

# Global Disaster Politics

Department of Political Science  
Sam Houston State University



PADM 5390 B1  
CRN 84742  
Online Course, Fall 2017



## About This Course

Always and everywhere, disasters are political events. Each of the phases of disaster management—mitigation, preparedness, response, and recovery—is subject to political causes and effects. In this course we attempt to explain variation throughout the world and across these phases, using the theories and methods of political science and economics. Our focus is not just the politics of disasters themselves but how disasters can serve as an analytical windows, allowing us to better view and appreciate some of the underlying incentives that always shape our domestic and international processes.

Throughout the semester we will illustrate these concepts by comparing cases. These stories provide us with a common narrative for analysis and hopefully force us to think carefully about the difficult choices facing policymakers and the powerful incentives that guide them as they navigate these choices, even in policymaking around disasters.

### Course objectives

- ◆ Gain factual knowledge (terminology, classifications, methods, trends) about the politics of disasters
- ◆ Learn fundamental principles, generalizations, theories of public goods, policymaking and other disaster-related models.
- ◆ Improve critical thinking and writing skills



## Course Materials

There are no books purchase for this seminar. However, there are a handful of case studies that you'll need to purchase and download. The total cost should be less than \$tk. All other readings are available through Bb or our Slack group.

## Requirements

### Course Engagement (10%)

Our primary interaction in this course will occur in our virtual classroom, our Slack team page. Each week, we will discuss the readings and case study materials. You'll receive five course engagement scores—one per week starting the week of 10/23 skipping the week of Thanksgiving—at 20 points each.

### Response Papers (3 @ 30% ea.)

These three papers (6-8 pages ea.) will be written in response to the material (readings, cases) in each unit. For each paper, you'll have the opportunity to revise and resubmit based on my feedback on your first draft. The first draft of each paper is worth 100 points. The final draft of each paper is worth 200 points.

# Course Policies

## Deadlines

All assigned work must be completed and submitted by due date/times indicated. There is no grace period. It is your responsibility to ensure that you leave yourself enough time to post/submit your assignment before the deadline. Everything that comes in after is late, and penalties will start to accrue as follows:

LATE	PENALTY
1 minute-24 hours	10%
24-48 hours	30%
48-72 hours	50%
72+	75%
96+ hours	100%

## Determining the Final Grade

Your current running total/grade will always be available on Blackboard. The final letter grade will be determined as follows per University policy:

EARNED	GRADE	DENOTATION
900+	A	Excellent
800-899.5	B	Acceptable
700-799.5	C	Pass, insufficient
below 700	F	Failure

## Dr. Jason Enia



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**Campus Office Hours:** W 10:30a-12p; by appt.\*

\*Please note: Most weekdays, I am in my office on campus for some if not all of the day. If you need to meet me in person outside of my open-door office hours, just email me or send me a message through Slack to make an appointment.

## Blackboard Assignments

Please familiarize yourself with the process of submitting assignments through Blackboard. Any claim that an assignment was submitted on time but "lost by Blackboard" must be accompanied by evidence that you submitted the assignment on time.

## Academic Integrity

Students are expected to maintain complete honesty and integrity in academic experiences both in and out of the classroom. **Any student found guilty of academic dishonesty will fail the course.**

In addition, the University and its official representatives may initiate disciplinary proceedings against a student accused of any form of academic dishonesty including, but not limited to, cheating on an examination or other academic work which is to be submitted, plagiarism, collusion and the abuse of resource materials. If you have any questions, please ask!

