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 include preparedness, warning response, mitigation, social vulnerability, long- and short-term recovery, and international hazard management.

Prerequisites: three hours of sociology

3. Learning Objectives

After taking Disasters & Society, you should be able to demonstrate your sociological understanding of the following topics:

- **LO 1.** The concepts of hazards, risks, disasters, vulnerability, and resiliency;
- **LO 2.** Various types of disasters and their impact on society;
- **LO 3.** The importance of addressing the needs of the populations affected by a disaster;
- **LO 4.** The key actors in the disaster-management process, including mitigation, preparedness, response, and recovery; and
- **LO 5.** Problems associated with preparedness, response, and recovery in short- and long-term disasters in local and international settings.

4. Service Learning Designation

**Service Learning Objectives**

- **SLO 1.** To hear firsthand experiences from partners in a community recently hit by a disaster (LO3).
- **SLO 2.** To hear firsthand experiences from key stakeholders, including issues, problems and challenges local, county, state, and federal organizations face in managing disasters (LO4, LO2).
- **SLO 3.** To learn how individuals who live in the Rio Grande Valley prepared for Hurricane Harvey (LO5, LO4).
SLO 4. To apply theories and concepts in order to solve the problems, issues, and challenges community partners face in effectively managing hurricane disaster and emergencies (LO1, LO2, LO3, LO4, LO5).

SLO 5. To prepare a report that presents experiential learning and sustainable solutions, applying theories and concepts learned in the classroom to problems, issues, and challenges in effective disaster/emergency management. (LO1, LO2, LO3, LO4, LO5).

What is Service Learning?

This course is officially designated as Service Learning 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 defined, service learning differs from both internship, which emphasizes more learning than service, and volunteering, which focuses more 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 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

SOCl 6331.01, Disasters and Society, 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 the firsthand experiences of multi-community partners. These include:

1. Community partners from a recent disaster-hit area
2. Community partners from federal, and local governments in the Rio Grande Valley
3. Community partners from RGV and beyond

To learn from community members, students will conduct an empirical study which focuses on individual disaster preparedness. Based on findings, students will understand how individual community members subjectively and objectively prepare themselves for a hurricane disaster.

To provide sustainable solutions to the challenges involved in disaster preparedness, response, recovery, and mitigation, students and instructor 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. This research will be published in a peer-reviewed journal to provide our solutions to all community partners in the RGV and beyond.
The following community partners are selected.

1. **Community partners from a community recently hard hit by Hurricane Harvey**
   
   CP1, Mayor, City of Corpus Christy  
   CP2, Emergency Management Coordinator, City of Corpus Christy  
   CP3, Volunteer Coordinator, City of Rockport  
   CP4, Victims of Hurricane Harvey, City of Rockport  
   CP5, District Emergency Coordinator, City of Corpus Christi

2. **Community partners who are key stakeholders in Rio Grande Valley**
   
   CP6, Federal Coordinating Officer (FCO), FEMA  
   CP7, Senator, the Texas Senate, Texas  
   CP8, Retired General, Texas National Guard  
   CP9, Administrator, Regional Center for Public Safety Excellent, City of Pharr  
   CP10, Emergency Coordinator, City of Pharr  
   CP11, Emergency Coordinator, City of Brownsville  
   CP12, Emergency Coordinator, City of McAllen  
   CP13, Emergency Coordinator, City of Edinburg  
   CP14, Emergency Coordinator, City of Weslaco  
   CP15, Emergency Coordinator, City of Mercedes  
   CP16, Emergency Coordinator, City of Mission  
   CP17, Emergency Coordinator, City of South Padre Island  
   CP18, Emergency Coordinator, City of Corpus Christi

3. **Community partners who are from the RGV**
   
   CP19, Individuals living in RGV

**Research Study Project**

In this course, the students and instructor carry out an empirical research study in search of sustainable solutions to building hurricane disaster resiliency in the bilingual and bicultural Rio Grande Valley. A group of more than 300 community members residing in this valley are sampled, using a convenience sampling method. Students have an opportunity to engage in formal learning and service learning experiences to understand how community members prepare themselves for a hurricane disaster. Detailed information on this research study will be provided in the first day of the class.
### Hours of service to community

