



GEORGETOWN UNIVERSITY
School of Continuing Studies
Emergency and Disaster Management

MPDM-640: Natural Hazards and Disasters

Tuesday 5:20 – 7:50

Spring 2017 (Jan 11 to May 13)

Instructor: Dr. Tim Frazier

Email: Tim.Frazier@georgetown.edu - I will respond to email within 48 hours of receipt but do not expect an email response after 11 PM or on weekends.

Office: C141

Office Hours: Tuesdays 4-5 or by appointment

Course Description

This course explores natural hazards and the multidimensional aspects surrounding these events that result in disaster.

Students will gain an understanding of the underlying physical processes behind hazards, the socioeconomic characteristics that manufacture risk and result in disproportionate impacts on communities, and potential mitigation, response, and recovery strategies. Coincident with case studies and readings on the underlying processes of hazards, the course will explore the topic of societal vulnerability and resilience. Students will learn through case studies, policy readings, and academic literature. Students will apply their knowledge by evaluating best practices and applying the theoretical frameworks covered throughout the course.



Learning Objectives

- Analyze the physical processes and societal impacts of past, current, and future natural hazards
- Assess various approaches to hazards and risk management to identify best practices, including the application of vulnerability and resilience frameworks
- Evaluate natural hazards literature and planning documents in terms of their quality, authorship, and relevance
- Craft place-specific hazard profiles and mitigation/recovery approaches and strategies

Required Texts

Keller, E. A., & DeVecchio, D. E. (2014). *Natural hazards: Earth's processes as hazards, disasters, and catastrophes*. Routledge. ISBN: 9780321939968 - \$98.25.

There will be additional readings required that will be made available on the course website in Canvas. You are responsible for completing all readings before the class discussion of the readings.

Attendance Policy

As outlined by the university, missing more than two classes will result in a final grade reduction of one level. Absences for classes beyond the initial two will result in further reduction of the final grade. If you are absent for more than four classes, you will be in danger of failing the course.

Late Assignment Policy

Late assignments will be penalized, so get in the habit of turning them in on time!

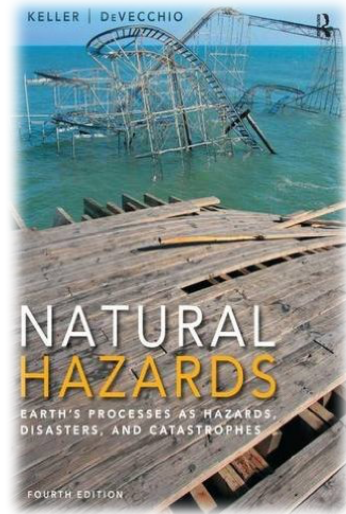
I **will not** accept late reaction papers. For all other assignments submitted after their due dates they will be accepted for grading with a 10% per day penalty (weekends count as one day). No assignment will be accepted if it is more than 2 weeks late. So, what does this mean Dr. Frazier? It means get your stuff in on time or risk failing the course. It is also your responsibility to ensure your assignments reach the instructor. Information for specific assignments will be provided in class and posted on the course website on Canvas.

Classroom Etiquette, Class Participation, and Other Guidelines

This course will be highly participatory and as such your attendance is critical not only to your individual performance but to the overall quality of everyone's learning experience. There will be many opportunities for you to participate in classroom discussion and to express your opinion on various topics, as such, it is important for everyone to be respectful of the opinions of others especially if they are different from your own. In any class there are bound to be individuals with different viewpoints about issues. It is up to the discretion of the professor as to what constitutes civil classroom behavior during discussion. Please feel free to express any opinion you may have but bullying of classmates in any manner during this course will not be tolerated.

Assignments

There are a variety of assignments for this course that include reaction notes to readings, in class discussions, hazard mitigation plan evaluations, and a final term paper. Each of these assignments will have a detailed assignment prompt including the grading rubric for each assignment. All assignments are to be submitted through the course webpage on Canvas.



Evaluation of grades will be based on the following assignments:

Weekly Participation (30% total)

(1) Written reaction notes. Reaction notes (two pages) should be posted to the appropriate drop box on Canvas before the beginning of class each Tuesday. Notes must be completed every week in response to each week's reading assignment. The reading assignments will help you familiarize yourself with academic writing and the state of knowledge on the various aspects of natural hazards and disasters. The reaction notes you produce are intended to make you think critically about the content of the readings. They are intended to help get your ideas about the readings down on paper and to help you to identify questions or issues that you would like to pursue during our class discussion.