## Religious Holy Days

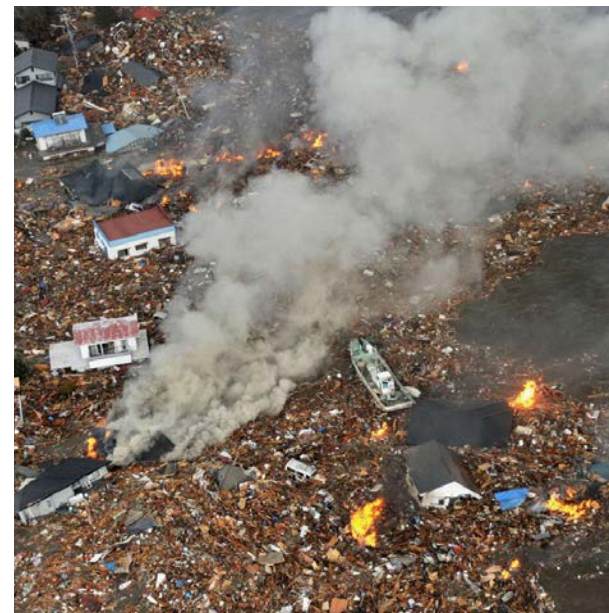
Section 51.911(b) of the Texas Education Code requires that an institution of higher education excuse a student from attending classes or other required activities, including examinations, for the observance of a religious holy day, including travel for that purpose. Section 51.911 (a) (2) defines a religious holy day as: "a holy day observed by a religion whose places of worship are exempt from property taxation under Section 11.20...." A student whose absence is excused under this subsection may not be penalized for that absence and shall be allowed to take an examination or

complete an assignment from which the student is excused within a reasonable time after the absence.

University policy 861001 provides the procedures to be followed by the student and instructor. A student desiring to absent himself/herself from a scheduled class in order to observe (a) religious holy day(s) shall present to each instructor involved a written statement concerning the religious holy day(s). The instructor will complete a form notifying the student of a reasonable timeframe in which the missed assignments and/or examinations are to be completed.

## Disability Services

It is the policy of Sam Houston State University that individuals otherwise qualified shall not be excluded, solely by reason of their disability, from participation in any academic program of the university. Further, they shall not be denied the benefits of these programs nor shall they be subjected to discrimination. Students with disabilities that might affect their academic performance are expected to visit with the Office of Services for Students with Disabilities located in the Counseling Center. They should then make arrangements with their individual instructors so that appropriate strategies can be considered and helpful procedures can be developed to ensure that participation and achievement opportunities are not impaired.



## Course Introduction (10/18 - 10/22)

### Readings

*On the politics of disasters*

- Olson (2000) "Toward a Politics of Disaster: Loss, Values, Agendas, and Blame," pp. 265-287.
- Hannigan (2012) "The Disaster Politics Nexus" in *Disasters Without Borders*, pp. 6-17.

*On a political economy approach to the world*

- Heyne et al. (2010) *The Economic Way of Thinking*, pp. 3-19; 45-47; 47-49.
- Roberts (2007) "[Pigs Don't Fly: The Economic Way of Thinking about Politics.](#)"

### Case Studies

- Watch "[Business of Disaster](#)," PBS Frontline (approximately 55 minutes)

### Notes

- ➡ Set up a Slack account. See my video on this for more information. Our team's URL is [padm5390shsufall2017.slack.com](https://padm5390shsufall2017.slack.com). (Hopefully you've received an email invitation from me.)

## The Political Economy of Risk and the Politics of Mitigation (10/23 - 11/1)

### Readings

*On risk & the politics of mitigation and preparation*

- Damodaran (2007) "What is Risk?" in *Strategic Risk Taking*, pp. 1-9.
- Ropeik (2010) "Bounded Rationality: Because Reason Alone Can't Keep You Safe" in *How Risky Is It, Really?* pp. 21-64.
- Kenny (2009) "Why Do People Die in Earthquakes? The Costs, Benefits & Institutions of Disaster Risk Reduction," pp. 1-40.
- Keefer (2009) "Disastrous Consequences: The Political Economy of Disaster Risk Reduction," pp. 1-25.
- Keefer et al. (2011) "Earthquake Propensity and the Politics of Mortality Prevention," pp. 1530-1541.
- Healy & Malhotra (2009) "Myopic Voters and Natural Disaster Policy," pp. 387-406.

