1. Textbook and Resource Material

Textbook


Resource Material


2. Course Description and Prerequisites

This course examines the relationship between disasters and society from a sociological perspective. Key themes that will be addressed throughout the course involve preparedness, warning response, mitigation, social vulnerability, long- and short-term recovery, and international hazard management.

Prerequisites: 3 hours of sociology

3. Learning Objectives

After taking Disasters & Society, you should be able to demonstrate, through a sociological lens, understanding of:

LO1: The concepts of hazards, risks, disasters, vulnerability, and resiliency;
LO2: Various types of disasters and their impact on society;
LO3: The importance of addressing the needs of the populations affected by a disaster;
LO4: The key actors in the disaster management process, which constitutes mitigation, preparedness, response, and recovery; and
LO5: Problems associated with preparedness, response, and recovery in short-and long-term in local and international settings.

4. Service Learning Designation

Service Learning Objectives

SLO1: To learn firsthand experiences from partners from a community which was recently hit by a disaster (LO3).
SLO2: To learn firsthand experiences from key stakeholders including issues, problems and challenges local, county, state, and federal organizations face in managing disasters (LO4, LO2).
SLO3: To learn hurricane disaster preparedness from individuals who live in the Rio Grande Valley in the aftermath of Hurricane Harvey (LO5, LO4).
SLO4: To apply theories and concepts in order to solve the problems, issues, and challenges learned from various community partners in managing hurricane disaster and emergency effectively (LO1, LO2, LO3, LO4, LO5).
SLO5: To prepare a report that contains experiential learning experience and sustainable solutions showcasing application of theories and concepts learned in classroom to problems, issues, and challenges in managing disaster and emergency effectively (LO1, LO2, LO3, LO4, LO5).

What is Service Learning?

This course is officially designated as Service Learning course by UTRGV’s Engaged Scholarship & Learning as of October 19, 2017. Service Learning is defined as “a thoughtfully organized service experience that addresses a need in the community in a reciprocal and mutually beneficial relationship and integrates a reflective component that relates the service experience to academic course objectives and the student’s learning” (Source: Engaged Scholarship & Learning, UTRGV). As stated in definition, the service learning differs from both internship which emphasizes more on learning than service and volunteering which focuses more on service than learning. (See more information at http://www.utrgv.edu/engaged/service-learning/index.htm). The details of the project will be explained in the class.

Platform for Service Learning: Engagement Zone

Students are required to enroll in the Engagement Zone and follow the instructions (http://ez.utrgv.edu/user/login/).

How Service Learning is Designated in this course?

SOC1 6331.01 Disasters and Society course is designated as a service learning course. This graduate level course is especially designed to provide an experiential learning opportunity to students who will become professionals in the disaster and emergency management field.

Because effectively managing disasters require harmonious collaboration among key stakeholders, students will learn from firsthand experiences from multi-community partners. In this course, community partners could be grouped into three, namely, community partners from a recent disaster hit area, community partners from federal, state, county, and local governments as well as community partner from a non-government organization (NGO).

The first group includes partners from a coastal community that was recently hit by a natural disaster. Three community partners, including a Mayor from the City of Corpus Christi, where the community was hit by recent Hurricane Harvey was selected.

The second group consists of community partners from federal, county, local, and NGO including a Representative of the President of the United States from a federal organization.

Third group of partners also include community members from RGV and beyond. To learn from the community members, students conduct an empirical study which focuses on individual disaster preparedness. Based on findings, students understand how the individual community members subjectively and objectively prepare themselves for a hurricane disaster.
To provide sustainable solutions and challenges related to disaster preparedness, response, recovery, and mitigation, students and instructor develop a research article which integrates the empirical study’s findings, service learning experiences, and application of theories and concepts learned in the classroom. To provide sustainable solutions to all community partners in the RGV and beyond, the research paper pertaining the solutions for effectively managing hurricane disaster in this valley will be published in a referred journal, namely, the *International Journal of Mass Emergencies and Disasters*.

