

Suspended Yale student acquitted of rape charges

By Associated Press

A suspended Yale University student accused of raping another undergraduate student in 2015 was acquitted of all charges Wednesday, and his lawyer called on the school to reinstate him.

A state jury in New Haven found Saifullah Khan not guilty of four sexual assault charges.

The 25-year-old Afghanistan native was charged with raping a female student in her dorm room on Halloween night. The woman testified that Khan took advantage of her when she was drunk, but Khan testified that she was the aggressor and invited him into her room.

“We’re grateful to six courageous jurors who were able to understand that campus life isn’t the real world,” Khan’s lawyer, Norman Pattis, said in a statement. “Kids experiment with identity and sexuality. When an experiment goes awry, it’s not a crime.”

Prosecutor Michael Pepper did not immediately return messages seeking comment.

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Yale spokeswoman Karen Peart declined to comment on the verdicts and whether Khan will be allowed to return to school.

The case was among a low percentage of rape allegations that ever go to trial, according to studies. Only 20 percent of college sexual assaults are reported to police, according to the U.S. Justice Department. And just over a third of reported rapes of adult women are ever prosecuted, studies show.

Khan, who was a senior studying cognitive science, was suspended shortly before his arrest more than two years ago and has not returned to campus.

The female student, who was not named during the court proceedings, cried at times as she testified during the trial last week. She testified that she could not remember everything that happened the night of the alleged assault because she was very intoxicated, but did remember Khan pinning her down. She said she was crying and tried to say “stop,” but she believed she was too drunk to

communicate.

Khan testified the sex was consensual, that she invited him into her room and that she removed a cat costume she was wearing that night. ■