

Kirkton to assist war effort in Iraq

Lt. Col. Janet Kirkton is accustomed to changes of scenery during her 19-year U.S. Army career. However, going from the UT Martin campus to the U.S. Embassy in Iraq just might be her most dramatic change to date. She has recently left her position as professor of military science and head of the university's Army ROTC Program to assist with planning efforts for the Iraq War. It's an assignment that will bring her in daily contact with top multinational military and Iraqi leaders in the war on terror.

Kirkton, of Troy, left June 21 to become a senior planner working under Gen. David Petraeus, the commanding general of the multinational forces in Iraq. Petraeus was recently appointed head of U.S. Central Command by Defense Secretary Robert Gates, which means that Kirkton will then report to Lt. Gen. Raymond Odierno, who will become the new commanding general.

Before coming to UT Martin in fall 2005, Kirkton was an operations officer for the 1st Engineer Brigade at Ft. Leonard Wood, Mo. She also previously taught at the U.S. Military Academy at West Point, so when the UT Martin assignment opened, the Skyhawk Battalion and Martin appeared to be a perfect fit. Kirkton recalled that she "felt really close to the community when I got here," and some productive years for the program followed.

Kirkton found the Skyhawk Battalion "on an upswing" but not reaching recruiting goals, something the battalion has achieved each year since her arrival in Martin. Other achievements under her leadership include the battalion's entry into Jackson and the cadets' success in the Ranger Challenge.

The program's expansion into Jackson allows the battalion to offer Army ROTC Scholarships to students at Union University, Freed-Hardeman University, Lambuth University, Lane College and Jackson State Community College. There is also now a Skyhawk Battalion office at the UT Martin Jackson Center located on the Jackson State campus.

The Ranger Challenge is a skills and endurance competition for ROTC cadets held annually at Ft. Jackson, S.C. In addition to vying for bragging rights with other universities, the

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Lt. Col. Janet Kirkton, center, is joined by members of the UT Martin Skyhawk Battalion before leaving for Iraq. She will serve as a senior planner working under the commanding general of the multinational forces. Pictured with Kirkton are, front row, left to right, 2nd Lt. Tyler McAnally and 2nd Lt. Travis Payne, both recent UT Martin graduates; and, back row, left to right, Maj. James Lacy and Capt. Donny Hebel.

Season ticket sales soon

The 2008 football season is fast approaching and the Skyhawks, under the direction of third-year head coach Jason Simpson, want to return to postseason play for the second time in three years.

The Skyhawks' schedule is loaded with challenges. For starters, the team will play 12 games this season, two against teams that were nationally ranked this past season - South Florida and Auburn. The Skyhawks open the year,

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Online counseling master's ready this fall

An online Master of Science in Education with a major in Counseling - School or Community - will be offered for the first time, beginning Aug. 25, by UT Martin. It is available to individuals who have obtained a bachelor's degree from an accredited college or university.

"We continue to provide accredited, instructional access to enable working professionals to expand their expertise and ultimately improve the level of services to citizens within the region," said Chancellor Rakes. "This program is one more graduate-level program we are pleased to offer as part of our growing online program menu."

Joining master of science in education degrees in administration and supervision, geoscience education and special education, all degree requirements for the new program may be completed online with the exception of a required four-day residency at the beginning of each semester. The residency for fall semester is Aug. 21-24; spring, Jan. 8-11; and summer, May 28-31. Candidates are admitted for each semester.

"We are very excited to be able to offer the master's degree in community and school counseling online," said Dr. Mary L. Hall, College of Education and Behavioral Sciences dean. "This is an opportunity for those who are working full-time jobs and

involved in family life to pursue a dream and goal of a master's degree in counseling without the travel involved." She added, "The residency requirement will provide the face-to-face connection that is so critical for those interested in counseling for a career. Faculty members will also work closely with a supervising mentor counselor during the internship to assure a quality experience."

The counseling program coursework and course materials are accessible online, 24/7, with discussion, email, chat, assignments, examinations and Web-conferencing capability. Students have access to free tech support through UT Martin's Help Desk, 731-881-7900, each day until midnight.

The program includes a graduate core of six hours, counseling core of 36 hours and a culminating internship experience of six hours. Total minimum hours required is 48. A student is permitted to take nine hours of degree course work each semester. Typically, the online counseling program takes 24-30 months to complete.

Also required is a school internship (600 hours total) or a community/mental health internship (600 hours total) for completion of the program. The internship is the experiential component of the counseling program, and it may be completed at a site

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Aug. 30, in Tampa at South Florida and then travel to Auburn on Nov. 8. This is the first time in school history that the Skyhawks have played a Big East team and a Southeastern Conference foe in football.

The Skyhawks will open the home portion of the schedule with back-to-back games, Sept. 6, against Baker University from Kansas, and Sept. 11, versus Concordia from Selmer, Ala.