The following community partners are selected.

1. **Community partners from a community recently hard hit by Hurricane Harvey disaster.**

   CP1, Authority Managing Disasters: Mayor Joe McComb, City of Corpus Christy  
   CP2, Local Partner: Billy Delgado, Emergency Management Coordinator, City of Corpus Christy  
   CP3, NGO Partner: Volunteering Coordinator, Rockport City  
   CP4, Victims of Hurricane Harvey living in Rockport City  
   CP5, District Emergency Coordinator, Brandi Ashby-Fisher, Texas Division of Emergency Management, Corpus Christi

2. **Community partners who are key stakeholders at federal, county, local, and NGO organizations.**

   CP6, Federal Partner: Kevin Hannes, Representative of the President of the United States, Federal Coordinating Officer, FEMA  
   CP7, County Partner: Pilar Rodriguez, Executive Director, Hidalgo County Regional Mobility Authority  
   CP8, Local Partner: Robert L. Canterbury, Deputy Director Operations, City of McAllen  
   CP9, NGO Partner: Julie Gaucin, Service Extension Representative – Region 1 Coastal Bend & Southeast Texas, The Salvation Army – Texas Division

3. **Community partners who are from the RGV**

   CP10, individuals living in RGV: In this semester, the students and instructor carry out an empirical research study in search of sustainable solutions to build a hurricane disaster resiliency in this bilingual and bicultural Rio Grande Valley from both formal learning and service learning experiences. A group of more than 300 community members residing in this valley are sampled using convenience sampling method. Students will have an opportunity to learn from experience from the community members on how they prepare themselves for a hurricane disaster.

**Hours of service to community**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Community Partner</th>
<th>Service to community</th>
<th>Hours</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CP1</td>
<td>(1) Authority Managing Disasters: Mayor Joe McComb, City of Corpus Christy</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Reflection Incorporated into Course Assignments**

Students are provided with opportunities to incorporate their reflections of what they learned from community partners into generating sustainable solutions to enhance disaster resiliency in the RGV. In other words, students provide sustainable solutions to overcome problems, issues, and challenges related to disaster preparedness, response, recovery, and mitigation the community members face. In their solutions, the students demonstrate an integration of their reflection of service learning into their solutions. Students and the instructor of the course will develop a research article which integrates the empirical study’s findings, service learning experiences, and application of theories and concepts learned in the classroom. To disseminate the solutions to all key stakeholders, the article will be published in the IJMED journal.

**5. Grading Policies**

**Grade points:** This course consists of face-to-face lectures and small group discussions. There are three elements that contribute to your grade points: exams, assignments, and class participation. There are two exams in this course, based upon class lectures and the study materials provided, including presentation slides, videos, and required reading materials. There will also be two assignments, one group assignment and one individual assignment. Both assignments are discussed in more detail on page 3 of this syllabus. Your class attendance, class participation, and participation in the service learning activities will be counted toward your final
grade. The final exam will include your experiential learning experiences. The point distribution for the exams, class attendance and group assignment are as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Element</th>
<th>Point Value</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Exam 1</td>
<td>100 (1 exam@ 100 pts each)</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exam 2: Service learning</td>
<td>100 (1 exam@ 100 pts each)</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Service learning report</td>
<td>50 (1 assignment @ 50 pts each)</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group assignment</td>
<td>50 (1 assignment @ 50 pts each)</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participation</td>
<td>30 (15 classes @ 2 pts each)</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>330</strong></td>
<td><strong>100%</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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*Note: Service learning components contribute to 45% of your total grade*

**Final grade:** The grade scale will be based on the total points you earn at the end of the course (out of a total of 330 points) and is as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Point Value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>297-330</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>264-296</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>230-263</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>198-229</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>&lt;197</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Your grade:** Your grade in this course will reflect your efforts in class participation, required reading, test and assignment scores. To earn a high grade in this course, you should carefully follow instructions and announcements, prepare and take all exams, complete assignments and submit them on time, and actively participate in all class discussions. To receive a satisfactory grade in this course, students are encouraged to regularly attend classes, with minimal absences and study a minimum of 2 hours per lecture.

