

## **Sociology of Disasters**

Sociology 4240 (Spring 2007)  
Blair Hall 3103  
Mondays 6-8:30 pm  
Sociology & Anthropology  
Eastern Illinois University

Professor: Dr. William E. Lovekamp  
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Office: Blair Hall 3140  
Office Hours: M & W 1-2:30;  
T & Th 11-12 and/or by appt.

### **Required text:**

Fischer, Henry W. 1998. *Response to Disaster: Fact Versus Fiction & Its Perpetuation*.  
2nd Edition. Lanham, Maryland: University Press of America. ISBN: 0761811834.

...and additional articles available on WebCT.

### **Course Description:**

This course provides an introduction to sociological aspects of disasters. This course will focus on major theoretical and methodological approaches that are used to study the social aspects of disasters and hazards. We will examine human response to disaster events and factors that influence vulnerability. We will also think about how individuals and institutions make and influence policy decisions at all levels. In sum, the objective of this course is to understand how and why disasters are social events, debunk myths about human behavior in disasters, examine unequal social consequences that stem from disasters, understand the relationship between disasters and theory and examine the relationship between action and policy in all phases of the disaster process.

### **Class Format:**

This course is designed as a seminar centered on lectures, reading and extensive class discussion. Students are expected to come to class prepared to participate in the discussion; therefore, it is very important that you keep up with your readings. As your exams are based partly on your readings, it is to your extreme disadvantage to consider the readings optional. At times, guest speakers and video presentations may also be used to supplement the readings and the overall learning experience.

### **Class Policies:**

As with any course, class discussion may, at times, concern controversial issues. Students are expected to respect the viewpoints expressed by others. If you disagree with what someone has said, you are encouraged to express your disagreement but are expected to do so in a civil, respectful, and polite manner. Failure to comply will result in a dismissal from the course.

### **Classroom Etiquette:**

Attendance/tardiness -You are expected to attend class regularly. Attendance is of critical importance as lectures will supplement textbook readings and provide additional information that cannot be gathered by reading the text. Excessive absences from class will negatively affect your final course grade. Furthermore, you should come to class on time. Walking into class late is disrespectful to both your instructor and your fellow students and will not be tolerated. Also, turn off all electronic devices (i.e. cell phones) before entering the classroom! Any **absences beyond 2**

**will result in a 10% reduction** in your final course grade for each additional absence (This means a one letter grade reduction per absence greater than 4).

Plagiarism - You should be aware of plagiarism in every paper or assignment you write. Plagiarism is the use, without adequate attribution, of another person's words or thoughts as if they were ones' own. You will receive a zero for any work that has been plagiarized to any extent and documentation will be filed with the Judicial Affairs office as a violation of the student code of conduct which could result in being expelled from EIU.

Readings - I will not discuss everything that your texts cover. I see no point in simply telling you what your book has already told you. However, you are responsible for all of the information I ask you to read. This means that if you read something that you do not understand, it is up to you to ask me for clarification. We will use class time to discuss and build on the readings. I write each lecture with the assumption that you have read the assigned readings for the day. In order to follow the lecture and participate in the class discussions it will be necessary to do the readings before coming to class.

#### **V. Evaluation:**

Midterm Exam	50 pts.	A= 210-189
Final Exam	60 pts.	B = 188-168
Homeworks	20 pts.	C = 167-147
Essay Assignments	30 pts.	D = 146-126
<u>Content Analysis Paper</u>	<u>50 pts.</u>	<u>F = 125-0</u>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>210 pts.</b>	

#### **Assignments:**

Using WebCT for this class is expected. I will not generally distribute class materials (articles, homework, exams, etc.) in paper format. Instead, all materials will be accessible on the class WebCT site and you are responsible for checking and obtaining all relevant information. Also, any assigned work to be turned in must be typed or word-processed. Handwritten work will not be accepted in this course.

Homework assignments: You will have to submit 2 homework assignments during the semester and have three possible homework options to choose from. These are small synthesis papers approximately two pages in length. Guidelines will be provided in class. Late homework assignments are not accepted.

Content Analysis Essay & Assignments: You will research a natural, technological, or conflict based disaster, as well as a specific population or social issue in the context of that event. Based upon your research, you will complete 4 content analysis essay assignments and write an essay not to exceed 10 pages in which you will summarize the consequences of the disaster, analyze 20 newspaper articles covering the event, and review some of the literature related to the population or social issue you are examining. Detailed essay guidelines and grading criteria will be distributed and discussed in class.

Exams: There will be a midterm and final exam. The exams will consist primarily of short answer and essay questions. You will be required to draw upon your readings, lectures, class discussions, and video's/guest lectures to answer the questions fully. Exams will not be given early or late, and no make-up exams will be given.

**Disabilities Statement**

Students with documented disabilities are encouraged to contact the Office of Disability Services (581-6583) if they wish to discuss any necessary academic accommodations.

