Disasters: Preparedness and Response

PUBAFRS 7509

Mondays and Wednesdays 2:20 to 3:40 p.m.
Mendenhall Lab 125

Credit Hours: 3

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Office Hours: Tuesdays 3 to 5 p.m., and by appointment

COURSE OVERVIEW

As the number, severity, and diversity of natural and human-made disasters (e.g., hurricanes, terrorist acts, wildfires, epidemics) across the globe rise, it is critical that public administrators understand the challenges that arise in mitigating against, preparing for, responding to and recovering from disasters. The purpose of this seminar is to introduce students to the planning, policy, and management issues that arise when disaster strikes.

Through lectures, discussions, case studies, and student presentations, students will explore the roles of government, nonprofits, communities and individuals in emergency management by examining a variety of recent natural and human-made disasters, both in the U.S. and abroad.

The course is divided into three sections. It begins with a broad exploration of emergency management, its history, and the relationships between key actors before, during, and after a disaster. The next section of the course examines the emergency management cycle in detail starting with the analysis of various hazards and then applying knowledge about those hazards to the four stages of emergency management. Finally, the course concludes by focusing on several critical policy issues that affect how disasters are managed, culminating in a discussion on how to build a more resilient society.
STUDENT LEARNING GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

The goal of this course is to explore the principles and practices of emergency and disaster management. The course is designed to enhance student’s understanding of emergency management policies in the U.S. and abroad. Students will learn about how to mitigate against various hazards and how to prepare for effective response and recovery. Specifically, upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to:

1. Describe the history and evolution of emergency management practices and disaster policies in the U.S. and elsewhere.
2. Identify a variety of different hazards, both natural and human-made, and the unique policy and management issues each type of hazard presents and the tradeoffs of preparing for specific hazards and taking an all-hazards approach.
3. Evaluate the relationships between federal, state, and local governments; the nonprofit sector, communities, and individuals in disaster mitigation, preparedness, response, and recovery.
4. Understand and discuss major policy issues in disaster management.

PREREQUISITES

There are no prerequisites for this course.

REQUIRED TEXT AND READINGS

Students can access textbook information via the Barnes & Noble bookstore website: www.shopOhioState.com as well as from their BuckeyeLink Student Center. This information is disseminated by B&N to all area bookstores. You may buy from a store of your choice and/or shop for books (always use ISBN# for searches) on line.

There are two required texts for the course:


The two texts are supplemented by a variety of articles, reports, and book chapters. All other readings are available on the Carmen website: www.carmen.osu.edu.
GRADING

The course is graded A-E, based on a total of 100 points, with point distribution outlined in the course requirements section. Transformation of numerical grade to letter grade will be according to the schedule below:

A  93 – 100  B-  80 – 82  D+  68 – 69
A-  90 – 92  C+  78 – 79  D  64 – 67
B+  88 – 89  C  73 – 77  E  63 and below
B  83 – 87  C-  70 – 72

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

There will be six components used in determining your final grade for the course. This section describes these requirements and their relative weights for your final grade:

Class Participation  10%
Homework  10%
Group Hazard Project  15%
Optional Midterm Exam  20%
Individual Research Project  25%
Final Exam  20% to 40%

Class Participation: Active and constructive participation in class discussion is a critical part of this seminar course, making attention to the assigned readings particularly important. Students are expected to attend each class session and come prepared to discuss questions raised by the readings. You can participate in class in many ways, including answering questions during class discussion; asking questions to clarify class discussions; and/or volunteering personal experiences to a case or concept discussed in class. If you are absent from class, you must make arrangements to obtain notes and handouts from other students or me. Class participation represents 10% of your final grade.

