Spotlight on Professor Lisa Hajjar

Title: Associate Professor and Department Chair
Department: Law and Society

Please list some personal profile information such as your hobbies, family, favorites, etc.:
My favorite activities include watching movies (I am a noir-aholic) and reading magazines (I live for each new issue of *The New Yorker*). I have adapted to living in beautiful Santa Barbara, but no amount of time will knock the east coast out of me.

What are your research interests?
My main research interest is torture, along with war, conflict, and other forms of violence. I began my academic career working on the Israeli military court system in the West Bank and Gaza. Since 9/11, that background has provided good preparation to focus on “the war on terror.” The book I am writing analyzes the roles that lawyers have played in contesting the “legalization” of torture by the Bush administration, and their efforts to re-delegitimize the odious practice. My subjects include military, human rights and private practice lawyers who have been involved, in various ways, in representing detainees or bringing suits to challenge policies and practices that violate international and federal laws.

How would you describe your teaching style?
I love teaching undergraduates. Back in the last millennium, my first teaching job was at Swarthmore College, where the students were super-overachieving workaholics (they complained if faculty gave them too little reading). I was so nervous that I used to write out lectures word-for-word, and my heart would pound every time I entered a classroom. That baptism-by-fire made me a better teacher. Now I would describe my teaching as intellectual “free styling.” I go into a class with a general idea about what I want to cover and riff off of the important points to provide information and historical, political and social context. Since I recently mastered the art of PowerPoint, I have become a bit of a junkie. Pictures and maps are very beneficial for teaching, not only because they give students something to look at other than the professor, but pardon the cliché, because a picture IS worth a thousand words.

What is your idea of a good time?
I am never very far from my academic interests, because they are so interesting to me. A good time might be hanging out with friends—mostly UCSB faculty—and talking about torture. Occasionally I take walks on the beach and think about torture.

What do you think is the most important thing for a student to learn at college?
The most important thing to learn is the value of being confused. Not understanding something can be great motivation for opening your mind to new information and new ideas.

What is your advice for new students at UCSB?
Take lots of courses across the board your first year and figure out what you really love, and major in that. The more excited and inspired you are by a subject, be it physics or music or sociology, the better you will do. The better you do, the better chance you have to get into a good grad school. Don’t choose a “practical” major that does not excite you.

UCSB students and parents are invited to learn about Lisa Hajjar and other “Primo Profs” in the UCSB Student Handbook—the Kiosk. More of UCSB’s fantastic faculty members will be spotlighted in future issues of The Gaucho Parents Gazette.
The March 2010 issue of The Gaucho Parents Gazette incorrectly stated that Summer Sessions fees are capped at the cost of 10 units. Summer Sessions fees are actually capped at the cost of 15 units. We apologize for the error.

Questions? Comments? Contact Parent Services @ (805) 893-3643
Meeting the Mental Health Challenge at UCSB

UC Santa Barbara is exceptionally proactive in meeting the mental health challenges facing college campuses today. Our approach begins with wellness, that is, with helping students to attain and maintain physical, mental, and emotional health. It continues with prevention and intervention—such as services that reduce high-risk drinking, help students to stop smoking, and assist students in minimizing risk while managing underlying issues such as anxiety and depression. Finally, our mental health efforts culminate in key resources that enable us to readily respond to pressing needs.

These resources include:

- Training sessions that help faculty and staff members identify and assist students in distress
- A campus emergency response protocol
- The student organization Active Minds and student intern initiatives that promote peer education around issues like suicide prevention

Our overarching vision is for a campus where students:

- Understand and attend to their physical, mental, and emotional health
- Develop habits for a fit and active lifestyle
- Are freed from stigma and connected with the resources they need
- Learn how to help themselves and others so that they practice individual responsibility within a healthy campus community

As parents, you already support this vision in many ways—by talking with your students, pointing them to campus resources, and being attuned to changes in their mood and behavior. If you are ever concerned about the mental health or well-being of your student, please do not hesitate to contact Angela Andrade, assistant dean and coordinator of Student Mental Health, or Ryan Sims, assistant coordinator, at (805) 893-8920 or angela.andrade@sa.ucsb.edu or ryan.sims@sa.ucsb.edu.

Also key is any financial support you can give to our mental health initiatives. Your gifts are vitally important to expanding our staff of mental health professionals, to training our faculty and staff, and to getting students the help they need when they need it. To make a gift to mental health at UC Santa Barbara, please contact our Student Affairs Grants and Development office at (805) 893-5037 or contact our executive director at laurie.hoyle@sa.ucsb.edu.

Thank you, and we wish you and your family the best of health!

Recreational Sports

The Recreation Department at UCSB aims to help students stay physically fit, relax, have fun, meet new people, and develop new skills and interests. Indoor and outdoor campus recreation facilities include tennis courts, sand volleyball courts, the Santa Barbara Harbor Sailing Facility, a softball field, the Uyesaka Baseball Stadium, Cachuma Lake Rowing facility, the Recreation Center and more. The Recreation Center, a popular spot for students to exercise and hang out with friends, features swimming pools, a climbing wall, racquetball courts, weight rooms and much more.

The department’s Recreational Sports program meets the needs of students with varying athletic abilities by providing different levels of competition and ways to participate. Intramural sports are offered quarterly and any student, regardless of skill level, may create or join an existing team. Sports include kickball, flag football, ultimate Frisbee, bowling and more. Participation fees range from $10-65 and vary each quarter. To sign up, students should visit the Intramural Office in room 1110 of the Recreation Center. More information about intramural sports is available at http://gauchosplay.com/intramurals.

Sport clubs are also open to all ability levels, but are often split into varsity, junior varsity, and frosh/novice skill levels. Sports include cycling, bowling, water skiing, fencing, lacrosse, rowing, rugby and more. Sport club teams travel and have experiences similar to intercollegiate team athletes. Participation fees vary by team. Students interested in joining a sport club team should contact Recreational Sports Assistant Director Taggart Malone at taggart.malone@essr.ucsb.edu. For more information about sport clubs, visit http://gauchosplay.com/sport-clubs.

questions? comments? email gauchoparents@sa.ucsb.edu