

**STATE UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK  
COLLEGE OF TECHNOLOGY  
CANTON, NEW YORK**



**MASTER SYLLABUS**

**SOCI 325 – SOCIOLOGY OF DISASTER**

**Created by: DANIEL N MCLANE, Ph.D.**

**SCHOOL OF BUSINESS AND LIBERAL ARTS  
SOCIAL SCIENCES DEPARTMENT  
FALL 2020**

- A. **TITLE:** SOCIOLOGY OF DISASTER
- B. **COURSE NUMBER:** SOCI 325
- C. **CREDIT HOURS:** 3
- D. **WRITING INTENSIVE COURSE:** No
- E. **GER CATEGORY:** None
- F. **SEMESTER(S) OFFERED:** Fall and Spring
- G. **COURSE DESCRIPTION:**

The foundational premise of this course is that disasters are social in nature; revealing, or exacerbating, existing social inequalities. Analyzing a series of case studies using methodology from classical and contemporary sociology this course prepares students to better understand, plan for, and respond to disasters. The course uses a problem-based learning model in which students work in small groups to help a particular community prepare for a particular hazard.

- H. **PRE-REQUISITES/CO-REQUISITES:** None
- I. **STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES:**

<b><u>Course Student Learning Outcome [SLO]</u></b>	<b><u>PSLO</u></b>	<b><u>GER</u></b>	<b><u>ISLO</u></b>
a. Identify particular data as essential for policy formation in multiple case studies of disaster.			2 [IA]
b. Compare differences in community response to disasters as a correlate of community perception of the disaster's origin as human vs. non.			2 [CA]
c. Compare responses to disaster case studies occurring within US vs. those requiring international response; specifically using Haiti as a case study.			4 [GL]
d. Evaluate differential preparation for, and response to, disaster along lines of stratification.			4[GL]
e. Apply theoretical frames from classical and contemporary sociology to understand disaster from multiple perspectives.			2[CA]

<b>KEY</b>	<b><u>Institutional Student Learning Outcomes</u></b> <b>[ISLO 1 – 5]</b>
<b>ISLO #</b>	<b>ISLO &amp; Subsets</b>
<b>1</b>	<b>Communication Skills</b> Oral [O], Written [W]
<b>2</b>	<b>Critical Thinking</b> <i>Critical Analysis [CA] , Inquiry &amp; Analysis [IA] , Problem Solving [PS]</i>
<b>3</b>	<b>Foundational Skills</b> <i>Information Management [IM], Quantitative Lit./Reasoning [QTR]</i>
<b>4</b>	<b>Social Responsibility</b> <i>Ethical Reasoning [ER], Global Learning [GL], Intercultural Knowledge [IK], Teamwork [T]</i>
<b>5</b>	<b>Industry, Professional, Discipline Specific Knowledge and Skills</b>

**J. APPLIED LEARNING COMPONENT:** No

**K. TEXTS:**

Erikson, Kai. 1994. *A New Species of Trouble: The Human Experience of Modern Disasters*. New York: W. W. Norton and Company.

Klinenberg, Eric. 2002. *Heat Wave: A Social Autopsy of Disaster in Chicago*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

**L. REFERENCES:**

Aguirre, Benigno E., Dennis Wenger, and Gabriela Vigo. 1998. "A Test of the Emergent Norm Theory of Collective Behavior." *Sociological Forum* 13:301-320.

Baker, EJ. 1991. "Hurricane Evacuation Behavior." *International Journal of Mass Emergency* 9(2):287-310.

Barry, J. M. (2004). *The great influenza: The epic story of the deadliest plague in history*. New York: Viking.

Bolin, R. and D. J. Klenow. 1983. "Response of the Elderly to Disaster - an Age-Stratified Analysis." *International Journal of Aging & Human Development* 16(4):283-96.

Cutter, Susan L., Bryan J. Boruff, and W. Lynn Shirley. 2003. "Social Vulnerability to Environmental Hazards." *Social Science Quarterly* 84(2): 242-261.

Dunlap, Riley E and Robert J Brulle. 2015. *Climate Change and Society: Sociological Perspectives*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press

Dyson, Michael Eric. 2006. *Come Hell or High Water: Hurricane Katrina and the Color of Disaster*. New York: Basic Civitas Books.

