

**SOC 4240**

**Sociology of Disasters**

**Spring 2021**

Tuesday & Thursday 2:00 - 3:15 p.m. Blair Hall 1165

Department of Sociology, Anthropology, and Criminology, Eastern Illinois University

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Office: Blair Hall 3151  
Office Hours: T, Th 12:45-1:45,  
W 12:30-2:30, or by appt.

**Required Text:**

\*Thomas, Deborah S.K., Brenda D. Phillips, William E. Lovekamp & Alice Fothergill (Editors). 2013. *Social Vulnerability to Disasters*. 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition. CRC Press.

\*\*...and additional readings that are in the weekly content folders of D2L.

**Course Description & Objectives:** This course is an introduction to sociological aspects of disasters. We will focus on major theories & methods of research used to study the social aspects of disasters & hazards. We will examine human response to disasters & factors that influence vulnerability. We will also evaluate how individuals & institutions influence social policy. By the end of the course, you should be able to:

1. understand how & why disasters are social events,
2. debunk myths about human behavior in disasters,
3. examine unequal social consequences that stem from disasters,
4. understand the relationship between disasters & theory, &
5. examine the relationship between action & policy in the disaster process.

**Course Guidelines:**

1. ***Collegiality*** – We are a diverse group of people who come from different geographic regions, with different life experiences, from different family environments, with different goals and aspirations, and important views and perspectives. This is a uniquely wonderful characteristic of college. Therefore, you are expected to listen thoughtfully to others, carefully consider how you expect to be treated, and respect the viewpoints expressed by others in a courteous and polite manner. We are never going to be asked to agree with what others always say, but if you disagree with what someone has said, you are to express your disagreement in a civil, respectful, & polite manner. We will have a classroom environment that is a safe and friendly place to exchange ideas and become better critical thinkers. Failure to comply with these expectations will result in your immediate dismissal from the course.
2. ***Attendance/Participation*** – I record attendance daily. You are expected to attend every class and participate fully. You will obviously miss critical information if you have excessive absences and this will be reflected in your exam and homework grades. Also, walking into class late is disrespectful to both your professor & your colleagues & will not be tolerated.

Second, there is a formula for how much time you devote to class. For every one hour you spend in a classroom, you are expected to put in 2 hours outside of the classroom for that course. Since you spend 2 ½ hours per week in our classroom, you are expected to put in 5 hours outside of the classroom per week devoted to this course. That's right! 7.5 hours in research methods per week. Now, if you are signed up for 5 classes, then you will devote 37.5 hours per week devoted to your classes. 1/3 of that is actually sitting in the classroom. Enrolling in 15 hours of coursework is equivalent to putting in a 40 hour work week and considered a full time student). If you actually do this, you will be successful.

3. ***Additional COVID-19 Expectations***

- a. In compliance with EIU's [Return to Campus Plan](#), everyone is expected to screen themselves daily for any combination of COVID-19 symptoms. If such symptoms