*On the political economy of insurance*

- Kunreuther & Pauly (2004) "Neglecting Disaster: Why Don't People Insure Against Large Losses?" pp. 5-21.
- Ip (2015) "The Price of Peace of Mind..." in *Foolproof: Why Safety Can be Dangerous & How Danger Can Make Us Safe* pp. 201-211.
- Hudson et al. (2014) "[Risk Selection & Moral Hazard in Natural Disaster Insurance Markets: Empirical evidence from Germany & the U.S.](#)" pp. 1-29.

### Case Studies

*Risk and preparation/mitigation (L'Aquila 2009; Houston pre-Harvey; The coming "Really Big One(s)" in the NW United States and Tampa Bay, FL;)*

- [Fountain \(2011\) "Trial Over Earthquake in Italy Puts Focus on Probability and Panic," New York Times 3 October.](#) (See other materials regarding the 2009 L'Aquila earthquake on Blackboard/Slack.)
- [Schulz \(2015\) "The Really Big One" The New Yorker 20 July.](#)
- [Fears \(2017\) "Tampa Bay's Coming Storm" The Washington Post.](#)
- Pro Publica & The Texas Tribune (2016) "[Boomtown Flood Town](#)" (Also see part 2: "[Hell & High Water...](#)")

### Notes

- ➡ Most of our discussion during the units will be about the case studies. However, we'll be using the readings to help us think about and analyze the cases.
- ➡ See the unit's introduction video for my suggestions about approaching the cases and readings.

### Important Dates & Deadlines

- 10/30** Upload first draft of your response paper #1 to Bb by 11:59pm.
- 11/5** Final draft of response paper #1 due via Bb by 11:59pm

## Political Institutions and Disasters (11/2 - 11/12)

### Readings

*Disasters in different types of political systems (democracies & non-democracies)*

- Bueno de Mesquita and Smith (2011) "The Rules of Politics," in *The Dictator's Handbook* pp. 1-20.
- Coyne (2011) "Constitutions and Crisis," pp. 351-357.
- Smith & Flores (2010) "Why Earthquakes Rock Democracies Less" *Foreign Affairs* 15 July.

*Disasters in federal systems*

- Sylves (2015) "Intergovernmental Relations in Disaster Policy" in *Disaster Policy & Politics*, pp. 154-193.
- Caruson and MacManus (2012) "Interlocal Emergency Management Collaboration: Vertical and Horizontal Roadblocks" pp. 162-187.
- Wachsmuth (2013) "[How Local Governments Hinder our Response to Natural Disasters](#)"

*Specific rules related to the politics of disaster (building codes, property rights, disaster declaration, etc.)*

- Ainuddin et al. (2014) "Public perception about enforcement of building codes..." pp. 99-106.
- Du et al. (2016) "Post-disaster building repair and retrofit in a disaster-prone historical village in China" pp. 142-157.
- TodayOnline (2015) "[Nepal Building Code Author Says Disaster was Waiting to Happen](#)"
- NBC News (2015) "['Nightmare Waiting to Happen': Quake Experts Gathered in Nepal a Week Ago](#)"
- Ferreira (2013) "[Haiti's Road to Reconstruction Blocked by Land Tenure Disputes](#)"
- Reeves (2011) "Political Disaster: Unilateral Powers, Electoral Incentives, and Presidential Disaster Declarations," pp. 1142-1151.
- Enia (2016) "Rules versus discretion: Comparing disaster declaration institutions in the Philippines and Indonesia," pp. 158-166.

