

Gov. Kerrey expected for stint at UCSB

When Bob Kerrey steps down next month as the governor of Nebraska, he'll come to Santa Barbara for his next job — as a visiting professor at UCSB.

A Vietnam veteran and Medal of Honor winner, Kerrey will help Professor Walter Capps teach an undergraduate religious studies class on "The Impact of the Vietnam War" and a graduate seminar on "State Government and Politics."

He's expected to arrive in the second week of January and teach during the winter quarter only before returning to Nebraska.

Full of surprises

Kerrey, 43, was an upset winner when he ran as a political unknown for governor in 1982. And he surprised people again in late 1985 when he decided not to seek a second term.

He'll leave the post as one of the most popular governors in Nebraska history. Recent polls show him with an approval rating of more than 75 percent, even though he is a Democrat in a largely Republican state.

Closely watched by political experts who consider him charismatic, Kerrey has been mentioned as a future candidate for president. (He also had a well-publicized romance with movie star Debra Winger in 1985.)

Ex-Navy commando

Kerrey lectured for Capps' class in 1985 and 1986 and was well received, the professor said. He spoke about his experiences as a member of an elite Navy commando team, including a 1969 combat explosion that severed his lower right leg.

He was awarded the Medal of Honor, but considered refusing it as part of a protest against the war.

The governor also spoke in May 1985 to a joint meeting of the Channel City Club and Women's Forum at the Miramar Center in Montecito. He talked then of the need to raise taxes to help balance the federal budget.