- occur, including fever, chills, persistent cough, respiratory distress, or the loss of the sense(s) of smell or taste, you should not go to work, class, or interact with others.
- b. Everyone is expected to maintain appropriate social distance at all times, including in the classroom.
  - c. Clean cloth or disposable face masks must be worn in all classroom spaces and public buildings and spaces, including but not limited to all elevators, stairwells, restrooms, hallways, classrooms, labs, and studios.
  - d. Appropriately wearing a face mask includes completely covering both the nose and mouth.
  - e. Students without or who are not appropriately wearing their face masks will be prohibited from the classroom.
  - f. Should it be necessary for us to transition to 'remote learning' during the fall semester, you will be notified by email and we will continue to move forward with the course as seamlessly as possible. All material to have been delivered in lecture format will be modified and delivered remotely, when possible. All assignments will continue to be turned in and graded on our [D2L Brightspace](#) platform and any remaining exams will be administered using [D2L Brightspace](#).
4. **Readings** – I write each lecture with the expectation that you have completed the assigned readings for that day or week. We will use class time to discuss & build on the readings. Should it be necessary for us to transition to 'remote learning' during the fall semester, see 3f above. Reading is required to participate in class and for successful completion of this course.
  5. **Cell Phones/Texting/Technology** – **I ask that you turn off or silence all cell phones** before entering class & **DO NOT use them for texting** or other non-class activities. If I see someone texting or using a cell phone for non-class related things, the entire class will have a pop quiz. However, I understand that cell phones are now a part of life so I just ask you to be respectful if you need to access your phone and not distract your colleagues or me. We may even use them in class from time to time. Generally speaking, you **may NOT use laptops or tape recorders** in class unless you have approval from Disability Services, but talk to me if you prefer using a laptop to take notes instead of pen and paper.
  6. **Academic Integrity** – You are expected to maintain principles of academic integrity and conduct as defined in EIU's [Code of Conduct](#). Violations will be reported to the Office of Student Standards. **You will automatically fail the course if you submit any work that violates these principles.**
  7. **Communication** – I am always available to meet with you to discuss grades, lecture, exams or other the course matters. This semester, we need to hold 'virtual' office hours only. If this is simply not possible, please email and we will make alternative arrangements. Use the link on my [faculty webpage](#) or [email](#) to schedule your appointments. When using email in any situation, remember to be professional and show your best self; Follow standard email guidelines. 1) Put the course # in the subject line (SOC 3620), 2) include greeting (Dr. or Professor Lovekamp), 3) use standard English, write in complete sentences, avoid abbreviations and text slang (TTYL, LOL), 4)) and end with a signature (your full name). And remember, email keeps forever and is the modern form of writing a letter to someone else. You will benefit greatly from writing high quality letters.
  8. **Homework** – You will complete four written homework assignments throughout the semester. To reduce our carbon footprint and as a cost savings measure to you, you are required to submit all assignments through [D2L Brightspace](#). You will NOT submit printed copies of assignments in class. Since all homework is available well in advance of the due

date, late work is simply not accepted. This means you must plan well and plan early to complete the work. All homework is due at 9:00 a.m. on the posted due date! Of course, you can always submit assignments early.

9. **Exams** – You will have three course exams consisting of a combination of multiple choice, short answer & essay questions. You will be required to draw upon your readings, lectures, class discussions, video's, etc. to answer the questions. Exams cannot be made up. If you miss an exam on the scheduled day you will receive a zero for the assignment. During the spring term, all exams will be administered using [D2L Brightspace](#). Any deviation in this policy must be in accordance with [IGP #43](#).

<b>Course Evaluation:</b>		A= (100-90%)
Homework (4 x 30 pts)	120 pts.	B= (89-80%)
<u>Exams</u>	<u>200 pts.</u>	C= (79-70%)
TOTAL	320 pts.	D= (69-60%)
		F= (0-59%)

**Students with Disabilities Statement:** If you are a student with a documented disability in need of accommodations to fully participate in this class, please contact the Office of Student Disability Services ([OSDS](#)). All accommodations must be approved through OSDS. Please stop by Ninth Street Hall, Room 2006, or call 217-581-6583 to make an appointment.

**Medical Emergency Statement:** For medical emergencies, go to the nearest phone & call 911. Be sure to state the floor & 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 emergency is on the 2<sup>nd</sup> or 3<sup>rd</sup> 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 & exit the building. When a fire alarm sounds, everyone must exit the building & cannot re-enter the building until allowed by the building coordinator or fire department official. Fire alarms are located at the north & south ends of the corridors just inside the fire doors. The closest exits for all classrooms in Blair are on the north & 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 & 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.

