

UMBC UGC New Course Request: POLI 468 – Disaster Politics

Date Submitted: 05/06/2015

Proposed Effective Date: Winter 2016

	Name	Email	Phone	Dept
Dept Chair or UPD	Tom Schaller	schaller@umbc.edu	52845	POLI
Other Contact	Brian Grodsky	bgrodsky@umbc.edu	58047	POLI

COURSE INFORMATION:

Course Number(s)	468
Formal Title	Disaster Politics
Transcript Title (≤24c)	Disaster Politics
Recommended Course Preparation	POLI 260, POLI 250
Prerequisite	
Credits	3
Repeatable?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Max. Total Credits	3
Grading Method(s)	X Reg (A-F) Audit Pass-Fail

PROPOSED CATALOG DESCRIPTION:

This course is designed to introduce students to the political and policy dimensions of disaster. The course will explore how disaster affects the social/political landscape, as well as how that social/political landscape affects the state's ability to deal with disaster. Topics covered include state institutional adaptation and policy learning; special cases of vulnerability; the impact of disaster on local and international conflicts; and humanitarian assistance.

RATIONALE FOR NEW COURSE

- a) There is no other course taught like this subject, which integrates a range of subfields from comparative politics and international relations to public administration. It is also a highly interdisciplinary course.
- b) To be taught every 2-4 semesters
- c) This is an upper level POLI elective which dovetails with numerous other courses offered on human rights, US foreign policy, international relations and intra-regional studies (see POLI 370s/470s, POLI 380s/480s and POLI 390s/490s).
- d) Upper level POLI students and other upper level students (EHS, HAPP)
- e) Heavy reading load combined with emphasis on discussion
- f) Basic background in comparative politics, international relations, public administration or pertinent EHS/HAPP-related coursework helpful but not necessary.
- g) Students must take for a regular grade
- h) This course cannot be repeated (unless failing grade)

ATTACH COURSE OUTLINE (mandatory):

Weeks 1-2. Introduction

What is the difference between man-made and natural disasters from the perspective of preparing (in advance) responding (ex post facto)?

Perry, Ronald. "What is a Disaster?" (Chapter 1 in Handbook of Disaster Research)

Wisner, Ben, Piers Blaikie, Terry Cannon, and Ian Davis. 2004. At risk: Natural hazards, people's vulnerability and disasters (Second Edition). New York: Routledge. Chapter 2, "The Disaster Pressure and Release Model".

Perrow, Charles. 2007. *The next catastrophe: Reducing our vulnerabilities to natural, industrial, and terrorist disasters*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press. Chapter 2, “‘Natural’ Disasters”.

Michael T. Osterholm, “Preparing for the Next Pandemic,” *N Engl J Med* 2005; 352:1839-1842, May 5, 2005 - <http://www.nejm.org/doi/full/10.1056/NEJMp058068>

Michele Zanini , ‘Power curves’: What natural and economic disasters have in common, *The Mckinsey Quarterly*, June 2009, http://www.relooney.info/0_New_5145.pdf

Week 3. Disasters and the State Today

How have state structures evolved to deal with disasters? How might future disasters continue to affect the modern state?

Robert Steven Gottfried, *The black death : natural and human disaster in medieval Europe*. London: Collier Macmillan 1983. Chapter 7, “Disease and the Transformation of Medieval Europe.”

John A. Garraty, "The New Deal, National Socialism, and the Great Depression," *The American Historical Review*, Vol. 78, No. 4 (Oct., 1973), pp. 907-944.

Week 4. Major State Institutions to Address Disaster (US)

What are the institutions that have been developed to deal with disaster in the United States? What are some strengths and weaknesses of the current system?

Perrow, Charles. 2007. *The next catastrophe: Reducing our vulnerabilities to natural, industrial, and terrorist disasters*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press. Chapter 3, “The Government Response: The First FEMA”; Chapter 4, “The Disaster After 9/11: The Department of Homeland Security and a New FEMA”.

Sylves, Rick. 2008. *Disaster Policy and Politics: Emergency Management and Homeland Security*. Washington D.C.: CQ Press, Chapters 1 and 3.

Week 5. Victim Responses

How do victims respond to disasters? How might these reactions have influenced the development of disaster response institutions?

John Drury, Chris Cocking, and Steve Reicher. “Everyone for themselves? A comparative study of crowd solidarity among emergency survivors,” *British Journal of Social Psychology* (2009). 48, pp.487-506.