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Service learning activities</th>
<th>Hours</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>CP1, Mayor, the City of Corpus Christy</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>CP2, Emergency Management Coordinator, City of Corpus Christy</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>CP3, Volunteering Coordinator, City of Rockport</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>CP4, Victims of Hurricane Harvey, the City of Rockport</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>CP5, District Emergency Coordinator, the City of Corpus Christi</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>CP6, Federal Coordinating Officer, FEMA</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>CP7, Senator, Texas Senate, Texas</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>CP8, Retired General, Texas National Guard</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>CP9, Administrator, Emergency Training Center, City of Pharr</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>CP10, Emergency Coordinator, City of Pharr</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>CP11, Emergency Coordinator, City of Brownsville</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>CP12, Emergency Coordinator, City of McAllen</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>CP13, Emergency Coordinator, City of Edinburg</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>CP14, Emergency Coordinator, City of Weslaco</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>CP15, Emergency Coordinator, City of Mercedes</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>CP16, Emergency Coordinator, City of Mission</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>CP17, Emergency Coordinator, City of South Padre Island</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>Reflection of service learning</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>Preparing report</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Total hours of community service** 28

### Field Trips

**Date:** 9/18/2018  
**Time:** 9:00 am ~ 12:00 am  
**Place:** Regional Center for Public Safety Excellent

**Date:** 10/23/2018  
**Time:** 7:20pm~8:10pm  
**Place:** Emergency Operation Center, City of Edinburg

**Date:** 00/11/2018 (TBA)  
**Time:** 6:00am~6:00pm  
**Place:** Emergency Operation Center, City of Corpus Christi & City of Rockport

### Reflection Incorporated into Course Assignments

Students incorporate their reflections of what they learned from community partners as they generate sustainable solutions to enhance disaster resiliency in the RGV, explaining how to
overcome problems, issues, and challenges related to disaster preparedness, response, recovery, and mitigation. In their solutions, the students demonstrate integration of their service learning. Together, students and instructor collect data and write a research article which integrates empirical findings, service learning experiences, and theoretical application. To disseminate the solutions to all key stakeholders, the article will be published in a peer-reviewed journal.

5. Grading Policies

**Grade points:** This course consists of face-to-face lectures, small group discussions, service learning, conducting research, and preparing reflection reports. There are three elements that contribute to your grade: exams, assignments, and class participation. The point distribution for the class activities is as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Activities</th>
<th>Points</th>
<th>Percent Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Service learning lecture attendance</td>
<td>110</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Service learning field trip attendance</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Class attendance</td>
<td>160</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Reflection reports</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>19%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Weekly evaluation</td>
<td>160</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Literature review assignment</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Sampling, data collection, and paper writing</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>1030</strong></td>
<td><strong>100%</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**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 1030 points) and is as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Point Value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>927-1030</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>824-927</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>721-824</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>618-721</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>&lt;617</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Your grade:** Your grade in this course will reflect your efforts in class participation, required reading, and 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 three 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, non-academic circumstances. These circumstances will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis, and are limited to significant illness or other emergency conditions beyond your control.

**Grade appeals:** If you think your exam or assignment is not graded correctly, you must make an appeal within two 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 “SOCl 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 courtesey 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, may not be used in class. All electronic devices need to be on silent mode 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 practical knowledge of disaster management, three guest speakers from local, county, and federal agencies and non-governmental organizations will be invited to speak throughout the course, providing their real-world expertise in the disaster-management field. They will provide a 45-minute presentation on a topic relevant to the course. These topics and dates will be announced as they become finalized.