**Medical Emergency Statement**

For medical emergencies, go to the nearest phone and call 911. All faculty offices have telephones and during normal business hours (8-12 and 1-4:30), the Sociology Office (Blair 3170) is open. Be sure to state the floor and room number of the emergency to the 911 operator. If possible, someone should go to the central entrance of Blair Hall to direct EMS personnel to the medical emergency scene. If the medical emergency is on the second or third floor, someone else should hold the elevator on the first floor for EMS use.

**Tornado Statement**

In case of a tornado warning, proceed to the center of the hallway on the first floor, near the posted severe weather signs. Under no circumstances should you attempt to leave the building.

**Building Fire Statement**

In case of fire, activate the fire alarm and exit the building. When a fire alarm sounds, everyone must exit the building and cannot re-enter the building until allowed by the building coordinator or fire department official. Fire alarms are located at the north and south ends of the corridors just inside the fire doors. The closes exits for all classrooms in Blair are on the north and south ends of the building. Under no circumstance should the elevator be used. Group assembly areas for all classes in Blair are either on the patio area between Blair and Old Main or on the southeast corner of the North Quad. As you exit the building, continue moving well away from the exits so that you do not impede the egress of other students or the work of fire officials. Move a safe distance away from the building.

**CLASS OUTLINE:****Week 1 (Jan 8): History of Disaster Research**

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**Week 2 (Jan 15): NO CLASS: Martin Luther King Jr. Day Observed**

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**Week 3 (Jan 22): Sociological Study of Disasters**

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**\*Content Analysis Essay Assignment 1 Due**

Fischer Chapter 1 (1-10)

Fritz, Charles E. 1961. "Disaster" Pp. 651-657, 682-694 in *Contemporary Social Problems*, edited by Robert K. Merton and R.A. Nisbet. New York: Harcourt, Brace, & World.

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.

Kreps, Gary A. 1984. "Sociological Inquiry and Disaster Research." *Annual Review of Sociology* 10: 309-330.

#### **Week 4 (Jan 29): Methods of Disaster Research**

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Killian, Lewis M. 2002. "An Introduction to Methodological Problems of Field Studies In Disasters." Pp 49-93 in *Methods of Disaster Research*, edited by Robert A. Stallings. Xlibris.

Michaels, Sarah. 2003. "Perishable Information, Enduring Insights? Understanding Quick Response Research." Pp. 15-48 in *Beyond September 11: An Account of Post-Disaster Research*, edited by Jacquelyn L. Monday. Boulder: Institute of Behavioral Science, University of Colorado.

#### **Week 5 (Feb 5): Theories of Disaster Research**

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

Stallings, Robert A. 1995. *Promoting Risk: Constructing the Earthquake Threat*. New York: Aldine De Gruyter: Pp. 19-33.

Peacock, Walter Gillis with A. Kathleen Ragsdale. 1997. "Social Systems, Ecological Networks, and Disasters." Pp. 20-35 in *Hurricane Andrew: Ethnicity, Gender, and the Sociology of Disasters*, edited by W.G. Peacock, B.H. Morrow, and H. Gladwin. New York: Routledge.

#### **Week 6 (Feb 12): Myths and Realities of Disasters**

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##### **\*Homework Assignment 1 (Disaster Myths) Due**

Fischer Chapters 2 (13-35) & 3 (37-87)

#### **Week 7 (Feb 19): Popular Culture of Disasters**

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##### **\*Content Analysis Essay Assignment 2 Due**

Tierney, Kathleen, Christine Bevc, and Erica Kuligowski. 2006. "Metaphors Matter: Disaster Myths, Media Frames, and Their Consequences in Hurricane Katrina." Pp 57-81 in *Shelter from the Storm: Repairing the National Emergency Management System after Hurricane Katrina*, edited by William L. Waugh Jr. Thousand Oaks: Sage.

Couch, Steven R. 2000. "The Cultural Scene of Disasters: Conceptualizing the Field of Disasters and Popular Culture." *International Journal of Mass Emergencies and Disasters* 5(3):285-310.

Dynes, Russell R., and Havidan Rodriguez. 2005. "Finding and Framing Katrina: The Social Construction of Disaster." *Understanding Katrina: Perspectives from the Social Sciences Report*. Social Science Research Council: 1-7.

Rodrigue, Christine. 2002. "Patterns of Media Coverage of the Terrorist Attacks on the United States in September of 2001." Quick Response Report #146. Boulder: Natural Hazards Research and Applications Information Center, University of Colorado.

#### **Week 8 (Feb 26): Race/Ethnicity and Social Class Vulnerability**

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##### **\*\*\*EXAM 1 DUE!**

Dyson, Michael Eric. 2006. *Come Hell or High Water: Hurricane Katrina and the Color of Disaster*. New York: Basic Civitas Books: Pp 55-88.

Perry, Ronald W. and Michael K. Lindell. 1991. "The Effects of Ethnicity on Evacuation." *International Journal of Mass Emergencies and Disasters* 9:47-68.

### **Week 9 (March 5): Gender and Vulnerability**

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#### **\*Content Analysis Essay Assignment 3 Due**

Enarson, Elaine. 1999. Violence Against Women In Disasters: A Study of Domestic Violence Programs in the United States and Canada." *Violence Against Women* 5(7): 742-768.