**Incomplete:** I do not give “I” (incomplete) grades, however, understanding that in some unusual circumstances, life emergencies may occur, I may assign an incomplete grade during the last quarter of a semester, if a student is unable to complete the course due to justifiable, documentable, and non-academic circumstances. These circumstances will be reviewed in a case by case basis, and are limited to significant illness or other emergency condition beyond your control.

**Grade appeals:** If you think your exam or assignment is not graded correctly, you must make an appeal within 7 days of receiving the grade.
6. Course policies

**Emails:** You are required to use UTRGV email, originating from UTRGV.EDU. I will not respond to emails sent from other accounts. To email Dr. Kyne, please use your UTRGV email and write “SOCI 6331.01” in the subject line of your email. I expect email communication to be professional and concise. I believe that you must learn a proper form and way of communication in professional settings for your future success. It is important that your email must show respect and courteousness in tone and content. You must begin with a proper salutation, e.g. Dear Dr. Kyne or Hi Dr. Kyne, and a proper ending, e.g. Sincerely, John Doe or Thank you, John Doe). In addition, you must NOT use text-messaging and incomplete sentences in your content. If your email does not have the required format mentioned, I will not respond to your email.

**Electronic devices:** My goal is to encourage you to engage in class activities and discussion. To achieve this goal, your electronic devices including smart phones and computers must not be used in class. All electronic devices need to be on silent and not visible in class.

**Class participation:** Students are expected to read study materials prior to each lecture and must be prepared to engage in class learning activities and discussions.

**Guest speakers:** To enrich the practical knowledge of disaster management, three guest speakers from local, county, federal agencies, and non-governmental organizations will be invited to speak on various dates, throughout the course, in order to provide you with their real-world expertise in the disaster management field. They will provide a 45-minute presentation on the topic relevant to the course. Their presentation topics(258,399),(736,453) will be announced at a later date as they get finalized.

**Exams:** There are two exams in this course. Each exam consists of 50 items multiple choice, and/or true or false questions; each question is worth 2 points. The exams are not cumulative, each exam covers chapters learned prior to the exam.

**Missing an exam:** If you are not able to take the exam due to any reason, you are required to inform the instructor via email 7 days prior to the exam. If there is a documentable, instructor-approved reason for missing the exam, you will be provided with another opportunity to make up the exam. However, students are strongly encouraged not to miss any of the exams as I rarely allow opportunities to take the exam at a different date, other than the one scheduled for all students.

**Individual assignment:** Students will be individually assigned two research articles. You are required to read and write a page summary of each article. You will submit the summary report no later than 10/24/2017.

**Group assignment:** Students will form groups of four, but no more than 2 groups. You are required to work on a group project in which you will require to conduct a survey. You will be
asked to write a report of your findings and present orally in class, for a 20-minute presentation. Your oral presentation will be evaluated by your peer groups during your presentation in class.

**Late submission:** No late assignments are accepted for this course. Students will receive zero points out of the total points per assignment if they do not submit their work on the due date.

**Important dates:** The schedule for exams and group assignment are as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Element</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>10/10/2017</td>
<td>Service learning from a community partner from a local government</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10/17/2017</td>
<td>Service learning from a community partner from a county government</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11/14/2017</td>
<td>Service learning from a community partner from a federal government</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11/15/2017</td>
<td>Service learning from engaging with partners from communities recently hit by a hurricane disaster (a field trip required)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11/21/2017</td>
<td>Service learning from a state community partner from an NGO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10/17/2017</td>
<td>Exam 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10/24/2017</td>
<td>Service learning assignment (reflection)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12/12/2016</td>
<td>Exam 2: Service learning</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

7. Calendar of Activities

**Week 1 (8/29/2017)**

**Introduction to Disaster Response and Recovery**
Chapter 1 “Knowing What to Expect”
   Session 1: Overview of course  
   Session 2: The nature of disasters  
   Session 3: The need for response and recovery operations

