Human Terrain Team Trip Report: A “Team of Teams”
Prepared by USMA’s Interdisciplinary Team in Iraq

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Purpose

The purpose of this preliminary paper is to provide an initial view of the value-added of Human Terrain Teams (HTTs). We acknowledge that our first deployment in this capacity will not produce the definitive study, but it has provided important contextual information and understanding required to gain a holistic perspective on the Human Terrain System (HTS) with focus on the HTTs and the complex environment in which they work. We anticipate that we will need to make follow-on trips both in theater and at CONUS training sites to gain a more comprehensive and strategic view of the program, as well as to discern longitudinal trends.

The TRADOC G2 requested that we provide a holistic and strategic study of the value-added of the HTS, specifically the HTTs, and their role to provide cultural information and analysis for the commander. Second, he asked us to assess if the HTT is the optimal construct for providing this information, and how might it be improved. With this in mind, we first traveled to Leavenworth to talk with program directors, especially those personnel who have made tactical HTT assessments and those involved with training, and members of the Afghanistan reach-back center. We also traveled to TRADOC G2 and the HTS program in Oyster Point, and talked with the overall program director and the Iraqi reach-back center. Once in Iraq, we established our home base at Camp Victory and traveled to Forward Operating Bases (FOBs) Liberty, Slayer, Loyalty, Taji, War Eagle, IZ (Prosperity), and Speicher.

To better discern value-added, we noted that we needed to study the HTS on several levels to best understand the operational environment. We talked to commanders and staff from MNFI, MNCI, Divisions, Brigades, Battalions, Companies, and the HTT members (over 100 total interviews). In total, we spoke with members of five Brigades in Iraq – four that had HTTs, and one “null set” Brigade that did not.

First, it was important to attain different perspectives of the Operational Environment (OE) and the challenges each OE presents. This is important context for understanding HTTs as they engage with the local population, help identify and establish local stakeholders, and provide cultural knowledge for the commander. This is particularly relevant to Iraq because no two operating environments are alike. The challenges are different due to the uneven security situation, the diverse cultures, societies, geography, economy, etc across the country.

Second, it is also important to understand the challenges at each level of command and how the military is evolving to synthesize non-lethal and lethal effects to enhance security and help build state capacity and legitimacy. Not only are HTTs grappling with the challenges posed by a changing and challenging OE, but so is the organization in which they work. How do these commanders or “customers” view the HTTs’ value-added? This question not only pertains to commanders, soldiers, and interagency personnel, but also to local leaders, officials, and the population. This is an important point: for although the ‘first-order’ customer of an HTT is the Brigade Commander, there can be important work done by HTTs, which the BCT commander may not see; thus, we
think it is important to consider a wide variety of potential customers, especially in view of the ‘vertical build’ the HTS is about to undergo via employment of the HTRAC and HTAT.

Third, do the HTTs actually influence decisions, and if so at what level? Examining how the HTTs affected the commander’s decision-making process and interacted with staffs helped to determine their input to and impact on operations. To best assess the current HTT construct, we continue to learn about all parts of the program, the mission, the evolving military, and the challenges current and future OEs present so that we may offer ways that may enhance HTT effectiveness.

The challenge for our Nation and Army is to have the strategic patience required to help build state capacity and legitimacy. The HTTs face this challenge head-on as they work with units to develop long-term sustainable development, which is hard to do in the midst of unit rotations and our national and military culture that demands immediate results.

**Bottom line, we find that the HTTs provide great value added to the overall effort, though we recognize, as did everyone with whom we spoke, that it is difficult to assess political, economic, social, and other non-lethal effects in this environment, certainly as a snapshot in time.** Clearly, HTTs provide the commander with the tools to set processes, such as negotiations, in place, to help alleviate human security issues germane to a specific area. Specifically, HTTs’ value-added included: providing critical familial, tribal, and political linkage charts and analyses; in the future, providing continuity of knowledge in the midst of unit rotations; and, providing alternative perspectives in the planning process. We had very limited time to explore the null set, that is, a brigade and division that did not have HTTs. In this null case, the Brigade Commander, relied on his own engagements and experience to develop cultural knowledge. Within the “null set” division, assistance was requested for economic and political expertise from USMA faculty who deployed over Spring Break and for the summer. **In both null cases, the continuity of knowledge and synchronization of staff processes concerning cultural knowledge seem limited compared with the positive cases.** In another case as told to us, a commander may rely on his/her interpreters for cultural knowledge. As several people relayed to us however, while interpreters may know the language, they may not have the kind of education required for key engagements and cultural knowledge and understanding. Cultural understanding especially in the context of a fluid and challenging operating environment requires social sciences/humanities education and not just language. HTTs provide the educational and language background required to achieve this cultural understanding.

