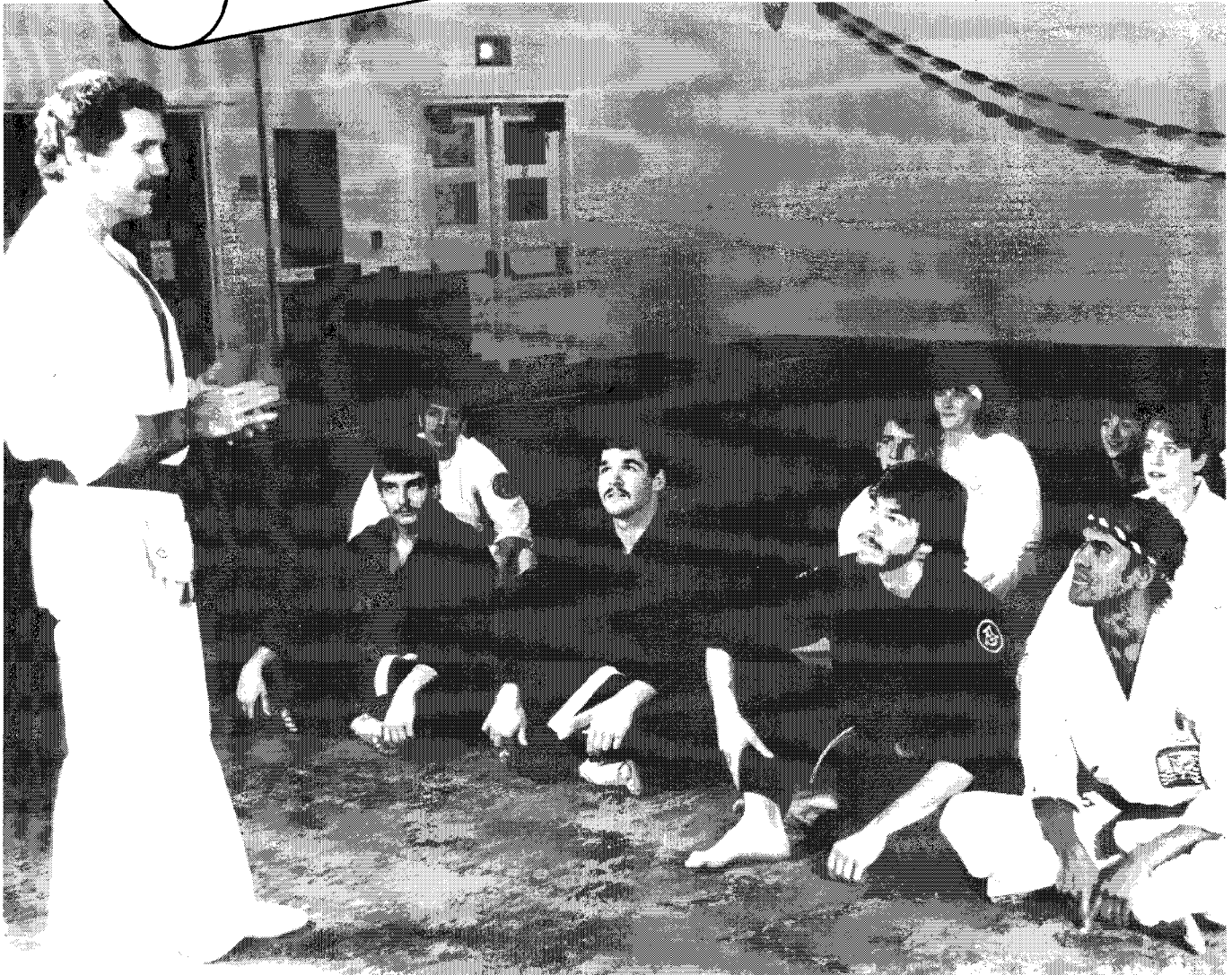
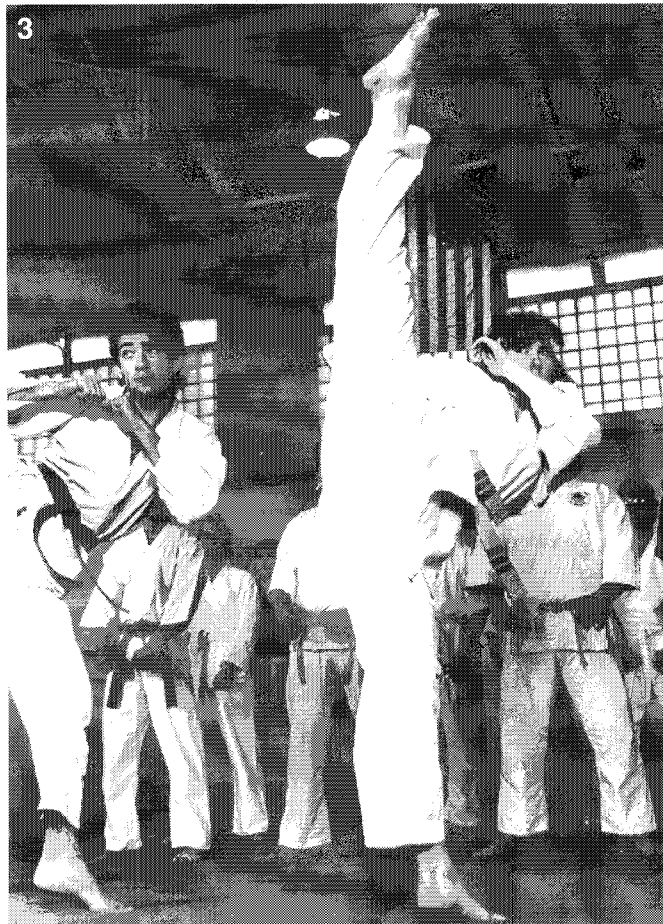
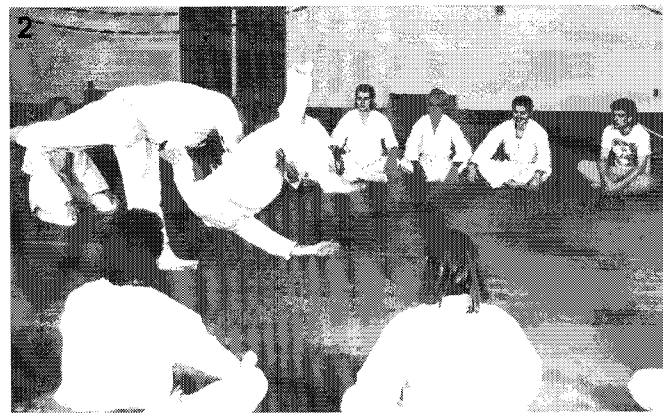


