

To: Evan R. Chesler, Chairman of the Board of Trustees, New York University
Linda Mills, President
Gigi Dopico, Provost
Victoria Rosner, Gallatin Dean

From: Critical Legal Collective

Date: May 16, 2025

Re: **Condemning NYU's Disgraceful Decision to Punish Logan Rozos**

We are legal scholars from around the country who are committed to academic freedom and interracial justice in higher education and our communities. We endeavor to promote a more inclusive, democratic, and just society through scholarship, teaching, and advocacy that reckons honestly with past and present structural oppression.

We write today to communicate our acute concern and disappointment regarding your punitive response to Logan Rozos' commencement speech. The threat of disciplinary action against Mr. Rozos follows a troubling pattern of NYU infringing upon academic freedom and penalizing the precise discourse that democracy demands at an institution of higher education.

Against the backdrop of the Trump administration's open assault on our universities and free and open inquiry, the stakes have never been higher. In that context, we were troubled to read that NYU has elected to punish Rozos because he mentioned genocide in Palestine at a graduation ceremony.

Your statement claims Mr. Rozos "misuse[d]" his platform to "express his personal and one-sided political views." Contrary to your characterization, Mr. Rozos' remarks reflect a moment of notable courage and moral clarity. Also, his views are not merely personal: genocide is a crime against humanity, and the Israeli Defence Forces have committed numerous acts that are fairly charged as genocidal. And given Mr. Rozos "one-sided political view" appears to have been his remarks condemning genocide, we are further left to question what other "side" of this issue you believe Mr. Rozos should have conveyed.

As legal scholars, we want to remind you that both international law and U.S. constitutional law protect free speech, academic freedom and the right to assembly, including the right to protest. In that spirit, we urge you to respect this young graduate's rights and freedoms and immediately withdraw all disciplinary action. NYU's actions have national and international visibility and this only underscores your responsibility to protect these basic rights and freedoms in this moment of historic crisis in higher education.