All commanders stated that they highly valued the HTT’s work, but they only embraced HTTs once the HTTs proved themselves in the commander’s eyes. The program must provide the best team and all that entails to convince the commander quickly that it is indeed a high value asset. With this in mind, we provide thoughts on how best to improve the program so that it may capitalize on its early gains. In this first report, we provide: emerging issues and preliminary thoughts; considerations for future HTS development; and finally, suggestions for further study.
This opportunity has been inspiring. It has been an honor to meet the HTT members; we were immediately impressed with their dedication, commitment, and intelligence. It was equally inspiring to meet soldiers, sailors, marines, airmen/women, and civilian professionals who meet each challenge with a fighting and compassionate spirit.

**Emerging Issues and Preliminary Thoughts**

All commanders/staffs enthusiastically hailed the value of the HTTs. The “bubble-up” model is critical to the success of the HTS program. In academe, there is a dearth of information concerning the local level of politics, culture, tribe, family, etc. The HTTs greatly contribute to the overall body of knowledge by discovering original information and creating new knowledge, not just rehashing and repackaging social networks and cultural info that is already known. Many staff/commanders talked about the in-depth analysis the HTTs provide concerning familial links and power networks. HTTs identify key power brokers who commanders need to engage, as well as those leaders, both formal and informal, who commanders should not empower. Moreover, HTTs are able to understand the nuance, body language, and meta-messages unique to the culture/situation/individual that help facilitate productive engagements. HTTs, with help from the reach-back center, also provide good historical analysis on critical areas to best understand political and social behaviors and help anticipate second and third order effects of both non-kinetic and kinetic actions. Finally, commanders and staff appreciate the alternative perspectives that HTTs provide. It is clear that the work and value of HTTs depends largely on the commander. The commander has to truly value diversity of ideas, through his actions as well as his words, and he has to truly value the criticality of cultural knowledge and the importance of non-lethal effects in general. (Note that we are using the pronoun, “he” as the HTTs have so far only been assigned to brigade combat teams or BCTs. This begs the question of exploring other units as HTT recipients. Specifically, it was brought to our attention that perhaps Camp Buqua, where future status of detainees must be assessed and determined, could greatly benefit from an HTT.)

It was important to study HTTs in context, gaining perspectives from MNFI, MNCI, Division, Brigade, Battalion, and Company levels. What we discovered is that the new operating environment requires adaptive, smart, flexible, open-minded, and dedicated leaders at all levels. This is particularly the case for Brigades. We had an opportunity to visit four Brigades with HTTs, and each one managed its assets, to include the HTTs, differently based on the commander’s personality, command style, and thought process, as well as the mission. The sectors across Iraq are so different in every aspect – politically, socially, geographically, culturally, etc, that no one method of integration addresses all cases. Some Brigades have configured the staffs into lethal/nonlethal sections. For some, the S2 and S3 focus on the lethal and the FECC or DCO focus on the non-lethal assets. Synchronization occurs during working group meetings that involve all staff primaries, and through a ‘fusion cell’ with representation of the different staff elements. The ePRTs/IQATFs/HTTs tend to organize themselves to leverage individual members’ strengths and minimize weaknesses. For some staffs, one member might emerge as a special advisor depending on the rapport/personality of the commander, but...
this is not to imply that a staff element required the status of a “special advisor” to be effective.

We were struck by the number of different organizations, which were trying to leverage or capture non-lethal effects. Again, there is no definitive answer on how exactly the IQATFs (Iraqi Advisor Task Forces, with a mission to “capture environmental atmospherics”), the HTTs (who may capture the key familial links and informal leader network), and the ePRTs (who attempt to provide a bridge to the local/central governance structure) synchronize their activities, but it seems that together, they help provide the commander with the necessary critical mass that allows him to adapt to the situation. In other words, we found that the IQATFs, the ePRTs, and the HTTs have different organizational personalities, and bring different skill sets and focus to the operation. Of course, the other non-lethal brigade assets must be synchronized with one another as well as with the kinetic operations. It is important that HTTs recognize they are contributing to a brigade staff that is also figuring out the way ahead based on personnel/mission/situation.