**University Statement: COVID-19 Practices & Expectations on EIU's Campus:** The University is asking all of us to take precautions to prevent the spread of COVID-19, including wearing face coverings when we are in class together, walking around campus, in the library, or participating in office hours. EIU's policy is intended to protect all of us on campus, as well as the community, your roommates, and loved ones at home. Additionally, you are expected to not attend class if you are ill and to consult the student health clinic if you have any COVID-19 like symptoms. EIU's COVID-19 [campus practices](#) including face coverings, avoiding campus if sick, sanitizing surfaces, social distancing, and hand washing are based on the best available public health guidance. As a faculty member, I am responsible for ensuring that we all engage in practices that reduce risk. If you have a health condition that prevents you from wearing a mask, please contact Student Disability Services ([OSDS](#)). If you are unable to follow EIU's COVID-19 guidelines, you may be asked to leave class or office hours as compliance with public health

guidance is essential. Accommodations for instruction and make-up work will be made for students with documented medical absences according to [IGP #43](#).

## **WEEKLY READINGS, HOMEWORK, AND EXAM SCHEDULE**

### ***Week 1 (January 12 & 14): Introduction to Hazards and Disasters***

#### **Perfect Storms: Galveston Hurricane**

### ***Week 2 (January 19 & 21): History of Hazards and Disaster Research***

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

\*\*Scanlon, T. Joseph. "1988. Disaster's Little Known Pioneer: Canada's Samuel Henry Prince." *International Journal of Mass Emergencies and Disasters* 6 (3): 213-232.

### ***Week 3 (January 26 & 28): Media, Myth, and Disaster***

\*\*Sun, Lisa Grow. 2011. "Disaster Mythology and the Law." *Cornell Law Review* 96 (5): 1131-120.

\*\*Tierney, Kathleen J. 2020. "Pandemic and Disaster: Insights from Seventy Years of Social Science Disaster Research." *Social Science Research Council (Items: Insights from the Social Sciences)*.

#### **Homework Assignment 1: Social Vulnerability and Supplies (30 points due 1/29 @ 9am)**

### ***Week 4 (February 2 & 4): Risk Assessment 1***

**NO CLASS FEBRUARY 2 – PERSONAL WELLNESS DAY**

#### **Rumblings of Imminence: New Madrid Earthquake Zone**

#### **Exam 1 (50 points on 2/4)**

### ***Week 5 (February 9 & 11): Vulnerability and Resilience***

\*Social vulnerability to Disasters Chapter 1

\*\*"Warning Systems." *NOAA National Weather Service*, October 2011.

\*\*"Watches and Warnings." *NOAA National Weather Service*, October 2011.

### ***Week 6 (February 16 & 18): Risk Assessment 2***

#### **San Andreas: California Earthquake**

### ***Week 7 (February 23 & 25): Theory and Worldviews***

\*Social vulnerability to Disasters Chapter 2

\*\*Burton. 2018. "A World of Disasters. Knowing More and Losing More." *Research Counts*.

\*\* Trumbo, Craig. 2017. "Do I Stay or Do I Go? Hurricane Risk Perception and Evacuation Behavior." *Research Counts*.

## Homework Assignment 2: Myth and Media Analysis due (30 points due 2/26 @ 9am)

### ***Week 8 (March 2 & 4): Social Class in Disaster***

\*Social vulnerability to Disasters Chapter 4

\*\* Qin, June. 2018. "Preparing the Whole Community: Including Homelessness in Disaster Planning." *Research Counts*.

## Exam 2 (50 points on 3/4)

### ***Week 9 (March 9 & 11): Race and Ethnicity in Disaster***

\*Social vulnerability to Disasters Chapter 5

\*\* Peek, Lori A. 2003. "Community Isolation and Group Solidarity: Examining the Muslim Student Experience after September 11<sup>th</sup>." *Beyond September 11th: An Account of Post-Disaster Research*, edited by J.L. Monday, Pp. 333-354. Boulder, CO: Institute of Behavioral Science, University of Colorado.

