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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

## Former Students Praise Ithaca Professor

To the Editor:

We are both 2004 Ithaca College alumni and graduates of its sociology program. We are appalled at the college's treatment of Professor Margo Ramlal-Nankoe and its denial of tenure to her (["Professor Says Views on Israel Kept Her From Tenure at Ithaca,"](#) *The Chronicle*, October 3). Between us we took all of Professor Ramlal-Nankoe's courses — and virtually every sociology course the school offered from 2000 to 2004 — so we may be able to offer a unique perspective.

Ms. Ramlal-Nankoe teaches many of the same concepts as the rest of the department, but she challenges her students to recast their knowledge base globally. In one or two of her classes we studied the historical narration, cultural dimensions, and economic realities of the conflict between Israelis and Palestinians. For us, Ms. Ramlal-Nankoe's scholarship and talent as an educator were evident in her ability to present the conflict not as having two sides, but rather as one long history narrated from multiple perspectives and influenced by many traditions.

After studying the various facets of the conflict, her students explored the process by which different groups have historically narrated the conflict. This included an exploration of a Palestinian narrative and point of view through the work of the prominent intellectual Edward Said, as well as exploring Israeli points of view put forward by various intellectuals, religious factions, and political groups. In one such class, Professor Ramlal-Nankoe invited an Israeli student to interview her father, who served in the Israeli Army. This video interview was shared with the class and sparked a discussion around the man's experiences and perspective.

Professor Ramlal-Nankoe also explored countless social issues in her other classes. She worked diligently to create a safe and open classroom environment where different perspectives were heard and respected. It saddens us that her approach to teaching has been called into question and that politically colored points of view regarding the Middle East are overshadowing her tenure process.

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