

UC SANTA BARBARA

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Bill Schlotter

Middle East Expert Wins Prestigious UCSB Faculty Award

Lisa Hajjar, an associate professor in the Law and Society Program at the University of California, Santa Barbara, has been chosen the 2003 winner of the Harold J. Plous Award, given annually to one of UCSB's top assistant professors.

The award, presented by UCSB's Academic Senate, recognizes Hajjar's "innovative research, inspirational teaching, and generous community service, which embodies the well-rounded academic excellence that the Plous celebrates."

The award is named for the energetic Plous, an esteemed assistant professor of economics at UCSB from 1950 until his death in 1957.

An expert on the Middle East, Hajjar earned a bachelors degree in international relations from Tufts University, and followed it with a masters in Arab studies from Georgetown University and a Ph.D. in sociology from The American University. She was a visiting assistant professor at Swarthmore College in Pennsylvania from 1995 to 1999 and a visiting professor at Morehouse College in Atlanta, Ga. from 1999 to 2001.

Hajjar joined the UCSB faculty as an assistant professor in 2001 and was recently promoted to associate professor.

Her most recent research, which the Plous search committee called "groundbreaking," looks at the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

It will soon be published as a book titled "Authority, Resistance and the Law: A Study of the Israeli Military Court System in the West Bank and Gaza."

Her other research interests include torture; cause lawyering; linkages between domestic violence, political authoritarianism, and Islam; and the complex role that human-rights organizations play in geopolitical conflict situations.

Since Sept. 11, 2001, she has been particularly involved in helping the campus community understand the Middle East.

"I am very honored to win this award," Hajjar said. "Since arriving at UCSB several days after 9/11, I have found many opportunities to speak publicly on campus and have been greatly inspired and heartened by colleagues and students who have mobilized to teach and learn about what the 'War on

Terrorism' means for the U.S. and the world."

In the classroom, Hajjar "is an exciting, energetic, and accessible instructor," the Plous committee

said. "She is a demanding, passionate teacher who cares both about her subject matter and her students."

In addition to her Law and Society Program duties, she is also affiliated with UCSB's Global and International Studies Program, the Center for Middle East Studies, and the Department of Sociology.

She also has performed a variety of other duties, including serving on campus faculty search committees and doctoral grant committees.

As the Plous winner, Hajjar will give a public lecture, "Torture and Future," later in the 2003-2004 academic year.

The date and place will be announced later.

About UC Santa Barbara

The University of California, Santa Barbara is a leading research institution that also provides a comprehensive liberal arts learning experience. Our academic community of faculty, students, and staff is characterized by a culture of interdisciplinary

collaboration that is responsive to the needs of our multicultural and global society. All of this takes place within a living and learning environment like no other, as we draw inspiration from the beauty and resources of our extraordinary location at the edge of the Pacific Ocean.