### Case Studies

*Comparing disasters across different political systems (Mexico 1992; Pakistan 2010; United States 2005; Haiti 2010)*

- Varley (1994) "Responding to Disaster: The Story of the Guadalajara Sewer Explosion," Kennedy School Case No. C16-94-1180.0
- Tannenwald (2014) "Inundation: The Slow-Moving Crisis of Pakistan's 2010 Floods," Kennedy School Case No. 2015.0
- [Dodson \(2017\) "Creating Disasters through Mass Urban Evacuation"](#)
- [PBS Frontline \(2010\) "The Quake"](#) (approx. 55 minutes)

### Notes

- ➡ See the unit's introduction video for my suggestions about approaching the cases and readings.

### Important Dates & Deadlines

**11/15** Upload first draft of your response paper #2 to Bb by 11:59pm.

**11/22** Upload final draft of response paper #2 to Bb by 11:59pm.

## Cooperation, Coordination and Disasters (11/13 - 11/22)

### Readings

*The inherent challenges of public goods and collective action*

- Barrett (2007) "Introduction: Incentives to Supply Global Public Goods," in *Why Cooperate? The Incentive to Supply Global Public Goods*, pp. 1-21.
- Schelling (1960) "Tacit Coordination (Common Interests)" in *The Strategy of Conflict*, pp. 54-74.
- Chamlee-Wright (2010) "Collective Action in the Wake of Disaster," in *The Culture and Political Economy of Recovery*, pp. 39-56.
- Montgomery (2014) "[Greensburg, Kan. Rebuilds from 2007 Tornado—Now it Just Needs More People](#)"

*Does social capital help with collective action challenges?*

- Aldrich (2012) "Social Capital: A Janus-Faced Resource for Recovery" in *Building Resilience*, pp. 24-53.
- Chamlee-Wright & Storr (2011) "Social Capital, Lobbying and Community-Based Interest Groups," pp. 167-185.
- Veszteg et al. (2015) "The Impact of the Tohoku Earthquake and Tsunami on Social Capital in Japan: Trust Before and After the Disaster," pp. 119-138.

### Case Studies

*Social capital and disaster recovery (Hurricane Katrina 2005; Chicago Fire 1871; Tōhoku earthquake and tsunami 2011)*

- [Scott \(2008\) "'Broadmoor Lives': A New Orleans Neighborhood's Battle To Recover from Hurricane Katrina" Kennedy School of Gov. Case #C14-08-1893.0](#) and [part B \(1894.0\)](#) and [sequel \(1894.1\)](#).
- Skarbek (2014) "The Chicago Fire of 1871: A Bottom-up Approach to Disaster Relief," pp. 155-180.
- Aldrich & Sawada (2015) "The Physical and Social Determinants of Mortality in the 3.11 Tsunami" pp. 66-75.

### Notes

- ➡ See the unit's introduction video for my suggestions about approaching the cases and readings.

### Important Dates & Deadlines

**12/1** Upload first draft of your response paper #3 to Bb by 11:59pm.

**12/8** Upload final draft of response paper #3 to Bb by 11:59pm.

## Disasters Reshaping the Political (11/27 - 12/1)

### Readings

*Disasters as critical junctures*

- Birkland (2007) *Lessons of Disaster: Policy Change After Catastrophic Events*. pp. 1-30; 103-156; 157-195.
- Quiroz Flores and Smith (2013) "Leader Survival and Natural Disasters," pp. 821-843.
- Gawronski & Olson (2013) "Disasters as Crisis Triggers for Critical Junctures? The 1976 Guatemala Case," pp. 133-149.
- Carlin, Love, & Zechmeister (2014) "Natural Disaster and Democratic Legitimacy," pp. 3-15.

*Disaster diplomacy*

- Akcinaroglu, DiCicco, and Radziszewski (2011) "Avalanches & Olive Branches," pp. 260-275.
- Kelman (2012) "Hypotheses and Research Questions," in *Disaster Diplomacy*, pp. 11-17.

### Case Studies

*Disaster diplomacy (2003 Iranian earthquake)*

- [Enia \(2006\) "Between Promise & Delivery"](#) GUID Case #313.

### Notes

- ➡ See the unit's introduction video for my suggestions about approaching the cases and readings.