Key to this critical knowledge is the continuity HTTs will be able to provide for future units. We have heard the oft-quoted phrase that the Iraq War has been a five-year war fought a year at a time. Iraqis, of course, interpret the conflict with a long-term view. There are costs involved with constant unit rotations, including the steep learning curve each unit faces when first arriving into theater. It takes time for the unit to begin to understand the area and people across the sector. Second, while strategically the coalition is working to help build Iraqi capacity in areas of security, governance, and the economy, the brigade has a one-year window to accomplish projects. Success of these individual projects is seen as constituting success for a brigade during its rotation. Unfortunately, many short term projects, if not knitted together into a larger plan, actually undermine long term sustainable development. This issue is bigger than the HTTs alone. The Army culture must change to embrace process more than outcome in some cases, and steer clear of using measures of effectiveness that are solely outcome-based, such as money spent. While some quantitative metrics are useful, they alone do not paint the full picture. The commander’s intuition and comfort level with embracing relationships, meetings, and other means of empowering local and legitimate stakeholders are key to operating effectively and creating a coherent, long term strategy in this complex and changing environment. The HTTs along with ePRTs can help with unit transitions by staying in place via staggering the deployment/redeployment of team members as the current model prescribes, thereby lowering the learning curve and helping the unit plug into the long term sustainment programs that were developed by their predecessors.

People at all levels were unfamiliar with or had misperceptions about the HTT when they first arrived in theater. Once they were introduced to the work of the HTTs, they became big fans. These discussions normally led to ideas about introducing the HTT into unit pre-deployment training. There are myriad training venues in which to do this: NTC, BCTP COIN Seminars, and the Leader Development and Education for Sustained Peace Program are just a few examples. Realizing that HTTs in the future will provide the critical continuity of knowledge in a given area as units rotate, we discussed
the possibility of maybe having the team leader link-up with a unit during some of its pre-deployment training to assist with developing key relationships with the commander and staff prior to the unit’s arrival in theater. This can provide another way to smooth the transition process between brigades, assist with the critical transfer of knowledge, and also make ‘HTT believers’ of the incoming BCT commander and staff.

During the summer periods, USMA faculty (to include civilians) can also augment HTTs, bringing with them a graduate school background as well as an expert knowledge of how the military functions. This can provide a short-duration surge capability of subject matter experts with background in both the academic and military worlds who can quickly assimilate and contribute to the HTT mission. HTT members expressed enthusiasm for this idea, and many remarked on the immediate impact that these USMA faculty members could make over the summer period. Within the operational constraints at USMA, we think this is an excellent way for the social sciences and humanities departments to contribute to the field Army.

**The differing perceptions between HTT missions and intel missions require more discussion and transparency.** It is difficult to make sharp distinctions between the two given that understanding the operating environment in terms of culture and all that entails is necessary at all levels to better make intel assessments and decisions. The line of demarcation seems to be ‘running a source’ and that’s where the hand-off between HTT and intel may occur should HTTs inadvertently uncover a likely intelligence source. Other than this case, good intel clearly requires an understanding of the human terrain when planning both kinetic and non-kinetic operations. Intel is critical for coalition force protection and Iraqi civilian protection. If the HTT has information that would enhance the units’ and the populations’ protection, then cross-talking with the S2 is necessary.

We realize that some of the military jargon (i.e. targeting a population) may seem at cross-purposes with the HTT’s desired effect of identifying and working with members of the blue and white force population. It is important to keep in mind, however, that the entire brigade team, which includes the HTT, wants to create the conditions for establishing a secure, legitimate Iraqi state. This common goal requires teamwork among all elements of the brigade while encouraging alternative ideas during the planning process in order to best leverage the unique assets within the brigade. At this point, each team leader must judge the appropriate level of cross-talk with the S2 given the mission and situation. It is our judgment that there is no sharp line between intel and HTTs; both entities want to create a secure Iraq for both the population and the coalition force.

Related to this intel issue, several HTT members asked if the reach back center should remain in the unclassified-only vein. Many HTT members felt that they routinely worked on SIPR and much important information is classified. (Note that we also struggled with this in reference to our West Point Combating Terrorism Center (CTC). We decided to remain primarily as an open source, but for specific requirements, we use classified material and produce classified products). **For outreach to academe, the reach back center and system could remain unclassified, but to help with operational products, it must enter classified channels, otherwise, its products may not be as useful for HTTs.**
We saw that information management presents challenges for all units in theater, and HTTs are no exception. Feedback from staffs highlighted the difficulties inherent in operating in an environment where the sheer volume of available information makes it hard to separate the important pieces from the rest of the traffic. Many in theater emphasized the need for a common searchable and retrievable database. The information that HTTs gather (via engagements and other interactions) is of great value to American forces, and many military personnel expressed a strong desire to obtain access to it. To facilitate this dissemination of information, HTTs may want to explore the possibility of using CIDNE as a routine part of their reporting procedure. Some teams do input their reports into this database, and others discussed the challenges inherent in parsing an engagement report into this system. But CIDNE does seem to offer the best existing database solution – and it is one that meets the “widely available, retrievable and searchable” criteria.