Eads, Marci. 2002. "Marginalized Groups in Times of Crisis: Identity, Needs, and Response." Quick Response Report #152. Boulder: Natural Hazards Research and Applications Information Center, University of Colorado.

Fordham, Maureen and Anne-Michelle Ketteridge. 1998. "Men Must Work and Women Must Weep: Examining Gender Stereotypes in Disasters." Pp 81-94 in *The Gendered Terrain of Disaster: Through Women's Eyes*, edited by E. Enarson and B. H. Morrow. Westport, CT: Praeger.

### **March 12-16: SPRING BREAK**

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### **Week 10 (March 19): Intersection of Race/Class/Gender**

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#### **\*Homework Assignment 2 (Disaster Vulnerability) Due**

Enarson, Elaine and Maureen Fordham. 2001. "Lines that Divide, Ties that Bind: Race, Class and Gender in Women's Flood Recovery in the U.S. and U.K." *Australian Journal of Emergency Management* 15(2): 15-32.

Peek, Lori A. 2002. "Religious And Ethnic Issues After September 11, 2001: Examining Muslim University Student Experiences." Quick Response Report #156. Boulder: Natural Hazards Research and Applications Information Center, University of Colorado.

### **Week 11 (March 26): Disasters, Language, Age, and Disability**

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#### **\*Content Analysis Essay Assignment 4 Due**

Klinenberg, Eric. 2001. "Dying Alone: The Social Production of Urban Isolation." *Ethnography* 2(4): 501-531.

Aguirre, Benigno E. 1988. "The Lack of Warnings Before the Saragosa Tornado." *International Journal of Mass Emergencies and Disasters* 6(1): 65-74.

Adamson, Robert. 1996. "Disabled and Disasters." *Emergency Preparedness Digest* 23(4): 15-17.

Peek, Lori and Alice Fothergill. 2006. "Reconstructing Childhood: An Exploratory Study of Children in Hurricane Katrina." Quick Response Report #186. Boulder: Natural Hazards Research and Applications Information Center, University of Colorado.

### **Week 12 (April 2): Community Preparedness and Response**

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#### **Homework Assignment 3 (Disaster Response) Due \*\*if you did not submit 1 & 2 already**

Fischer Chapter 4 (90-163)

Perry, Ronald W. & Michael K. Lindell. 2003. "Preparedness for Emergency Response." *Disasters* 27(4): 336-350.

Simpson, David M. 2002. "Earthquake Drills & Simulations in Community-based Training & Preparedness Programs." *Disasters* 26(1): 55-69.

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**Week 13 (April 9): Technological Disasters & Terrorism**

Erikson, Kai. 1994. *A New Species of Trouble: The Human Experience of Modern Disasters*. New York: W.W. Norton and Company. Pp 139-157.

Freudenburg, William R. and Timothy R. Jones. 1991. "Attitudes and Stress in the Presence of Technological Risk." *Social Forces* 69(4): 1143-1168.

Kendra, James and Tricia Watchendorf. 2003. "Creativity in Emergency Response to the World Trade Center Disaster." Pp. 121-146 in *Beyond September 11: An Account of Post-Disaster Research*, edited by Jacquelyn L. Monday. Boulder: Institute of Behavioral Science, University of Colorado.

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**Week 14 (April 16): Disaster recovery; The U. S. hazard policy system**

**\*Content Analysis Essay Paper Due**

Perrow, Charles. 2006. "The Disaster after 9/11: The Department of Homeland Security and The Intelligence Reorganization." *Homeland Security Affairs* 2(1): 1-32.

Tierney, Kathleen. 2005. "The Red Pill." Understanding Katrina: Perspectives from the Social Sciences Report. Social Science Research Council: 1-6.

Department of Homeland Security. 2003. "A Guide to the Disaster Declaration Process." DHS Emergency Preparedness and Response Directorate Report #202-646-4500. Office of Legislative Affairs: 1-6.

Federal Emergency Management Agency. 2004. "Help After a Disaster." *FEMA Applicants Guide to the Individuals & Households Program*: 1-24.

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**Week 15 (April 23): Recovery and Social Change**

Fischer Chapter 5 (166-198)

Riad, Jasmin K. and Fran H. Norris. 1996. "The Influence of Relocation on the Environmental, Social, and Psychological Stress Experienced by Disaster Victims." *Environment and Behavior* 28(2): 163-182.

Monday, Jacquelyn L. 2005. "Promoting Social and Intergenerational Equity During Disaster Recovery." Pp. 1-29 in *Holistic Disaster Recovery: Ideas for Building Local Sustainability After a Natural Disaster*. Boulder: Natural Hazards Research and Applications Information Center, University of Colorado.

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**Week 16 (April 30 - May 4): FINALS WEEK**

**FINAL EXAM: Monday April 30, 7:30pm – 9:30pm Blair 3103**

\*\*\*All Additional Readings will be posted on WebCT.

\*\*\*This syllabus serves as a contract between the student and instructor and the student is responsible for all information contained within this syllabus. This syllabus may be amended and any changes that the instructor deems necessary will be announced in class.