Erikson, Kai T. 1976. *Everything in Its Path: Destruction of Community in the Buffalo Creek Flood*. New York: Simon & Schuster.

Elliott, James R. and Jeremy Pais. 2006. "Race, Class, and Hurricane Katrina: Social Differences in Human Responses to Disaster." *Social Science Research* 35(2):295-321.

Farmer, P., Gardner, A. M., Hoof, H. C., & Mukherjee, J. (2011). *Haiti after the earthquake*. New York: PublicAffairs.

- FEMA. 2009. "National Disaster Housing Strategy and Annexes." Vol. Washington, DC: Federal Emergency Management Agency.
- FEMA. 2010. "National Disaster Recovery Framework." Vol. Washington, DC: Federal Emergency Management Agency.
- FEMA. 2011. "A Whole Community Approach to Emergency Management: Principles, Themes, and Pathways for Action." Washington, DC: Federal Emergency Management Agency
- Fischer, Henry W., III. 1998. *Response to Disaster: Fact Versus Fiction and It's Perpetuation*. Lanham, Maryland: University Press of America, Inc
- Freudenburg, William R., Robert Gramling, Shirley Laska, and Kai Erikson. 2009. *Catastrophe in the Making: The Engineering of Katrina and the Disasters of Tomorrow*. Washington, DC: Island Press.
- Godderis, R. and Rossiter, K. (2013), 'If you have a soul, you will volunteer at once': gendered expectations of duty to care during pandemics. *Sociology of Health & Illness*, 35: 304-308.
- Hasegawa, K. (2012). Facing nuclear risks: Lessons from the Fukushima nuclear disaster. *International Journal of Japanese Sociology*, 21(1), 84-91.
- Hopkins, A. (2001), Was Three Mile Island a 'Normal Accident'?. *Journal of Contingencies and Crisis Management*, 9: 65-72
- James, C. L. R. (1963). *The Black Jacobins: Toussaint L'Ouverture and the San Domingo Revolution*. New York: Vintage Books.
- Katz, J. M. (2013). *The big truck that went by: How the world came to save Haiti and left behind a disaster*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Kishore, N., Marqués, D., Mahmud, A., Kiang, M. V., Rodriguez, I., Fuller, A., et al. (2018). Mortality in Puerto Rico after Hurricane Maria. *The New England Journal of Medicine*, 379(2), 162–170
- Mitchell, Jerry T., Deborah S.K. Thomas, Arleen A. Hill and Susan L. Cutter. 2000. "Catastrophe in Reel Life Versus Real Life: Perpetuating Disaster Myth Through Hollywood Films". *International Journal of Mass Emergencies and Disasters* 18:383-402.
- Nesvetajlov, G.A. (1992). Chernobyl from the point of view of disaster sociology. *Vestnik Rossijskoj Akademii Nauk*, (4), 54-64.
- Peek, Lori and Jeannette N. Sutton. 2003. "An Exploratory Comparison of Disasters, Riots, and Terrorist Acts." *Disasters* 27(4): 319-335.
- Quarantelli, E. L. 1987. "Disaster Studies: An Analysis of the Social Historical Factors Affecting the Development of Research in the Area." *International Journal of Mass Emergencies and Disasters* 5(3): 285-310.
- Rodriguez, H., & Mora, M. (2020, September 28). Hurricane Maria: Disaster Response in Puerto Rico. *Oxford Research Encyclopedia of Politics*. Retrieved 25 Oct. 2020
- Taylor, R.C. (2013), The politics of securing borders and the identities of disease. *Sociology of Health & Illness*, 35: 241-254.
- Tierney, K.J. Toward a Critical Sociology of Risk. *Sociological Forum* 14, 215–242 (1999).
- Tierney, Kathleen. 2014. *The Social Roots of Risk: Producing Disasters, Promoting Resilience*. Stanford, CA: Stanford Business Books.
- Trías, M. J. 1997. *Puerto Rico: The trials of the oldest colony in the world*. New Haven [Conn.: Yale University Press.