Placement of HTTs within the brigade also generated discussion. Should a team leader split the HTT, placing members at the battalion and even the company level? Or, should members be centralized at the brigade, where constant dialogue could occur amongst the team and effort is more likely to remain focused on brigade-level concerns? Both approaches have merits and downsides, and the key seems to be finding the distribution that best supports the brigade commander, while retaining flexibility. The two guiding principles seem to be that HTTs need to be where engagements occur, and second, team members need to share ideas/findings to create a holistic and accurate picture of the OE in terms of the human terrain to best support the commander. The brigade’s subordinate units seemed to appreciate receiving HTT members. One Battalion Commander and one Acting Battalion Commander specifically gave rave reviews of their HTTs. One even said that he would simply be ineffective without his HTT.

HTTs are most effective in a permissive environment. AFRICOM presents a perfect opportunity for HTTs to help prevent conflict while providing creative tools and ideas to the commander to help build state/governmental capacity and legitimacy. Since the Combatant Command is new, placing a HTS entity at the COCOM-level could be an important move, given that the subordinate unit structure is currently unknown. While this violates the currently successful “bubble-up” methodology of HTS, it is worthwhile to consider the differences inherent in the Phase 0 operation – differences that may necessitate a change in operating procedure. Concurrently, HTTs should play a role at lower levels within AFRICOM. Perhaps placement at US Embassies, working with DATTs (Defense Attaches) and ARMAs (Army Attaches), with subsequent placement with deploying ground elements, can help create the “bubble up” effect that the teams are developing within US Brigades in Iraq.

Given the discussion noted above, there are many considerations for HTT recruitment and training. **Key to the commander’s buy-in concerning the HTT’s value is the HTT’s effectiveness.** It is more important that HTS build excellent teams who prove their effectiveness than to produce numerous ineffective teams. Everyone we talked
with mentioned that personality and attitude is everything. For the individuals on the teams, the experience is what you make of it. Given this caveat, some of the knowledge, skills, and abilities mentioned during interviews include:

- Each team should have an educated Iraqi-American fluent in the language. Arabic speakers from other countries are generally less desirable due to differing dialects and less understanding of Iraqi people.

- Having at least one woman who can interact with Iraqi women and pick up on side conversations would be beneficial. Many have said that Iraqi women are quite powerful in a very understated (and often unrecognized) way.

- The HTS should consider a wider and broader net in terms of disciplines: political science (in fact, one team raised this point as key), human geographers, economists, psychologists, sociologists, regional geographers, historians, etc. Anthropologists are just one type of social scientist of potential value to the HTS. The problems of the anthropology community with HTS have been well noted; other academic communities have an established relationship with DoD and might be far more receptive.

- Advertise in WIIS (Women in International Security), Chronicle of Higher Education, etc. to help spread the word about the opportunities that HTS offers. Approach the recruiting of civilian academics as a ‘head hunter’ enterprise, looking for the ‘best fit’ candidates. Develop the human resource branch of HTS to provide timely feedback to inquiries and assist applicants with moving through the selection process in a timely manner. We know of two instances where seemingly qualified military candidates were asked for application materials, then after submission were never contacted again by HTS recruiters. The program is too good to let instances like this to give it a black eye and cause potential candidates to pass it up due to perceptions of unprofessionalism or ineptness.

- Limiting academics to only holders of doctorates may be inadvertently missing a talented and eager group of academics with masters degrees who may bring other needed attributes to the team. While PhDs tend to provide “deep thinking” we have observed a civilian team member with only a BA (and some MA level work) providing outstanding analysis and linkages. In fact, we struggled with our CTC in this vein as well and discovered the great attributes of holders of masters degrees that provided excellent academic and team support. The HTS program may want to consider advertising and searching for both doctoral and master degree holders as a way of casting the net more widely and having a broader sample from which to select personnel who not only think deeply but are terrific team players as well.

