrote about Israel's attack on Gaza since October 2023.

- **Evidence to support the claim that the University of Minnesota violated academic freedom principles:**
 - [Several emails in support of Dr. Segal](#), including from Jewish community members, Holocaust and Genocide Studies scholars, and UMN faculty to Interim President Ettinger, Provost Croson, and the Regents, urging UMN to hire Dr. Segal.
 - [Email from Beth Gendler, Executive Director of Jewish Community Action in Minnesota, to Interim President Ettinger, Provost Croson, and the Regents](#), urging the university to hire him.
 - A [FAQ document](#) in preparation for a special session of the UMN Faculty Senate on June 26, 2024.
 - [Email from a UMN student](#) involved in the search process.
 - [No-confidence vote](#) by the CLA Faculty Assembly and the UMN Faculty Senate against Interim President Ettinger and Provost Croson.
 - [Email to President Cunningham](#) from Dr. Travis Workman, UMN faculty member.
- **Forty leading [Holocaust and Genocide Studies scholars writing to the University of Minnesota](#) in support of Dr. Segal, urging the university to hire him.**