(2) Active participation in seminar discussions. Every Monday by 5 pm, each student will contribute a question, issue, or comment, pertaining to the readings. You are required to submit your question to the appropriate drop box on Canvas 5 pm on Monday.

(3) In class exercises. Throughout the semester, there will be additional exercises such as focus groups, debates, & student led discussions that will also require student participation.

Hazard Mitigation Planning Evaluation Exercise (20% Total)

Each student will read and evaluate a county hazard mitigation plan (HMP). This assignment is designed to help you familiarize yourself with hazard and emergency management-related planning documents. By reading and analyzing the HMP, you can better understand the real-world challenges communities face in dealing with natural hazards and disasters. The analysis of your plan should be 8 to 12 pages double-spaced with 12-point font and one-inch margins.

Term Paper and Presentation (50% total)

Each student will prepare a 15 to 20 - page paper on a topic of their choosing related to natural hazards and society, provided it meets instructor approval. The term paper for this course involve a process. The steps involve:

(1) Determining the paper topic and doing a preliminary investigation to make sure that the topic is appropriate

(2) Meeting with the Instructor to discuss and obtain approval for the proposed topic

(3) Doing the research, and writing the paper

“15-20 - page paper” means at least 15 pages of text double-spaced with 12-point font and one-inch margins. Papers must not be less than 15 pages of text but no more than 20 pages of text.

Cover page, references list, figures, and tables are not **part of the page count**.

All written assignments for this course must conform to APA style guide.

Grading

Your course grade will be based on the following:

Weekly reaction notes and questions	25%
In class exercises	05%
Hazard Mitigation Planning Exercise	20%
Final Term Paper	50%
Total	100%

A	95-100%	B-	80-82%
A-	90-94%	C	70-79%
B+	87-89%	F	0-69%
B	83-86%		

Withdrawal Policy and Calendar

Should a student voluntarily withdraw from this course, credit for tuition will be calculated by the date of the student's official notice to the Program Manager, according to periods and percentages listed below. **The last day to withdraw from this course is April 27, 2017.**

Dates	Percentage Refunded
Jan 19 – 24	100%
Jan 25 – Feb 7	80%
Feb 8 – 21	70%
Feb 22 – Mar 7	50%
Mar 8 – 14	40%

Academic Resources

Library Services

SCS Librarian: Jessica Vanderhoff

202-784-7389; jessica.vanderhoff@georgetown.edu

<http://www.library.georgetown.edu/scs>

Emergency and Disaster Management Research Guide:

<http://guides.library.georgetown.edu/EDM>

Writing Center

202-687-4246; <http://writingcenter.georgetown.edu/>

Academic Resource Center

202-687-8354; arc@georgetown.edu; <https://academicsupport.georgetown.edu/>

Students with Disabilities

Students with documented disabilities have the right to specific accommodations that do not fundamentally alter the nature of the course. Students with disabilities should contact the Academic Resource Center (ARC) (202-784-7366; arc@georgetown.edu; <http://academicsupport.georgetown.edu/>) before the start of classes to allow their office time to

review the documentation and make recommendations for appropriate accommodations. If accommodations are recommended, you will be given a letter from ARC to share with your professors. You are personally responsible for completing this process officially and in a timely manner. Neither accommodations nor exceptions to policies can be permitted to students who have not completed this process in advance.

Georgetown Honor System

All students are expected to maintain the highest standards of academic and personal integrity in pursuit of their education at Georgetown University. Academic dishonesty in any form is a serious offense, and students found in violation are subject to academic penalties that include, but are not limited to, failure of the course, termination from the program, and revocation of degrees already conferred. The Georgetown Honor Code pledge reads as follows:

In pursuit of the high ideals and rigorous standards of academic life, I commit myself to respect and uphold the Georgetown Honor System: to be honest in any academic endeavor and to conduct myself honorably, as a responsible member of the Georgetown community, as we live and work together.

Course Calendar

Please consult and follow the course calendar (on the class website on Canvas) for the schedule of class meetings, topics, readings, assignments and assigned/due dates.