- The HTS should consider ensuring that team members possess and maintain an adequate medical condition and level of physical fitness to allow them to keep up with the unit so that the unit does not view HTT members as a liability during
convoy/missions. Also, units may be more apt to ask for HTT members on selected missions if they are physically up to the tasks required – to include those that develop if the situation deteriorates or changes.

- **The vetting process should also include some measure of a potential HTT member to be a team player and for a team leader’s ability to build and lead teams.** Team members must be willing to subordinate themselves and their efforts (not their thoughts or ideas) to the team leader. Performance counseling by team leaders should be part of the HTT standard procedures. Formal, written counseling can be collaborative and positive in nature. If so, it helps to define expectations and set goals.

- **The structure of the HTT should retain maximum flexibility so as to preserve the ability to best fit team leaders to commanders.** Many team members discussed the importance of having an officer in the rank of MAJ or LTC reservist as the team leader. The advantage of a major is being able to work with the many other majors on the BCT staff. A lieutenant colonel can serve as a special staff officer to the brigade commander, and can serve as the authorizing authority for certain admin/log functions, which can streamline these tasks for the HTT. In other cases, a civilian team leader can be just as effective given the right personality and unique civilian presence that translates into credibility.

- **In order to have a sustainable impact on the understanding of human terrain and to fully realize the advantages of gains already made, the HTS program requires institutionalization in the future in terms of possible MTOE inclusion and regular training with parent units.** This will also enable a focus on “Phase 0” operations, such as those occurring in AFRICOM.

- **Placing a program liaison in country, perhaps co-located with the HTT at Camp Liberty, could serve as a central point of contact for administrative issues and also assist with the coordination of teams and members (to include HTAT and HTRAC) entering into country.** An ASO (area support officer) position can be moved to theater for greater effectiveness.

Given the discussion above, the training should emphasize the following (note many team members acknowledged the infancy of the program, but still felt that the training did not prepare them):

- **This is a dangerous mission that requires long hours of hard work under austere conditions.** Accordingly, some sort of emphasis on physical health and fitness, as well as some education on operating in conditions of mental stress would seem appropriate.

- **Understanding and working within the military structure is critical.**
Intel is not the enemy – the term ‘intelligence’ includes all aspects of the operating environment.

More education on the specific area/culture is recommended.

Need more specificity on the team member’s specific role – how do roles differ, and how do they work together?

Engagement/interview training would be helpful for the HTTs and the units.

Less focus on computer training – most teams had their computers “wiped clean” of all software before brigade information officers allowed them to connect to the network.

Perhaps some training ought to occur in-country, though resources may not make this a feasible option. This training is most critical during the initial ‘reception phase” when a team member first enters country.

**Considerations for Future HTS Development**

- Leaving HTTs in place, with staggered entrances and exits of team members will continue to provide important knowledge continuity.

- Reference intel, consider the “need to share” model as opposed to the “need to know” model. Different staff/command elements can leverage the information for different specific purposes. This is a good thing, and keeps everyone interested in HTT products.

- Potential issues with intellectual property rights of SME Net need to be resolved. This is a different issue than products created by HTT members post-deployment; it’s a question of what can be done with intellectual products initially produced on the Army’s dime. Can they be then published as original by the individual? Who “owns” the product? How different does it have to be from what was produced under contract?

- HTT member selection process: form a committee consisting of former team leaders, an external member of the program (possibly members of the USMA study group if desired), program managers, with Montgomery McFate and/or Mr. Maxie McFarland holding the final approval authority. Selections made via committee provide for an opportunity to see all possible attributes and have a discussion about each candidate. This committee could look for many of the traits identified by the HTTs (personality, expertise, attitude, willingness to work in a dangerous environment with the military, physical conditioning).
Suggestions for Future Study

It is important to re-visit this study in the changing military context as the Army continues to learn how best to conduct operations that will not only help secure the country, but also help shape the conditions that will promote state capacity and legitimacy.

As the HTS program matures, it will be important to study the evolving relationship between the HTTs and the units they support, especially as the teams help new units transition. The continuity aspect of in-place HTTs is key; we would like to try to develop an assessment process or model to help evaluate the benefits of the continuity of knowledge that HTTs provide. Similarly, we would like to further study the relationship between the research reach-back centers (RRCs), the subject matter expert net, and the HTTs they support as the RRCs become more mature.