GET A COLLEGE DEGREE IN THE MARTIAL ARTS

Radford University Program Offers Martial Arts Major
by Robert W. Young

Photos by Jack Jeffers





Until a few years ago, the serious martial artist interested in higher education had basically two alternatives. He could pack his bags and head off to college, and between homework assignments, research papers and final exams, he just might be able to find enough free time to participate in the campus karate club. Or he could opt for a less strenuous course load at the nearby community college, and hope for a chance to sneak out for a lesson at the local martial arts school. Neither choice seemed overly appealing.

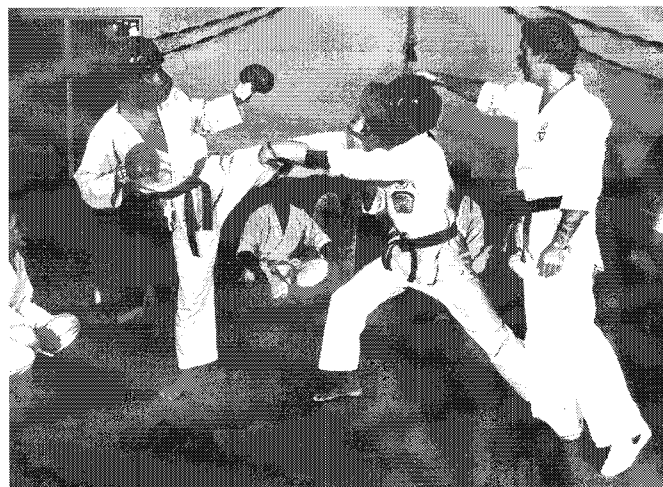
The dismal situation was radically changed in 1984 with the inception of a full-fledged martial arts program at Radford University in Radford, Virginia. This one-of-a-kind, degree-granting curriculum was the brainchild of Dr. Jerry Beasley, who personally teaches nearly every martial arts class offered by the school.