Other home games include homecoming set for Oct. 4, against Tennessee State; Oct. 11, against perennial Ohio Valley Conference power Eastern Illinois; Oct. 23, against Jacksonville State; and Nov. 22, against defending OVC champion Eastern Kentucky.

The home slate includes two Thursday night contests, Sept. 11, against Concordia, and Oct. 23, against Jacksonville State and LSU transfer quarterback Ryan Perrilloux. The Jacksonville State game will be televised live on ESPNU. Kickoff is set for 6:30 p.m.

The Skyhawks closed out their 2007 season with three consecutive wins and victories in four of their last five OVC games to finish fourth in the league standings.

Offensively, the Skyhawks were one of the best in the OVC and among the nation's most potent attacks. Led by All-American tailback Don Chapman, the Skyhawks were ranked among the top 35 teams in the nation in eight offensive statistical categories. The Skyhawks were 13th in the nation in total offense, averaging 430.55 yards per game. They were 19th in the country in scoring offense averaging 33.36 points per game.

In the OVC, the Skyhawks were ranked first in six offensive stat categories (scoring, total offense, total offense per play, total offensive yards per game, total offensive touchdowns and pass efficiency). The Skyhawks were ranked second in the 10-team league in three more offensive stat categories (touchdowns scored, rushing offense and yards per rush).

While Simpson is faced with replacing Chapman in the backfield this season, he can rely on junior quarterback Cade Thompson from Maryville. Thompson was named to the OVC's All-Newcomer team in 2007. He completed 81-of 124 passes (65.3 percent) for 1,034 yards and eight touchdowns. The Skyhawks also return All-OVC selections, Ray Williams (DL) and Kevin Bannon (OL).

Chapman, from Marietta, Ga., completed his four-year career at UT Martin by rewriting the school's record book. He rushed for 5,017 career yards and scored 296 points. He is one of 14 college football players ever to rush for 1,000 yards in a year for four consecutive seasons.

Season tickets go on sale late July or early August. A limited number of chair-back seats will be available. However, there are plenty of bench-back seats available. UT Martin employees can buy chair-back season tickets for \$45 and reserved bench-back seats for \$38.

For more information, call the Skyhawk Ticket Office and Jenny Canary at ext. 7207.

The Office of University Relations provides free design and print consultation services to the campus community.

Kirkton

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Ranger Challenge offers a way to measure the success of the battalion's training programs. "We might be small, but the cadets we produce are simply outstanding," Kirkton said. "So I'm very proud of my cadre and the training that they do."

Tyler McAnally, who received his bachelor's degree in May from UT Martin and was commissioned as an Army second lieutenant, was a member of the Ranger Challenge team. He said that Kirkton helped to make the Skyhawk Battalion successful by offering ways for cadets to improve themselves. "She did this by giving us the opportunity to go to Air Assault and Airborne schools and others as well," he said. "These slots were given to the most qualified cadets, so competition was high."

Kirkton leaves UT Martin with plenty of enthusiasm for her new assignment. Specific duties will evolve after she arrives in Iraq, but she does know that she will participate in strategic and contingency planning for the war effort at the highest level. For example, it won't be unusual for her to observe discussions between the Iraqi president and commanding general. "I don't know," she said. "I might be making coffee or making slides, ... but certainly I'll be in and around the area and hopefully making a good contribution to that team."

The challenges of her new assignment include some very real dangers. Indirect mortar fire is a concern, with some 700 attacks recorded around the embassy in recent months. "We have all the safe equipment. ... I'm just going to go to work every day and not worry about that part," she said.

Kirkton joins many other members of the military in making personal sacrifices to serve her country. During her yearlong deployment, she will leave behind her husband, a retired infantry officer, and four children, including a son who will begin college this fall. Despite the pending separation, her family is supportive, and Kirkton sees much for which to be thankful. "... I'm so blessed in my career to have only had to deploy twice," she said. "Many of my peers have gone three and four times, and so I have certainly nothing to complain about compared to everybody else's workload."

Kirkton is optimistic about the future of the Skyhawk Battalion that will be led by her replacement, Lt. Col. Angela Odom. She is also positive about the military and sees service to country as a noble calling.

"My father was in the military. I'm just very proud of our service," she said. "Selfless service to the nation, though, I think takes a special calling, and so I think our young people could only be optimistic about that service and be very proud about that decision."

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where the student works or resides.

UT Martin is accredited by the Commission on Colleges of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools to award bachelor's and master's degrees, and the education curriculum is approved by the Tennessee State Board of Education and accredited by the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE).

"This program has been under development for online delivery for two years," added Dr. Tommy Cates, director of UT Online. "The faculty have done a masterful job of preparing the courses and materials for this venture."

For more information about the online counseling program or other online programs offered by the College of Education and Behavioral Sciences, call ext. 7125.

CALENDAR

Thursday, July 3

- First half of summer courses end

Friday, July 4

- Independence Day

Tuesday, July 8

- Second half of summer courses begin

Thursday, July 10

- All students' schedules must be confirmed

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