Van Willigen, Marieke, Terri Edwards, Bob Edwards, and Shawn Hesse. 2002. "Riding Out the Storm: Experiences of the Physically Disabled during Hurricanes Bonnie, Dennis, and Floyd." *Natural Hazards Review* 3(3): 98-106.

Wilkinson, Iain and Arthur Kleinman. 2016. *A Passion for Society: How We Think about Human Suffering*. Oakland: University of California Press

Will, Catherine A. 'And breathe...'? The sociology of health and illness in COVID- 19 time, *Sociology of Health & Illness*, 10.1111/1467-9566.13110, **42**, 5, (967-971), (2020).

M. **EQUIPMENT:** University Supplied Equipment

N. **GRADING METHOD:** A – F

O. **MEASUREMENT CRITERIA/METHODS:**

Quizzes of essential data, exams of synthetic and summative knowledge, and group discussion and collaboration in a problem-based learning model.

P. **DETAILED COURSE OUTLINE:**

- I. Essentials of Sociology
  - A. Classical Theories
    - a. Marx – Conflict perspective
    - b. Durkheim- Structural functionalism
    - c. Weber- Bureaucratization
  - B. Contemporary Theories
    - a. Mead- symbolic interaction
    - b. Feminist and intersectional theory
- II. Heat Wave
  - A. Chicago Case Study
    - a. Defining the disaster- methodological difficulties
  - B. Methodological Innovations
    - a. Establishing a "baseline"
    - b. Determining cause of death
  - C. Implications of climate change for heat waves
    - a. Increasing incidents of heat waves, compare with France 2003 and 2019
  - D. Age, Gender, Isolation and Disasters
    - a. Explore data of disproportionate older male deaths
    - b. Theory of social cohesion and disproportionate Black versus Hispanic
- III. Disaster Studies
  - A. History of Disaster Research United States
    - a. Cold war context
    - b. Role of government research
    - c. Department of Defense and climate change
  - B. Social Construction of Disaster
    - a. Media and spectacle theory
    - b. Conflict perspective of definitions
  - C. Natural vs Non-Natural Disasters
    - a. Role of media
    - b. Role of government

- D. Disaster Response Cycle US Model
  - a. FEMA Training
  - Superstorm Sandy Critique of Response

## VI. Hurricane

- A. Puerto Rico 2018
  - a. History of Puerto Rico
  - b. History of dependency
  - c. Role of corruption and failed infrastructure
  - d. National government response
  - e. Mental Health and Disasters
  - f. Political change following Maria response
- B. New Orleans 2005
  - a. History of New Orleans
  - b. Basics of race as social construct
  - c. Role of media
  - d. Role of city government
  - e. Role of national government
  - f. Data on poverty and networks
  - g. Disaster as opportunity – the rebuilding of a new city
- C. Race and Disaster
  - a. Lessons learned from US disasters
  - b. Lessons learned from international disasters

## IV. Earthquake

- A. Haiti 2010 Case Study
  - a. Basics of international development
  - b. Basics of Haitian history
  - c. Role of dependency in disaster preparation
  - d. Role of national government
  - e. Role of international aid
  - f. Problem of competing bureaucracy
  
- B. Competing Bureaucracies and Disaster
  - a. Basics of NGOs and fundraising
  - b. Links to Weberian analysis
  - c. Implications for US context

## V. Unnatural Disasters

- A. Nuclear Disaster –
  - a. Chernobyl vs Three Mile Island – Communication and Governance
  - b. Fukushima and Black Swan Concept
  - c. Risk Society

## VI. Pandemic

- A. Disease and demography
  - a. Life expectancy and medicine
  - b. Measuring risk
- B. International response to outbreaks
  - a. Strengths and weaknesses of international system.
  - b. 1918 Pandemic and war
- D. COVID 19

- VI. A More Dangerous World
  - A. Climate Change
    - a. Basics of climate change
    - b. Threat multiplier concept US national security
    - c. Migration and climate change
    - d. Drought, famine and disasters
    - e. International response
  - B. Responding to the Threat
    - a. International governance
    - b. National governance and preparation
    - c. Local governance and preparation

Q. **LABORATORY OUTLINE:** N/A