Beasley is not without qualifications. A martial artist for nearly 25 years, he has studied the gamut of combat arts: Japanese karate, Korean *tae kwon do*, American boxing, kickboxing, judo and jujitsu. The 1980s brought Beasley exciting involvement in even deeper fighting concepts: the teachings of Dan Inosanto and Bruce Lee's *jeet kune do* principles.

The connection between Radford University and the martial arts dates back to 1974, when Beasley, then a member of the adjunct faculty, was asked to start karate and self-defense classes for the benefit of the mostly female student body. Beasley was chosen to lead the new program because of his unique educational background: both a master's and a doctorate related to martial arts education.

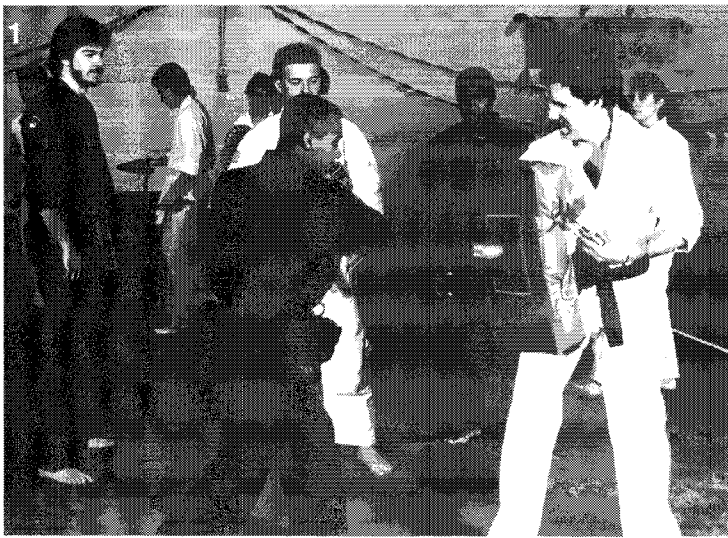
Students at Radford University in Radford, Virginia, can take courses in traditional karate (1), jujitsu (2), and Korean tae kwon do (3), among other martial arts.

Throughout those intervening years, Beasley formulated the groundwork for a complete, multicultural martial arts program that would parallel his own martial career. He planned to introduce students to the arts of various nations, selecting the most functional techniques from each style. In this way, Beasley could mold new martial artists, not in the ultra-traditional, often-biased fashion of many Oriental masters, but in a modern, eclectic, decidedly American way. The long-awaited dream was

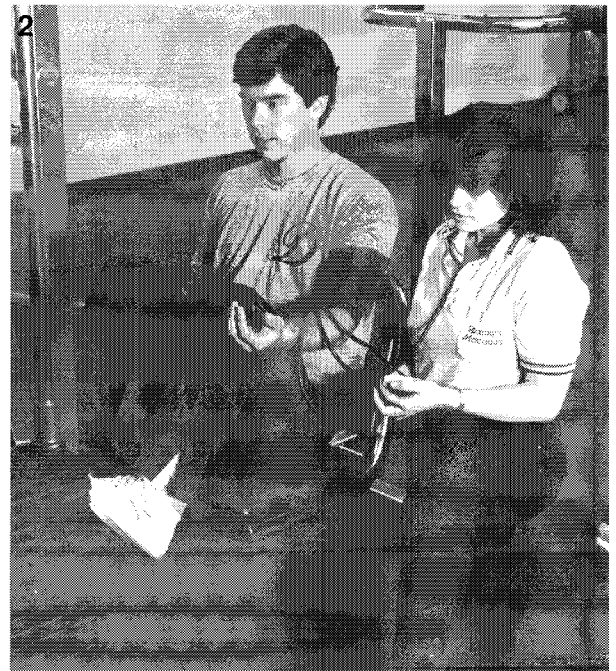


Dr. Jerry Beasley, speaking to one of his classes at left, masterminded the martial arts program at Radford University.

Dr. Jerry Beasley supervises a sparring session by two Radford students. Head and hand safety equipment is required during sparring.



Radford University is stocked with the latest in martial arts equipment, including the Impax force-measuring gear (1) and a modern weight-training room (2).



finally realized in 1984 when the university announced the new program.

Aside from the usual college fitness facilities, such as Nautilus equipment, swimming pools, and track, martial arts students at Radford University have their own practice room, complete with mirrors, padded floors, and heavy bag. In the near future, they will be moving to an even larger, better-equipped room, in recognition of the program's growing success. There is also a martial arts videotape library, to which more cassettes are added every year.

