

Ergun Caner moving to school started by J. Frank Norris

by [Bob Allen](#)

May 19, 2011

ARLINGTON, Texas (ABP) – Ergun Caner, the former president of Liberty Theological Seminary demoted for exaggerating claims about his Muslim upbringing, has been hired as provost and vice president for academic affairs at Arlington Baptist College, according to a press release on Caner's website.

Founded by J. Frank Norris in 1939 as the Fundamental Bible Baptist Institute, the Arlington Baptist College is affiliated with the World Baptist Fellowship. Caner, who remained as professor at Liberty after trustees removed him as president and dean last June, will also teach theology, church history and apologetics at Arlington.

“I have the utmost confidence in Dr. Ergun Caner,” President D.L. Moody said in presenting the candidate to the board of trustees. “I believe that he has the abilities, wisdom and passion to enhance the work and ministry of Arlington Baptist College as we prepare a generation of giants for Jesus Christ.”

According to the press release, Caner's election was unanimous.

“I am thrilled to be joining the Arlington Baptist College,” Caner said. “This is an historic institution, founded by one of Christianity's most courageous voices, Dr. J. Frank Norris.”

Caner became a popular speaker after 9/11 on circuits including the Southern Baptist Convention with his testimony of being trained overseas as a jihadist terrorist before his conversion to Christianity. After blogs and news media reported that he grew up in Ohio, Liberty trustees investigated and found “factual statements that are self-contradictory” in recordings of Caner's speeches, asked him to step down as dean and gave him a teaching contract for one year.

Moody said he was excited to welcome Caner to the school's administrative team. “He shares the values that I have for biblical authority, evangelistic fervor and godly

example,” Moody said.

Norris, founder of both Arlington Baptist College and the World Baptist Fellowship, was a fundamentalist Baptist leader in Texas in the first half of the 20th century. The one-time editor of the Baptist Standard and longtime pastor of First Baptist Church in Fort Worth was nicknamed the “Texas Tornado” during a long-running feud with the Southern Baptists.

Once loyal to the Southern Baptist Convention, Norris became alienated by the Seventy-Five Million Campaign, forerunner to today’s Cooperative Program of unified budget support of both state and national Baptist conventions. He spent the rest of his days seeking to undermine the SBC, accusing Baptist schools of teaching evolution and tolerating “modernist” theories of Bible study.

After his exclusion from his local association, state convention and the Southern Baptist Convention, Norris founded his own independent fundamentalist group, originally called the Premillennial Baptist Missionary Fellowship but renamed the World Baptist Fellowship after a split over his authoritarian leadership.