**Week 2 (9/5/2017)**

**The Actors Involved in Response and Recovery**
Chapter 2 “Understanding the Actors”
   Session 4: Activities of local, state and federal government  
   Session 5: Roles of businesses and non-profits  
   Session 6: Emergent groups and citizens in disasters


**Week 3 (9/12/2017)**
Myths, Exaggerations and Realities
Chapter 3 “Anticipating Human Behavior in Disasters”
   Session 7: The impact of Hollywood and media portrayals
   Session 8: Research about myths
   Session 9: How people actually react


Week 4 (9/19/2017)

Management Approaches
Chapter 4 “Recognizing Alternative Response and Recovery Approaches”
   Session 10: The traditional approach
   Session 11: The professional approach
   Session 12: Comparing the two models


Week 5 (9/26/2017)

Generic Functions
Chapter 5 “Implementing Initial Response Measures”
   Session 13: Hazard detection
   Session 14: Warning
   Session 15: Evacuation and sheltering

doi:10.1016/j.ssresearch.2006.02.003

Week 6 (10/3/2017)

Generic Functions (cont.)
Chapter 6 “Caring for the Injured, Dead, and Distraught”
   Session 16: Search and rescue operations
   Session 17: Medical care and mass fatality management
   Session 18: Treating post-traumatic stress disorder

doi:10.1017/s0033291707001353
Week 7 (10/10/2017)

**Generic Functions (cont.)**

Chapter 7 “Managing Public Information, Donations and Volunteers”

  - Session 19: Communicating with the media
  - Session 20: Accepting donations
  - Session 21: Working with volunteers
  - Session 22: Exam 1 review


**Service learning from a community partner from a local government:**

**Robert L. Canterbury**, Deputy Director Operations, City of McAllen

**Topic:** Managing Public Information, Donations, and Volunteers at City of McAllen

**Time:** 7:30pm~8:30pm

Week 8 (10/17/2017)

**Exam 1**

  - Session 23: Exam 1

**Service learning from a community partner from a county government:**

**Pilar Rodriguez**, Executive Director, Hidalgo County Regional Mobility Authority

**Topic:** Promoting Recovery and Mitigation: Utilizing GIS for Recovery and Mitigation

**Time:** 7:30pm~8:30pm

Week 9 (10/24/2017)

**Generic Functions (cont.)**

Chapter 9 “Promoting Recovery and Mitigation”

  - Session 27: Individual and public assistance
  - Session 28: Fraud, historic buildings and the environment
  - Session 29: Reducing vulnerability after disaster


Week 10 (10/31/2017)

**Expected Problems**

Chapter 10 “Overcoming Typical Challenges”

  - Session 30: Decision making, transportation and politics
  - Session 31: Special populations, communication and coordination
Session 32: Legal issues and record keeping

Week 11 (11/7/2017)

Using Tools and Strategies
Chapter 11 “Harnessing Technology and Organization”
Session 33: Technology in emergency management
Session 34: Incident command, emergency operations centers and mutual aid


Week 12 (11/14/2017)

Interorganizational Coordination
No Reading Assignment/Term Papers Due
Session 35: EMAC, NIMS and the National Response Plan


Week 13 (11/21/2017)

Looking to the Future
Chapter 12 “Foreseeing the Future”
Session 36: The interaction of hazards
Session 37: New threats
Session 38: Rising vulnerability


Service learning from a community partner from a state NGO:
**Julie Gaucin**, Service Extension Representative – Region 1 Coastal Bend & Southeast Texas-Emergency Disaster Services, The Salvation Army – Texas Division
Topic: Disaster Response Activities in the aftermath of Hurricane Harvey and Hurricane Irma
Time: 7:30pm~8:30pm

Week 14 (11/28/2017)