### ***Week 10 (March 16 & 18): Risk Assessment 3***

**NO CLASS MARCH 18 – PERSONAL WELLNESS DAY**

## Nature's Fury & the Human Spirit

## Homework Assignment 3: Disaster Declarations (30 points due 3/19 @ 9am)

### ***Week 11 (March 23 & 25): Sex and Gender in Disaster***

\*Social vulnerability to Disasters Chapter 6

### ***Week 12 (March 30 & April 1): Age in Disaster***

\*Social vulnerability to Disasters Chapter 7

\*\* Lovekamp, William E. & Sara K. McMahon. 2011. "I Have a Snickers Bar in the Trunk of My Car: Student Narratives of Disaster Risk, Fear, Preparedness, and Reflections on Union University." *International Journal of Mass Emergencies and Disasters* 29 (2): 132-148.

\*\* Peek. 2018. "America's Deathtrap Schools." *Research Counts*.

\*\* Lai, Betty and Ann-Margaret Esnard. 2017. "Children, Distress, and Disaster: How Adults Can Help." *Research Counts*

## Exam 3 (50 points on 4/1)

### ***Week 13 (April 6 & 8): Risk Assessment 4***

Twister

## **Week 14 (April 13 & 15): Intersectionality in Disaster**

\*\*Luft, Rachel. 2017. "Beware of Recovering the Worst Parts: Race, Class, and Gender Guidelines for a Just Recovery." *Research Counts*.

\*\*Browne, Katherine. 2017. "Who Lives Here? How Understanding Culture Reduces Suffering, Speeds Recovery, and Supports Resilience." *Research Counts*.

\*\*Stough, Laura. 2017. "What Comes After Hurricane Harvey for People with Disabilities? Restoring, Recovering, and Rebuilding." *Research Counts*.

\*\*Nejat, Ali, Sherri Brokopp Binder, Alex Greer, and Medhi Jamali. 2018. "Demographics and the Dynamics of Recovery: A Latent Class Analysis of Disaster Recovery Priorities after the 2013 Moore, Oklahoma Tornado." *International Journal of Mass Emergencies and Disasters* 36(1): 23-51.

\*\*Haeffele, Stefanie and Virgil Henry Storr. 2017. "People Matter: The Social Element of Disaster Response and Recovery." *Research Counts*.

### **Homework Assignment 4: Myth and Media Analysis (30 points due 4/16 @ 9am)**

## **Week 15 (April 20 & 22): Crime in Disaster**

### **NO CLASS APRIL 22 – PERSONAL WELLNESS DAY**

\*\*Ashby, Matthew P.J. 2020. "Initial Evidence on the Relationship between the Coronavirus Pandemic and Crime in the United States." *Crime Science* 9: 1-16.

## **Week 16 (April 27 & 29): Crime in Disaster**

\*\*Van Brown, Bethany L. 2019. "Conflict or Consensus: Re-examining Crime and Disaster." *Journal of Disaster Risk Studies* 11(1): 1-4.

\*\*Frailing, Kelly and Dee Wood Harper. 2020. "Examining Postdisaster Behavior Through a Criminological Lens: A Look at Property Crime." *American Behavioral Scientist* 64(8): 1179-1195.

\*\*Weil, Frederick D., Michael Barton, Heather Rackin, Matthew Valasik, and David Maddox. 2019. "Collective Resources and Violent Crime Reconsidered: New Orleans Before and After Hurricane Katrina." *Journal of Interpersonal Violence* 1-25.

## **Week 17: Finals Week**

### **Exam 4 (50 points on Thursday, May 6 @ 2:45-4:45pm)**

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\* denotes textbook reading (available from EIU textbook rental)

\*\* denotes additional reading (available in D2L as .pdf file)

- a) 1/25/21 deadline to withdraw from course w/ no grade; 4/2/21 deadline to withdraw from with a W.
- b) This syllabus serves as a contract between the student & professor. You are responsible for all information contained within this syllabus. Any changes the professor makes will be announced in advance.

- c) [Holidays](#): Martin Luther King, Jr. Day 1/81/21; Lincoln's Birthday 2/12/21; Personal Wellness Days 2/2, 2/24, 3/18, 4/7, 4/22.