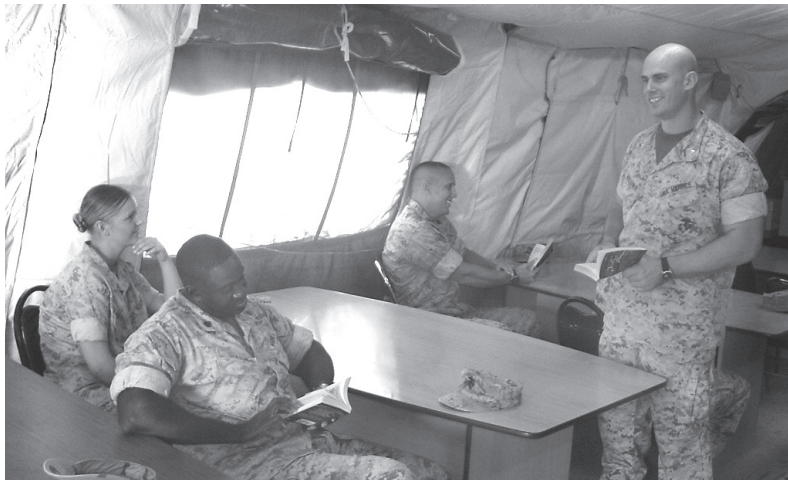


FACULTY HIGHLIGHT

Adam McKeown: Giving New Meaning to the Phrase "Active Tour of Duty"



Marine Corps Maj. Adam McKeown, standing, teaches an Adelphi class on Shakespeare in Djibouti, Africa.

Dr. Adam McKeown, assistant professor of English at Adelphi since 2002, garners attention not only because of the high level of respect his students have for him, but also because of the remarkable manner in which he has been able to merge his military and academic careers.

Dr. McKeown received his bachelor's and master's degrees from the University of New Hampshire and then spent the next four years serving in the United States Marine Corps. During his time in the Marines he was able to gain a better understanding of what an academic career had to offer.

His first foray into the teaching field came while he was serving in Japan in 1993. "I started teaching an English course to Marines at the University of Maryland's extension campus in Okinawa," he said. "I absolutely loved it."

Upon returning to the United States, Dr. McKeown renewed his desire to continue his education and enrolled in New York University's doctoral program in English literature, where he completed his studies in 2000. He was drawn to Adelphi when the University was looking to expand its English curriculum. "The English department at Adelphi was re-inventing itself when I joined the faculty in 2002, which really appealed to me," he said. "I wanted a chance to grow along with the University and this provided the perfect opportunity."

In 2005, while on the faculty of Adelphi, Dr. McKeown was sent to Djibouti, a country located on the northeastern coast of Africa, for six months with the Marine Corps., where he again put his talents as a professor to good use, teaching a full-credit college course in Shakespeare to the men and women stationed there. "It was tough," he remembers. "There were times when we were all just completely exhausted, but everyone there seemed to be so energized by the class and happy to be able to think about something else."

Although his two professions may seem strikingly dissimilar, Dr. McKeown draws parallels between higher education and military service. "The two careers have been mutually beneficial to one another," he says. "In both roles I'm helping 18–22 year olds do their jobs, albeit in different manners. At the end of the day it all comes down to helping people better themselves, which is my main objective with these careers."

In 2005, Dr. McKeown was the recipient of Adelphi's Teaching Excellence Award, which honors a faculty member who has made a significant impact on students' educational experiences at Adelphi. "That was a great moment," he says. "I never do things for the reward. To me, the greatest reward has always been the level of support I've received from the Adelphi community. It's great to know that people are paying attention to the hard work we do, though. I have to say, one of the greatest things about receiving that award is the fact that I now have the opportunity to serve on the committee that selects future recipients."

Dr. McKeown's hope is that he teaches his students to be excited and happy with whatever path they choose in life. "Life asks us to put energy into a lot of different things," he says. "The more energy we put into doing something, the greater the personal reward we'll receive from it."