As the HTATs and HTRACs move into theater, it will be important to study HTAT/HTRAC in relationship with HTTs, and with respect to the staff elements at higher level headquarters. What is the value-added of these organizations, and how will they nest within the HTS framework – and the DIV/Corps framework? What will/should their relationship be to PRTs and other interagency endeavors. What kind of knowledge, skills, and abilities are required of members of the HTAT/HTRAC?

For future study in Iraq, we not only would like to study the newly deployed HTATs and HTRACs, but we would also like to explore how the Marines are integrating the HTTs; how new units such as MND-N are integrating HTTs, and how the HTTs have matured and provided transition assistance to unit rotations in MND-B and MND-C. Moreover, as time permits, we would like to make a similar study of HTT/HTAT employment in Afghanistan and explore possible HTT deployment with AFRICOM.

Finally, we would like to spend some effort on assessing the curriculum presented to training HTT members. We did not access curricular material and made little discovery of the current state of the training curriculum. To supplement this study, we would like to explore the cultural education and training provided by the Marines, the State Dept, USAID, IQATF, and the law enforcement program (LEP).

Suggested Timeline

January/February 2009: conduct a three-day visit to Quantico and Washington D.C. regarding the cultural education and training provided to Marines, State Dept (PRTs), IQATF, LEPS, and USAID.

Summer 2009: Based on the suggestions for further study described above, we propose to visit Iraq to conduct a longitudinal study of BCTs, the HTAT, HTRAC if deployed, the Marines, and other customers as described above. We did as much coverage and study as possible given the narrow time constraints and feel that we could capitalize on this first
study with a more time in-theater. We may also be able to incorporate a visit to AFRICOM on our return trip to explore possibilities there as well. We look forward to learning of further TRADOC G2 requirements (such as studying HTTs in Afghanistan), and helping in any way we can.
Study Author Biographies

Colonel Cindy R. Jebb is Professor and Deputy Head in the Department of Social Sciences. She teaches courses in Comparative Politics, International Security, Cultural Anthropology, and Terrorism and Counterterrorism. Colonel Jebb has served in numerous command and staff positions in the United States and overseas, to include tours with the 1st Armored Division, III Corps, and the National Security Agency. Before reporting to the United States Military Academy, she served as the Deputy Commander of the 704th Military Intelligence Brigade, which supported NSA. During 2000-2001, she served as USMA Fellow at the Naval War College (2000-2001), where she taught the graduate-level course on Strategy and Force Planning, and during 2006-2007, she served as a Visiting Fellow for the Pell Center. She has several published articles and authored/co-authored three books: *Bridging the Gap: Ethnicity, Legitimacy, and State Alignment in the International System*, (Lexington Publisher); *Mapping Macedonia: Idea and Identity*, co-authored with P.H. Liotta (Praeger Publisher); and, *The Fight for Legitimacy: Democracy Versus Terrorism*, co-authored with P.H. Liotta, Thom Sherlock, and Ruth Beitler, (Praeger Security International Publisher). Colonel Jebb received a Ph.D. in Political Science from Duke University in 1997, a MA in Political Science from Duke in 1992, an MA in National Security and Strategic Studies from the Naval War College in 2000, and a BS from the United States Military Academy in 1982.

Colonel Laurel J. Hummel is an Academy Professor and Program Director of Geography in the Department of Geography and Environmental Engineering. She has spent the majority of her military career in the fields of tactical, imagery, and strategic intelligence, in Army field units and the joint arena. She is a graduate of the US Army War College, the US Army Command and General Staff College and is a Joint Service Officer. As a member of the USMA faculty, she has taught Physical Geography, Geography of Global Cultures, Geomorphology, Population Geography, Geography of North America, and the Honors Research Seminar in Geography. COL Hummel is primarily a human geographer with interests in landscape studies, geography in higher education, and environmental security and the formulation of national security policy. She has conducted research, lectured, and published across a diverse spectrum of interests, including: the US military’s influence upon the cultural and environmental landscape, infusing geography in K-12 public education, population increase and regional instability in sub-Saharan Africa, gendered aspects of transformational leadership, and the patterns of decline and resurgence among small towns in Appalachia. As an Alaskan, COL Hummel maintains a regional interest in the geography of Alaska, and specifically the many effects of the militarization of Alaska on Alaska Native people. She received her Ph.D. from the University of Colorado in 2002, a M.S.S. from the US Army War College in 2006, a M.Ed. from the University of Alaska Anchorage in 1999, a M.S. from Pennsylvania State University in 1991, and a B.S. from the United States Military Academy in 1982.

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