Homework: Students are asked to complete four independent study courses (IS-100.b, IS-200.b, IS-700.a and IS-800.b) offered by FEMA free of charge as a way of becoming well-versed in the National Response Framework, the Nation Incident Management System, and the Incident Command System used in the U.S. today. After completing each of the four courses, students will submit a copy of the completion report to the Carmen dropbox by 5:00 p.m. on the day the assignment is due. Completion of these courses as homework assignments represents 10% of your final grade. These independent study courses are part of a series of courses that are often required for NIMS/ICS certification. It is recommended that you keep a copy of your completion report for yourself.
Group Hazard Project: This project allows students to work in teams to explore a specific type of hazard, in depth. Teams may choose to work on natural hazards (e.g., earthquakes, hurricanes, wildfires, epidemics) or human-made hazards (e.g., chemical spills, terrorism, mass shootings). Each group will describe the type of hazard, the implications of the hazard, and will discuss challenges of dealing with the hazard from an emergency management perspective.

Groups will provide two deliverables for this project: 1) a short in-class presentation to brief fellow students on the type of hazard; and 2) a one-page hazard fact sheet summarizing the key points from the presentation for the class. The fact sheet is due to the Carmen dropbox by 5:00 p.m. the day before the presentation. Additional information about the group hazard project will be distributed in class. The group hazard project represents 15% of your final grade.

Individual Research Project: Students will research, analyze and report on a specific disaster policy/management research question of their choice. In doing so, each student will explore a specific disaster event, either in the U.S. or internationally, analyze and evaluate the response to and recovery from the disaster, discuss possible ways to mitigate against and prepare for the type of hazard in the future, and provide policy and management recommendations to build resilience, among individuals, community, and government. The paper should not just reiterate the events leading up to and following the disaster event. Rather, the paper should explore a policy/management problem through the lens of the disaster event (e.g., communication during September 11th attack, or evacuation during Hurricane Katrina).

There are three deliverables for this project: 1) a one-page topic summary; 2) a 10-page research paper; and 3) a short in-class presentation summarizing the research, findings and recommendations. Further information on this project will be distributed in class. The individual research project represents 25% of your final grade.

Midterm and Final Examinations: Two exams will be administered. Exam questions will be multiple choice, short answer, and/or essay. The optional midterm represents 20% of your final grade and the final comprehensive exam represents another 20% of your final grade. For students electing not to take the midterm exam, the final exam will be worth 40% of the final grade.

There will be no make-up exams. If you are absent from the midterm exam, the weight of that exam will be applied to the final exam. The final exam will be scheduled during the University’s final exam period for this course. Failure to take the final exam at the scheduled time will result in a grade of zero on the final exam.

COURSE POLICIES

Academic Integrity/ Academic Misconduct Policy
From: http://oaa.osu.edu/coamFAQs.html#academicmisconductstatement

The Ohio State University and the Committee on Academic Misconduct (COAM) expect that all students have read and understand the University’s Code of Student Conduct, and that all students will complete all academic and scholarly assignments with fairness and honesty.
Failure to follow the rules and guidelines established in the University’s *Code of Student Conduct* may constitute “Academic Misconduct.” Sanctions for the misconduct could include a failing grade in this course and suspension or dismissal from the University.

In the Ohio State University’s *Code of Student Conduct*, Section 3335-23-04 defines academic misconduct as: “Any activity that tends to compromise the academic integrity of the University, or subvert the educational process.” Examples of academic misconduct include (but are not limited to) plagiarism, collusion (unauthorized collaboration), copying the work of another student, and possession of unauthorized materials during an examination. Ignorance of the University’s *Code of Student Conduct* is never considered an “excuse” for academic misconduct.

Other sources of information on academic misconduct (integrity) to which you can refer include:
- The Committee on Academic Misconduct web page: [http://oaa.osu.edu/coam.html](http://oaa.osu.edu/coam.html)
- Ten Suggestions for Preserving Academic Integrity: [http://oaa.osu.edu/coam/10suggestions.html](http://oaa.osu.edu/coam/10suggestions.html)
- Eight Cardinal Rules of Academic Integrity: [www.northwestern.edu/uacc/8cards.html](www.northwestern.edu/uacc/8cards.html)

If you have any questions about the above policy or what constitutes academic misconduct in this course, please contact me.

