

Executive Masters in Crisis and Emergency Management
Community Preparedness
ECEM 722

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Course Description:

This course introduces students to the understanding of hazard and disaster management using community capacity building, emergency preparedness and social vulnerability analysis. Using the multi-disciplinary approach, the course examines historical, geographical, social and cultural factors and conditions that put people differentially at risk before, during and after disasters.

Community preparedness is presented in its many contexts: the practice of emergency management, the community for which planning is done and the network of intergovernmental relationships in which planning occurs. Drawing on current theory and research, field studies, class activities and life experiences, students explore how vulnerable social groups are affected by and cope with hazardous conditions and events and strategies for community-based mitigation engaging those most at risk and developing community collaboration to respond effectively.

Course Objectives:

- Understand how social vulnerability impacts traditional approaches to disaster and emergency management
- Identify root causes of social vulnerability, which tend to place some groups more at risk
- Assess the determinants of structural and situational social vulnerability in particular places, times and social contexts
- Conduct community vulnerability analysis incorporating the capacity and resources as well as the needs of the most vulnerable groups
- Apply knowledge gained through vulnerability analysis to develop a community-based action plan increasing resilience
- Understand how community preparedness depends upon planning as a process involving effective communication
- Understand the basic formats for an emergency operations plan and a continuity of operations plan
- Identify parameters, constraints and opportunities that promote or limit strategies for effective response

Books:

- Ronald W. Perry and Michael K. Lindell, **Emergency Planning** (John Wiley & Sons: 2007) ISBN 13-978-0-471-92077-0
- Piers Baillie, Terry Cannon, Ian Davis and Ben Davis, **At Risk: Natural Hazards, People's Vulnerability and Disasters** (Routledge, 1st Edition, 1994)

Journals:

- *The Australian Journal of Emergency Management*
- *Disaster Prevention and Management: An International Journal* (UK)
- *Disaster Recovery Journal* (for Business Continuity Planners)
- *Disasters: The Journal of Disaster Studies, Policy and Management*
- *Environmental Hazards: Human and Policy Dimensions*
- *International Journal of Mass Emergencies and Disasters* (International Research Committee on Disasters, American Sociological Association)
- *Journal of Contingencies and Crisis Management* (The Netherlands)
- *Journal of Emergency Management*
- *Journal of Homeland Security and Emergency Management* (electronic)
- *The Liaison (for Civil-Military Humanitarian Relief Collaboration)* (Center of Excellence in Disaster Management and Humanitarian Assistance, Hawaii)
- *Natural Hazards: An International Journal of Hazards Research & Prevention*
- *Natural Hazards Review* (Natural Hazards Center, University of Colorado)

Websites:

- A specific list of disaster websites will be provided and more websites will be suggested in the class discussions and readings
 1. www.fema.gov - for basic information on the federal emergency management system, reports, legal documents, training and planning documents, and status reports on disasters, as well as links to state and local emergency management agencies (including a link to the Georgia Emergency Management Agency)
 2. www.dhs.gov - for basic information on the Department of Homeland Security, including FEMA, and its constituent agencies and directorates
 3. www.iaem.org - for information on the International Association of Emergency Managers, job listings, commentary on current policy issues
 4. www.colorado.edu/hazards - for information regarding specific hazards, full texts of some of the Natural Hazards Center's series of working papers and quick response reports for recent disasters, and other information sources
 5. www.udel.edu/DRC/ - for applied social science research related to disasters, full texts of some of the Disaster Research Center's publications, including reports to FEMA and other government agencies
 6. www.emforum.org - Emergency Information Infrastructure Partnership (EIIP) forum. Holds Internet workshops on a broad range of emergency management issues and maintains an archive of transcripts. Tune in online for Wednesday noon programs
- Students may subscribe to discussion lists for a variety of disaster organizations and related professions and receive email notification of major earthquakes and other disasters, federal

disaster relief announcements, job announcements, research opportunities, and other relevant professional news from the field.

Objectives Measurement:

In-Class Participation	15%
Web-Based Participation	15%
Midterm Exam	15%
Research Project	40%
Final Exam	15%

Performance Assessments:

In-Class Participation: Full points are awarded based on active and meaningful participation in classroom discussion, insightful contributions and interactions between instructor and peers.

Web-Based Participation: Each student is expected to interact with peers using WebCampus and posting to the discussion board a minimum of 10 times during the course. A minimum of three postings must be in the form of an inquiry to provoke thoughtful responses and interactions from peers. A minimum of seven postings must be in response to inquiries posted by peers.

Midterm Exam: This take-home exam is intended to be a check of learning. It will require brief case-study analysis and proper identification of course-specific terminology.

Research Project: The research project should focus on an emergency management issue or function in a community and assess that community's vulnerability as well as assets to respond. Students should survey the literature (library and Internet), assess the state of knowledge about the issue, function, hazard, or disaster and provide an analysis that identifies information needs, lessons learned, and/or other concerns for emergency managers, policymakers, and communities at risk. Papers should be 12-15 pages in length and students should be prepared to provide a 2-5 minute overview in class.

Final Exam: This take-home exam is the final assessment of student learning. It will be in short-essay format.

Discussion Topics:

- Community Emergency Planning
- Understanding and Protecting the Community
 - Development of Vulnerability Analysis
 - Natural Disasters
 - Technological and Human-Induced Disasters
 - The Social Construction of Disasters
 - Demographic and Economic Trends
 - Classes of Protective Action Recommendations
 - Analyzing and Selecting Protective Actions
- Structural and Community Barriers to Disaster Resilience
 - Social Class
 - Race and Ethnicity

- Gender
- Age
- Health and Disability
- Situational Barriers to Resilience
 - Language and Literacy
 - Foreign Birth
 - Household and Family
 - Violence
 - Economic
- Knowing Your Community
 - Nature of Human Communities
 - Case Studies of Community Vulnerability
 - Strategies for Assessing Community Vulnerability
 - Conducting Community Vulnerability Assessments
 - Presenting Social Vulnerability Project
- Building Disaster-Resilient Communities
 - New Ways of Working
 - New Skills for Practitioners
 - New Practices to Reduce Vulnerability
 - Promoting Empowerment and Community Capacity
 - Community Organizations Active in Disaster
 - Reducing Risk Through Sustainable Development
- Basic Content and Format of Emergency Plans
- Basics of Continuity of Operations Plans

This syllabus is a guide, not a contract. It may be revised if it seems in the best interest of the class to do so. Students will be notified promptly of any revisions.