How to Prepare and React
Chapter 13 “Enhancing Disaster Resilience”
Session 39: Acquiring resources, hazard and vulnerability assessments, planning, training
Session 40: Exercises, community education, improvisation and leadership


Week 15 (12/05/2017)

**Generic Functions (cont.)**

Chapter 8 “Moving Beyond Immediate Needs”
- Session 41: Damage assessment
- Session 42: Disaster declarations
- Session 43: Debris removal


Week 16 (12/12/2017)

**Exam 2**
- Session 44: Exam 2

Service learning from a community partner from a federal organization:
**Kevin Hannes**, Federal Coordinating Officer, Representative of the President of the United States, FEMA

**Topic: Disaster Declaration Process**
**Time:** 7:30pm–8:30pm

8. **UGRTV policy statements**

**Students with Disabilities:** If you have a documented disability (physical, psychological, learning, or other disability which affects your academic performance) and would like to receive academic accommodations, please inform your instructor and contact Student Accessibility Services to schedule an appointment to initiate services. It is recommended that you schedule an appointment with Student Accessibility Services before classes start. However, accommodations can be provided at any time. **Brownsville Campus:** Student Accessibility Services is located in Cortez Hall Room 129 and can be contacted by phone at (956) 882-7374 (Voice) or via email at ability@utrgv.edu. **Edinburg Campus:** Student Accessibility Services is located in 108 University Center and can be contacted by phone at (956) 665-7005 (Voice), (956) 665-3840 (Fax), or via email at ability@utrgv.edu.
Mandatory Course Evaluation Period: Students are required to complete an ONLINE evaluation of this course, accessed through your UTRGV account (https://my.utrgv.edu/home); you will be contacted through email with further instructions. Students who complete their evaluations will have priority access to their grades. Online evaluations will be available between November 15 and December 6 for Fall 2017 semester courses.

Attendance: Students are expected to attend all scheduled classes and may be dropped from the course for excessive absences. UTRGV’s attendance policy excuses students from attending class if they are participating in officially sponsored university activities, such as athletics; for observance of religious holy days; or for military service. Students should contact the instructor in advance of the excused absence and arrange to make up missed work or examinations.

Scholastic Integrity: As members of a community dedicated to Honesty, Integrity and Respect, students are reminded that those who engage in scholastic dishonesty are subject to disciplinary penalties, including the possibility of failure in the course and expulsion from the University. Scholastic dishonesty includes but is not limited to: cheating, plagiarism, and collusion; submission for credit of any work or materials that are attributable in whole or in part to another person; taking an examination for another person; any act designed to give unfair advantage to a student; or the attempt to commit such acts. Since scholastic dishonesty harms the individual, all students and the integrity of the University, policies on scholastic dishonesty will be strictly enforced (Board of Regents Rules and Regulations and UTRGV Academic Integrity Guidelines). All scholastic dishonesty incidents will be reported to the Dean of Students.

Sexual Harassment, Discrimination, and Violence: In accordance with UT System regulations, your instructor is a “responsible employee” for reporting purposes under Title IX regulations and so must report any instance, occurring during a student’s time in college, of sexual assault, stalking, dating violence, domestic violence, or sexual harassment about which she/he becomes aware during this course through writing, discussion, or personal disclosure. More information can be found at www.utrgv.edu/equity, including confidential resources available on campus. The faculty and staff of UTRGV actively strive to provide a learning, working, and living environment that promotes personal integrity, civility, and mutual respect in an environment free from sexual misconduct and discrimination.

Course Drops: According to UTRGV policy, students may drop any class without penalty earning a grade of DR until the official drop date. Following that date, students must be assigned a letter grade and can no longer drop the class. Students considering dropping the class should be aware of the “3-peat rule” and the “6-drop” rule so they can recognize how dropped classes may affect their academic success. The 6-drop rule refers to Texas law that dictates that undergraduate students may not drop more than six courses during their undergraduate career. Courses dropped at other Texas public higher education institutions will count toward the six-course drop limit. The 3-peat rule refers to additional fees charged to students who take the same class for the third time.

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