**Exams:** There are no exams in this course.

**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.

7. **Calendar of Activities**

Week 1 (8/28/2018)

**Introduction to Disaster Response and Recovery**

Chapter 1 “Knowing What to Expect”

- Overview of course
- The nature of disasters
- The need for response and recovery operations
Week 2 (9/4/2018)

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

Reading assignment:

Service learning from a community partner from a local government:
Daniel Ramirez, Communications Director /Deputy Emergency Management Coordinator, City of Pharr
Topic: Mitigation and Responding Disasters and Emergencies in City of Pharr, Texas
Time: 7:20pm~8:10pm

Week 3 (9/11/2018)

Myths, Exaggerations and Realities
Chapter 3 “Anticipating Human Behavior in Disasters”
- The impact of Hollywood and media portrayals
- Research about myths
- How people actually react


Service learning from a community partner from a local government:
Jarrett Sheldon, Emergency Management Coordinator, City of Brownsville
Topic: Mitigation and Responding Disasters and Emergencies in City of Brownsville, Texas
Time: 7:20pm~8:10pm

Week 4 (9/18/2018)

Management Approaches
Chapter 4 “Recognizing Alternative Response and Recovery Approaches”
- The traditional approach
- The professional approach
- Comparing the two models

Service learning from a community partner from a local government:
**Jeff Johnston**, Assistant City Manager and Assistant Emergency Management Coordinator, City of McAllen
Topic: Mitigation and Responding Disasters and Emergencies in City of McAllen, Texas
Time: 7:20pm~8:10pm

Week 5 (9/25/2018)

_This class is delivered online. Dr. Kyne will participate in a conference hosted by NSF in another state in this week._

**Generic Functions**
Chapter 5 “Implementing Initial Response Measures”
- Hazard detection
- Warning
- Evacuation and sheltering


Week 6 (10/2/2018)

_No Class: Dr. Kyne will participate in an international conference hosted by IAEA in another country in this week._

_A Make-up class is scheduled on Week 15 (12/04/2018)_

Week 7 (10/09/2018)

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


Service learning from a community partner from a state government:
**State Senator Juan Hinojosa, Member of Texas Senate**, City of McAllen
Topic: Mitigation and Responding Disasters and Emergencies in Texas
Time: 7:20pm~8:10pm
Week 8 (10/16/2018)

**Generic Functions (cont.)**
Chapter 7 “Managing Public Information, Donations and Volunteers”
- Communicating with the media
- Accepting donations
- Working with volunteers
- Exam 1 review


Service learning from a community partner from a local government:
**Billy Delgado**, Emergency Management Coordinator, City of Corpus Christi
Topic: Mitigation and Responding Disasters and Emergencies in City of Corpus Christi, Texas
Time: 7:20pm~8:10pm

Week 9 (10/23/2018)

**Generic Functions (cont.)**
Chapter 9 “Promoting Recovery and Mitigation”
- Individual and public assistance
- Fraud, historic buildings and the environment
- Reducing vulnerability after disaster


Service learning from a community partner from a local government:
**Shawn Michael Snider**, Fire Chief, Edinburg Fire Department, City of Edinburg
Topic: Mitigation and Responding Disasters and Emergencies in City of Edinburg, Texas
Time: 7:20pm~8:10pm
Place: Emergency Operation Center, the City of Edinburg

*Note: After the service learning hours, the class will continue at the City’s EOC room for the remaining hours until 9:50 pm.*
Week 10 (10/30/2018)

**Expected Problems**
Chapter 10 “Overcoming Typical Challenges”
- Decision making, transportation and politics
- Special populations, communication and coordination
- Legal issues and record keeping

Service learning from a community partner from a local government:
**Chief Doug Fowler**, Emergency Management Coordinator, City of South Padre Island
Topic: Mitigation and Responding Disasters and Emergencies in City of South Padre Island, Texas
Time: 7:20pm~8:10pm

Week 11 (11/06/2018)

**Using Tools and Strategies**
Chapter 11 “Harnessing Technology and Organization”
- Technology in emergency management
- Incident command, emergency operations centers and mutual aid