Upon acceptance at Radford, a student may choose either to minor in the martial arts, or to major in physical education with a martial arts concentration. A wide variety of courses are offered, most of which involve actual training. Following Beasley's belief that no country has a monopoly on effective tech-

niques, the course matter is drawn from nations around the globe, including Japan, South Korea, China, the Philippines, and America. It is Beasley's hope that this study of other cultures through the martial arts will help promote greater world understanding.

Students seem to enjoy Beasley's personalized method of instruction. Interspersed throughout both his semiformal training sessions and his more orthodox classroom lectures are fascinating recollections and humorous anecdotes that could only come from a person with Beasley's extensive martial arts background. Beasley does not play the dictator with his students. Instead, he gives respect during class in order to receive it. Apparently this philosophy works well, since his martial arts classes are among the first to fill up during registration.

Martial arts-related extracurricular activities at Radford are

The Martial Arts Curriculum at Radford University

A wide variety of martial arts courses await the new student at Radford University in Radford, Virginia, with more to be added in the near future.

The basic self-defense class is primarily comprised of female students seeking a few elementary but effective techniques for personal protection. They also learn striking methods, targets, awareness, and rape prevention.

In the karate and *kobudo* (traditional weapons) courses, students practice martial arts fundamentals such as stance, focus, and punching and kicking techniques. The Japanese code of *bushido* (way of the warrior) is included as a means of character development, which in program director Dr. Jerry Beasley's opinion is one of the most important aspects of martial arts training. Students enrolling in the second level *kobudo* class receive advanced instruction in energy channeling and the use of the *bo* (staff).

The *kali* class centers on the close-

range Filipino arts. Students learn to use sticks in combat by actually sparring with them, with full protective gear of course. They must then be able to apply those principles to other fighting situations in which the sticks might not be available.

Participants in the kung fu class are taught effective Chinese styles of combat. They focus on the *wing chun* system, which Beasley feels contains the best trapping techniques in all the martial arts. Also included are several animal forms and sensitivity drills for general awareness improvement.

Jeet kune do classes feature Beasley's own redemptive principles of the concepts immortalized by Bruce Lee. Mobility, footwork, and strategy are stressed in this second-level course, with the associated skills coming mostly from boxing.

The Korean art of *tae kwon do* forms the basis of a course which concentrates on kicking techniques. Beasley maintains that *tae kwon do* possesses the

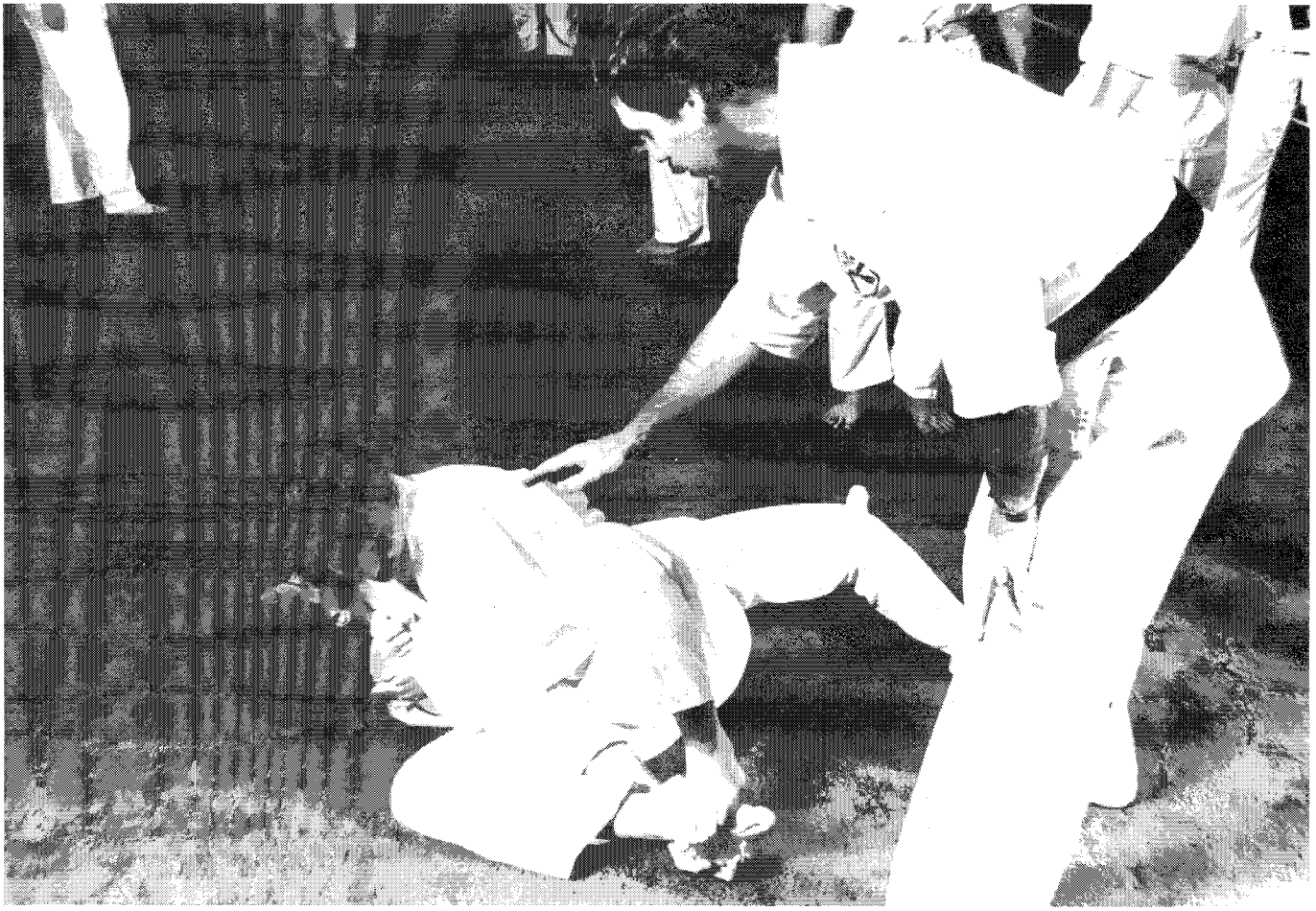
most effective leg attacks in the martial arts. Students train to hit any portion of the opponent's body with maximum speed, power, and balance.