**Writing Style and Citations**
All written work for this class should be well organized, written, and edited. If you have concerns about your writing or struggle with writing consider working with OSU’s Writing Center ([http://cstw.osu.edu/](http://cstw.osu.edu/)).

All work should be original. Paraphrasing or quotation of other’s works including, but not limited to, information from websites, promotional materials, lecture slides, and texts without proper attribution will not be accepted. *When in doubt, include a citation.*

Citations must be included using a standard reference format (APA, Chicago, or MLA). For help with citations, please see the University’s online style guides available at [http://library.osu.edu/help/research-strategies/cite-references/](http://library.osu.edu/help/research-strategies/cite-references/). The main objective is for students to cite their work consistently and accurately.

**Late Assignment Policy**
Assignments are due to the Carmen dropbox on the date specified. Failing to submit your assignment on time will result in a late penalty of one point per day for *EACH DAY* it is late.

**Grade Appeals**
Grades on assignments are intended to reflect the overall quality of performance of the student. You may appeal your grade on an assignment if you think the grade does not reflect the quality of your performance on the assignment. To appeal a grade, submit a clear written explanation describing why you believe the assigned grade is inappropriate *within one week* after your work is returned. I will carefully consider all such appeals. When I re-grade the assignment, I will re-grade the *entire* assignment. As a result, the final grade for the re-graded assignment may be greater than, less than, or equal to the original grade.
ADA STATEMENT

Students with disabilities that have been certified by the Office for Disability Services will be appropriately accommodated, and should inform the instructor as soon as possible of their needs. The Office for Disability Services is located in 150 Pomerene Hall, 1760 Neil Avenue; telephone 292-3307, TDD 292-0901; http://www.ods.ohio-state.edu/

Social Support Services
As a student you may experience a range of issues that can cause barriers to learning, such as strained relationships, increased anxiety, alcohol/drug problems, feeling down, difficulty concentrating and/or lack of motivation. These mental health concerns or stressful events may lead to diminished academic performance or reduce a student’s ability to participate in daily activities.

The Ohio State University offers services to assist you with addressing these and other concerns you may be experiencing. If you or someone you know are suffering from any of the aforementioned conditions, you can learn more about the broad range of confidential mental health services available on campus via:

- The Office of Student Life Counseling and Consultation Services (CCS) by visiting ccs.osu.edu or calling 614-292-5766. CCS is located on the 4th Floor of the Younkin Success Center and 4th Floor of the PAES Building.
- 24 hour emergency help is also available through the National 24/7 Prevention Hotline at 1-800-273-TALK or at suicidepreventionlifeline.org
COURSE OUTLINE AND ASSIGNED READINGS

Class 1: Aug 26  Class Overview and Introductions

Readings:

Class 2: Aug 31  Introduction to Disaster Policy

Readings:
- Sylves, Chapter 1 Disaster Policy in the United States, pp. 2-25.

Class 3: Sept 2  History of Disasters and Emergency Management

Readings:
- Sylves, Chapter 3 Historical Trends in Disaster Management, pp. 58 – 89.

September 7  NO CLASS LABOR DAY

Class 4: Sept 9  Laws and Policies Governing Disaster Management

Readings:
- Sylves, Chapter 2 Disaster Management and Theories of Public Policy and Management, pp. 26 – 57.

Class 5: Sept 14  Intergovernmental Relations in Disaster Management

Readings:
- Sylves, Chapter 6 Intergovernmental Relations in Disaster Policy, pp. 154 – 193.

Class 6: Sept 16  Intergovernmental Relations in Disaster Management (Cont.)