Kathleen J. Tierney, “The Social and Community Contexts of Disaster,” (Chapter 1) in Richard Gist and Bernard Lubin (ed.s), *Psychosocial Aspects of Disaster Response*. New York: Wiley and Sons, 1989.

Week 6. Community Responses

How do people in the immediate area react to a disaster? How does their reaction facilitate or hinder official disaster response? How might institutions be adapted to take advantage of these reactions? What are the sorts of political opportunities that emerge at the national level?

Herbst, *States and Power in Africa*

Xu, Bin. 2009. "Durkheim in Sichuan: The Earthquake, National Solidarity, and the Politics of Small Things." *Social Psychology Quarterly* 72:5-8.

Week 7. Vulnerability

How might community type influence individual and collective response and levels of national solidarity? To what degree are these identities likely to eclipse or be eclipsed by the local community and national community ones discussed earlier? How do the factors described affect local and national politics with respect to long-term change?

Klinenberg, Eric. 2002. Heat wave: a social autopsy of disaster in Chicago. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. Chapter 2. "Race, place, and Vulnerability."

David Stromberg, "Natural Disasters, Economic Development, and Humanitarian Aid," *Journal of Economic Perspectives*, 21, 3 (Summer 2007): 199 –222.

Mid-Term

Week 8. Expertise and Policy Adaptation

What might be some easy lessons learned, and what are the challenges to implementing them? How might these challenges be connected to the range of individual and community issues examined earlier?

Thomas A Birkland, *Lessons of disaster : policy change after catastrophic events*. Washington, D.C.: Georgetown University Press, 2006. Chapter 1.

Scott Gabriel Knowles, *The disaster experts : mastering risk in modern America*. Conclusion.

Week 9. Why policymakers don't get it

What are the psychological and structural barriers to disaster preparedness and mitigation on the part of citizens and policymakers?

Rodriguez, H.. W. Diaz, J.M. Santos and B. E. Aguirre. 2007. Chapter 29, "Communicating Risk and Uncertainty: Science, Technology, and Disasters at the Crossroads," in H. Rodriguez, E.L. Quarantelli and R.R. Dynes (Eds). *Handbook of Disaster Research*. New York, NY: Springer.

Klinenberg, Eric. 2002. Heat wave: a social autopsy of disaster in Chicago. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. Chapter 4 (Governing by Public Relations)

Weeks 10-11. How Disasters Change Political Landscape

How does the broader political landscape and the nature of accountability affect the willingness and capability to learn from and adjust to disasters? How do disasters represent political openings for various groups? Under what conditions do they tend to undermine or strengthen the incumbents and their adversaries?

A Healy, N Malhotra, "Myopic voters and natural disaster policy," *American Political Science Review*, 103, 3, 2009.

Heijmans, Annelies, "The everyday politics of disaster risk reduction in Central Java, Indonesia," (Chapter 13) in Thea Hilhorst (ed.) *Disaster, conflict and society in crises: everyday politics of crisis response*, New York: Routledge 2013.

Clarke, Lee Ben. 2006. *Worst cases: terror and catastrophe in the popular imagination*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. Chapter 4, "Power, Politics and Panic in the Worst Cases."

Warner, Jeroen, "The Politics of 'Catastrophization'," (Chapter 5) in Thea Hilhorst (ed.) *Disaster, conflict and society in crises: everyday politics of crisis response*, New York: Routledge 2013.

Week 12. Disasters, War and Peace

What is the relationship between disasters and peace/conflict? Given what we have learned in this course (individual, community and national reactions; political environment and policy learning) what might account for this?

Philip Nel and Marjolein Righarts, "Natural Disasters and the Risk of Violent Civil Conflict," *International Studies Quarterly*, Vol. 52, No. 1 (Mar., 2008), pp. 159-185.

Dawn Brancati, "Political aftershocks: The impact of earthquakes on intrastate conflict," *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, 51, 5, 2007: 715-743.

Week 13. Foreign Humanitarian Aid

What have been some obstacles and problems related to post-disaster humanitarian assistance?

Travis Nelson, "Rejecting the gift horse: international politics of disaster aid refusal," *Conflict, Security & Development*, Volume 10, Issue 3, 2010.

Tin Maung Maung Than. "Myanmar in 2008: Weathering the Storm," *Southeast Asian Affairs*, 2009, pp. 195-222.

Final Exam