The *jujitsu* course offers another taste of the Japanese arts. Participants learn how to throw, take down, and choke their opponents. Joint locks and pressure-point maneuvers are also taught.

Courses in fencing are also offered, as well as a number of lecture/discussion classes. Beasley's "Traditional and Contemporary Martial Arts" course introduces the martial arts' history and development in Asia, and subsequent arrival in the United States. Bushido, Zen Buddhism, and various other cultural teachings are examined in detail.

The "Theory and Practice of Self-Defense" course describes the less-obvious aspects of spontaneous fighting situations. Theory is studied and then applied to illustrate the appropriate martial arts principles in action.

—Robert W. Young



definitely not lacking. There is a karate club, in which members practice American freestyle karate, emphasizing point-sparring tournament preparation. There is also a more general martial arts club, in which members can specialize in any style, as long as they have completed at least one university martial arts class. In both organizations, members are required to wear traditional uniforms and normal belt rankings are utilized. Credit is awarded for diligent participation.

Beasley has also hosted a number of seminars at the university by internationally known martial artists. Famous Korean and Japanese senior instructors have made appearances, and

Dr. Jerry Beasley's self-defense course is comprised primarily of female students seeking elementary but effective self-defense techniques.

karate superstar Joe Lewis conducts an annual clinic at Radford on fighting strategy.

During the summer, Beasley holds his Karate College, an intense three-day training camp led by former full-contact karate champions Lewis, Bill Wallace and Jeff Smith. This summer, a new Instructors College will be held to prepare inexperienced martial arts teachers for the rigors of opening and running a school.

Just what does all this add up to? According to Beasley, successful completion of his martial arts classes, along with participation in seminars and club activities, produces an informed, skilled, university-educated martial arts instructor, certified by the American Independent Karate Instructors Association (AIKIA). Beasley will even help graduates establish their own martial arts school.

Most of Beasley's students have entered the program at the beginning and intermediate levels, opting for the martial arts minor. But as word spreads about this one-of-a-kind, university-level martial arts curriculum, he hopes to attract higher-ranking practitioners who could polish the skills they already have and add multicultural concepts as well.



For information about the Radford University martial arts program, write Dr. Jerry Beasley, Physical Education Department 5807, Radford University, Radford, Virginia 24142.

About the Author: Robert W. Young is a Windsor, New York-based freelance writer.



Dr. Jerry Beasley (far left) poses with the instructors from his summer training camp (from left): Bill Wallace, Joe Lewis and Jeff Smith.