*Assignment Due: Completion of IS-800.b*

Class 7: Sept 21  Role of Nonprofits in Disaster Management

*Readings:*

Class 8: Sept 23  Guest Lecture

*Assignment Due: Completion of IS-700.a*

Class 9: Sept 28  Natural Hazards and Risk Assessment

*Readings:*
• HBC, Chapter 2 Natural and Technological Hazards and Risk Assessment, pp. 31 – 70.

Class 10: Sept 30  Natural Hazards and Risk Assessment

*Assignment Due: Group Hazard Projects – Natural Hazards*
Class 11: Oct 5  Human-made Hazards and Risk Assessment

Readings:

Assignment Due: Topic Summaries for Individual Research Projects

Class 12: Oct 7  Human-made Hazards and Risk Assessment

Assignment Due: Group Hazard Projects – Human-made Hazards

Class 13: Oct 12  Disaster Mitigation

Readings:
- HBC, Chapter 3 The Disciplines of Emergency Management: Mitigation, pp. 71 – 100.

Class 14: Oct 14  Disaster Preparedness

Readings:
- HBC, Chapter 4 The Disciplines of Emergency Management: Preparedness, pp. 101 – 137.

Class 15: Oct 19  Optional Midterm

Class 16: Oct 21  Disaster Response

Readings:
- HBC, Chapter 5 The Disciplines of Emergency Management: Response, pp. 75 – 228.
Class 17: Oct 26  
**Disaster Recovery**

*Readings:*
- HBC, Chapter 4 The Disciplines of Emergency Management: Recovery, pp. 229 – 262.

Class 18: Oct 28  
**Special Populations**

*Readings:*
- The Urban Justice Center. (2002). Ripple Effect: The Crisis in NYC’s Low-Income Communities after September 11th. (Carmen)

*Assignment Due: Completion of IS-100.b*

Class 19: Nov 2  
**Financing Disasters Before They Occur**

*Readings:*

Class 20: Nov 4  
**Financing Disaster Response and Recovery**

*Readings:*
- Sylves, Chapter 9 Recovery Assistance: September 11th Victims Compensation Fund Versus Conventional Relief, pp. 244 – 265.
Class 21: Nov 9  Communications: Managing the Story and Informing the Public

Readings:
- HBC, Chapter 5 The Disciplines of Emergency Management: Communications, pp. 139 – 173.
- Scanlon, J. Research about the Mass Media and Disaster: Never (Well Hardly Ever) the Twain Shall Meet in Disciplines, Disasters and Emergency Management. (Carmen)
- Lindsay, B. (2011). Social Media and Disasters: Current Uses, Future Options, and Policy Considerations. (Carmen)

Assignment Due: Completion of IS-200.b

November 11  NO CLASS VETERANS DAY

Class 22: Nov 16  Individual Project Presentations

Class 23: Nov 18  Individual Project Presentations

Class 24: Nov 23  International Disaster Management

Readings:
- HBC, Chapter 8 International Disaster Management, pp. 263 – 304.

November 25  NO CLASS THANKSGIVING BREAK

Class 25: Nov 30  International Disaster Management (Cont.)
Class 26: Dec 2  Building Resiliency

Readings:

Class 27: Dec 7  Building Resiliency (Cont.)

Class 28: Dec 9  Course Wrap-up and Review

Assignment Due: Individual Research Papers

Final Exam: Wednesday December 16th from 2:00 to 3:45 p.m.

SUMMARY OF IMPORTANT DATES

September 7  No Class – Labor Day
September 16  IS-800.b Certification Due
September 23  IS-700.a Certification Due
September 30  Group Presentations – Natural Hazards
October 5   Topic Summaries for Individual Papers Due
October 7   Group Presentations – Human-made Hazards
October 19  Optional Midterm
October 28  IS-100.b Certification Due
November 9  IS-200.b Certification Due
November 11  No Class – Veterans Day
November 16  Individual Presentations
November 18  Individual Presentations
November 25  No Class – Thanksgiving Break
December 9  Final Papers Due
December 16  Final Exam (2:00 to 3:45p.m.)