

PROF RETURNS TO CARLETON AFTER BEING FREED FROM JAIL

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Sociology professor, Hassan Diab, is returning to Carleton as a contract professor after his termination and arrest based on unfounded terrorism charges.

Diab was arrested by the RCMP in November 2008 based on his alleged involvement in the 1980 bombing of a Paris synagogue. He was released this past January.

Diab's new seminar-styled course, called 'Power and Miscarriages of Justice' (SOC1 4860 A), will focus on a sociological analysis of wrongful imprisonment and the miscarriage of justice—a subject he believes is “not well-known or well-covered.” The course is currently full with no waitlist.

In an interview with *the Charlatan* this month, Diab said his course will also use his own experiences in the French and Canadian prisons where he spent more than nine years of his life.

“Of course, when I have a case that I have seen and known very closely, it will be analyzed and examined very closely . . . students will have the opportunity to learn firsthand what was going on and what was happening, and what is still going on,” he said.

Diab said his class will also look closely at extradition law, pointing towards his own judicial decision from 2011 when former Ontario Superior Court Justice Robert Maranger ordered his extradition to France.

In 2011, Maranger called the evidence against Diab “illogical, very problematic, convoluted, and with conclusions that are suspect,” but Canada's extradition law forced his hand, leaving the final decision to then-Minister of Justice, Rob Nicholson.

The university hired Diab as a contract instructor with the public knowledge about his 2008 arrest.

But, in July 2009, as Diab waited under strict bail conditions, Carleton said that a full-time faculty

member would immediately replace Diab, who was terminated without warning.

According to an official statement from the university at the time, the move was made to provide students “with a stable, productive academic environment that is conducive to learning.”

At a press conference held in January this year, Diab had told the media, “I miss teaching, but I have other priorities right now—I want to focus on spending time with family.”

Diab told the *Charlatan* in August that a reflection of his experiences made him change his mind.

“I will be talking about something I know . . . I’ll be talking about the system now, something I’m so familiar with to the point that I can give opinions and give people theories about this,” he said. “I think students will have a great opportunity to learn something new.”

Deanna Cummings, a third-year anthropology student at Carleton, said in an email that the new course is a “must-take” for her.

“Personal experiences add depth and realness to academic courses. As a student, being able to connect the academic material you are reading and learning to real life events helps us all understand and learn better,” Cummings said.

She added that the university went against its own policy when terminating Diab.

“Diab’s return to Carleton does, in my mind, start to redeem his termination. He has done nothing wrong, and the university should be standing behind him, just like his own department and union was,” she said. “We

cannot change the past and his termination, but offering him a position will help remedy it for the future.”

In an emailed statement from Steven Reid, Carleton’s media relations officer, he said the university had previously confirmed it was open to having Diab back as a contract professor, but did not mention what made the administration change their mind.

“We wish him success in his teaching assignment,” Reid said.

The sociology course will begin this fall term with 25 students.

File photo

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