Service learning from a community partner from a local government:
**Antonio Lopez**, Fire Chief/Emergency Management Coordinator, City of Weslaco
Topic: Mitigation and Responding Disasters and Emergencies in City of Weslaco, Texas
Time: 7:20pm~8:10pm

Week 12 (11/13/2018)

**Interorganizational Coordination**
- EMAC, NIMS and the National Response Plan


Service learning from a community partner from a federal organization:
**Dr. Kenneth W. Wisian**, Retired Major General, Texas National Guard
Topic: Mitigation and Responding Disasters and Emergencies in Texas
Time: 7:20pm~8:10pm
Week 13 (11/20/2018)

**Looking to the Future**
Chapter 12 “Foreseeing the Future”
- The interaction of hazards and new threats
- Rising vulnerability


Week 14 (11/27/2018)

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


Service learning from a community partner from a local government:
**Tommy Ureste**, Fire Chief/Emergency Management Coordinator, City of Mercedes
Topic: Mitigation and Responding Disasters and Emergencies in City of Mercedes, Texas
Time: 7:20pm~8:10pm

Week 15 (12/04/2018)

**Generic Functions (cont.)**
Chapter 8 “Moving Beyond Immediate Needs”
- Damage assessment
- Disaster declarations
- Debris removal


Service learning from a community partner from a local government:
**James Cardoza**, Emergency Management Coordinator, City of Mission
**Topic:** Mitigation and Responding Disasters and Emergencies in City of Mission, Texas
**Time:** 7:20pm–8:10pm

**Week 16 (12/11/2018)**

**Conclusions**
- Reviews on chapters
- Reviews on reflections on service learning
- Reviews on research study

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:** 7:20pm–8:10pm

8. **UGRTV policy statements**

**STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES:** Students with a documented disability (physical, psychological, learning, or other disability which affects academic performance) who would like to receive academic accommodations should contact **Student Accessibility Services (SAS)** as soon as possible to schedule an appointment to initiate services. Accommodations can be arranged through SAS at any time, but are not retroactive. Students who suffer a broken bone, severe injury or undergo surgery during the semester are eligible for temporary services.

**Pregnancy, Pregnancy-related, and Parenting Accommodations**
Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 prohibits sex discrimination, which includes discrimination based on pregnancy, marital status, or parental status. Students seeking accommodations related to pregnancy, pregnancy-related condition, or parenting (reasonably immediate postpartum period) are encouraged to contact Student Accessibility Services for additional information and to request accommodations.

**Student Accessibility Services:**
**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 (http://my.utrgv.edu); 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 on or about:
Module 1  October 4 – 10
Module 2  November 29 – December 5
Full Fall Semester  November 15 – December 5

**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 (including self-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](http://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 that is free from sexual misconduct and discrimination.

**COURSE DROPS:** Recommended on all syllabi; may be modified by the instructor as long as it is not inconsistent with UTRGV policy. 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 “3PEAT 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.

**STUDENT SERVICES:** Students who demonstrate financial need have a variety of options when it comes to paying for college costs, such as scholarships, grants, loans and work-study.
Students should visit the Students Services Center (U Central) for additional information. U Central is located in BMAIN 1.100 (Brownsville) or ESSBL 1.145 (Edinburg) or can be reached by email (ucentral@utrgv.edu) or telephone: (888) 882-4026. In addition to financial aid, U Central can assist students with registration and admissions.

Students seeking academic help in their studies can use university resources in addition to an instructor’s office hours. University Resources include the Learning Center, Writing Center, Advising Center and Career Center. The centers provide services such as tutoring, writing help, critical thinking, study skills, degree planning, and student employment. Locations are:

- Learning center: BSTUN 2.10 (Brownsville) or ELCTR 100 (Edinburg)
- Writing center: BLIBR 3.206 (Brownsville) or ESTAC 3.119 (Edinburg)
- Advising center: BMAIN 1.400 (Brownsville) or ESWKH 101 (Edinburg)
- Career center: BCRTZ 129 (Brownsville) or ESSBL 2.101 (Edinburg)

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