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# MIZZOU

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## Around the Columns

### Professor heads to war

A finance professor who urges his students to seek work experience through internships and travel has gone to extremes for his own work in the field. The battlefield, that is.

steve ferris

Finance Professor Steve Ferris left in February for U.S. Navy Reserve duty in Kuwait. Photo courtesy of Steve Ferris.

Steve Ferris is director of the Financial Research Institute and J.H. Rogers Chair of Money, Credit and Banking in the [College of Business](#). He is also a commander and 18-year veteran of the U.S. Navy Reserve who holds a master's degree in strategic studies from the U.S. Army War College in Carlisle, Pa., in addition to his doctorate in finance. In late February, he left for two months of training in Virginia, after which he reported to Camp Arifjan in Kuwait to serve as chief of staff for a 1,000-person logistics unit, which assists operations in Iraq.

"I will come back a more experienced faculty member," says Ferris, who is MU's only tenured faculty member to be deployed to the current Iraq war, according to Ed Danielski, manager for human resources support services.




Bruce Walker, professor and dean of the College of Business, ribbed Ferris during a going-away reception, noting that Ferris' reserve unit is based in Phoenix, an incongruous location for the Navy. After promising to throw a party upon Ferris' return, Walker presented Ferris with a gift bag containing sweat-resistant bug spray, hand sanitizer, duct tape, protective gloves, and sunscreen. "We looked for SPF 95 but they didn't have it," he told Ferris, who expected to see temperatures surpass 120 degrees in Kuwait. "We don't want you to get scorched."

As a Navy logistics officer, Ferris handles "all the stuff coming in and going out." Ferris says military supply operations use the same principles of risk management, project prioritization of workflow and inventory management that he teaches at Mizzou. "It's classic issues of logistics that any modern business must address."

He planned to put his academic training to use in the Middle East, and he is already planning a workshop for when he returns to Columbia in December. “I’m excited and proud about what I’m doing,” he says. “But I’m looking forward to coming back.”

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