

SOCI 4334 SOCIOLOGY OF DISASTER
3 Credit Hours
Spring 2018
Online

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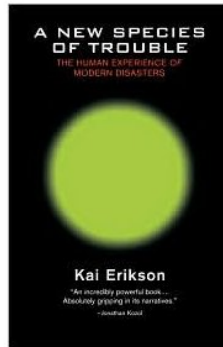
Course Description: Disasters are fundamentally social events. This course will investigate how culture, inequality, social structure shape how people face disasters, how they respond and the ways in which they recover or fail to do so. How disasters lead to rapid social change will also be explored. Students will learn the foundations of sociology of disaster theory, will examine a number of case studies and will apply theory to the in-depth study of one event. Prerequisite: SOC131.

Course Objectives: By the end of the course, students should be able to:

- examine natural, technological and human-initiated disasters from a sociological perspective;
- understand conflict models and theories of social vulnerability;
- apply these theories to case studies of disasters;
- think critically about how social dynamics shape the ways people and communities prepare for, face, and recover from disasters.

Required Texts:

Most readings will be available **online** through SHSU's Newton Gresham Library. Instructions to access materials for our course are posted in Blackboard. However, you are asked to read the following book:



Erikson, Kai. 1994. *A New Species of Trouble: The Human Experience of Modern Disasters*. New York: W. W. Norton and Company. ISBN: 9780393313192

Course Requirements and Grading Criteria:

Readings: This course is organized around a set of readings that will be used to guide lectures and discussions. The readings will also be used as a basis for the examinations and projects. Not all reading topics will be discussed in the lectures, but you are still responsible for all of the material covered in the required readings and discussions. College courses are intensive and it is imperative that you stay on schedule with the readings.

Discussion (100 points):

To receive full points for Discussion, you must make *at least* three, thoughtful, thorough contributions. Except for the first week of class, our weeks begin Monday morning and end Sunday evening. Your first post should appear by Friday night (11:59pm) so that people have sufficient time to comment on it, and you have plenty of time to comment on others' posts before the Sunday night deadline.

The first post should answer the discussion question by drawing on the readings each week (explicitly refer to the texts). Connections to some form of relevant outside information (articles, data, experiences, videos, etc.) will earn maximum points. The post should include a related question for others to answer.

Feedback on other students' posts should be specific to the posts, refer to course material, and also include a relevant question.

All posts must be written in college-level English and free of grammar and spelling errors. All posts must appear before 11:59pm on Sunday nights to count for that week's discussion. You are responsible for discussion in 10 weeks of the class. This does not include the first week in which participation is simply a completion grade. Nor does it include weeks 10 and 11 which are graded as part of the Exploring Disasters project, and the expectations for posts increase. Therefore, you may choose which week to take off from discussion. You are asked to post that you are taking that week off, no need to give any reasons.

Exam #1 (100 points): The first exam will be administered on Wednesday, February 21, 2018. The exam will consist of short answer essay questions designed to assess your understanding of the material covered in the first part of the course. The questions will be drawn from the readings, lectures, videos, and class discussions. The exam cannot be taken early or late, and no make-up exams will be given.

Exploring Disasters Project (100 points): You will select a disaster event from a brief list I will provide and research one of the social issues resulting from that disaster. During weeks 10 and 11, each of you will present your findings through discussion posts. (Half of you will post during week 10, half of you will post in week 11. Your presentations may be written, in the form of Powerpoint presentations, or may be short videos. You will be graded on the thoroughness of the content, integration of outside sources, connections to course readings, and the presentation format (clearly organized, appealing, informative, creative, error free).

Exam #2 (100 points): The second exam will be administered on Wednesday, May 2, 2018. The exam will consist of short answer essay questions designed to assess your understanding of the material covered in the second part of the course. The questions will be drawn from the readings, lectures, videos, and class discussions. The exam cannot be taken early or late, and no make-up exams will be given.

Exams and Grading Plan: The exams will cover the assigned readings AND the material discussed as a part of the course. You are expected to read and study independently. Information discussed in the course, as well as that contained in the assigned readings, even if it is not reviewed in class, may appear on exams.

Make-up exams will be given only if arranged with the professor **PRIOR** to the day of the scheduled exam to be missed and **ONLY** if the reason for the absence is deemed valid by the professor. **Documentation for absences must be provided** to make-up assignments, quizzes or exams.

Final grades will be calculated as follows:

	Percentage	Points Possible
Discussion	25%	100
Exam #1	25%	100
Exam #2	25%	100
Exploring Disasters Project	25%	100
Original "class" post		50
Feedback post #1		25
Feedback post #2		25
Total Points Possible	100%	400

Grading Scale:

A = 400-360
B = 359-320
C = 319-280
D = 279-240
F = 239-Below

Academic Dishonesty: Students are expected to maintain honesty and integrity in the academic experiences both in and out of the classroom. Cheating on an exam, quiz and/or assignment is an act of dishonesty, as is plagiarism. Students who cheat or plagiarize will automatically receive the grade of zero (0). *See Student Syllabus Guidelines* <http://www.shsu.edu/syllabus/>

Americans with Disabilities Policy: 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 should visit with the Office of Services for Students with Disabilities located in the Counseling Center and then meet with the instructor so that appropriate accommodations may be made. **This meeting should take place within the first two weeks of the semester.** *See Student Syllabus Guidelines* <http://www.shsu.edu/syllabus/>

Student Absences on Religious Holy Days: Students are allowed to miss class and other required activities, including examinations, for the observance of a religious holy day, including travel for that purpose. Students remain responsible for all work. *See Student Syllabus Guidelines* <http://www.shsu.edu/syllabus/>

Visitors to the Course: Only registered students may attend class. Exceptions can be made on a case-by-case basis if arranged with the professor. In all cases, visitors must not present a disruption to the class by their attendance. Students wishing to audit a class must apply to do so through the Registrar's Office. *See Student Syllabus Guidelines* <http://www.shsu.edu/syllabus/>

Instructor Evaluations: Student will be asked to complete a course/instructor evaluation form toward the end of the semester. This feedback is important. It is used by professors to improve their teaching. Please participate in the evaluation process.

Assignments: Work for this class will consist of reading the texts, participating in class discussions, studying the texts and class notes for the exams, completing the Exploring Disasters Project and presenting it to the class (virtually).

Required Supplies: You must have access to Blackboard for this course. The syllabus, class notes, assignments and announcements will be posted on Blackboard. You are expected to check Blackboard regularly and frequently for announcements and course materials. Please note that announcements and notifications are sent to your campus email, so you need to check it regularly to stay informed about your courses.

COURSE OUTLINE

Week 1 – Introductions

Jan. 17-21 Syllabus and Introduction to Course

Week 2 – Sociology and the Study of Disasters

Jan. 22-28 Perry, Ronald W. 2018. “Defining Disaster: An Evolving Concept” in *Handbook of Disaster Research*, 2nd Edition edited by H. Rodríguez, et al. New York: Springer.

Week 3 – Myths, Realities, and Cultural Representations of Disasters

Jan. 29-4 Tierney, Kathleen, Christine Bevc, and Erica Kuligowski. 2006. “Metaphors Matter: Disaster Myths, Media Frames, and Their Consequences in Hurricane Katrina.” *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 604(1): 57-81.

Week 4 – Are All Disasters the Same?

Feb. 5-11 Peek, Lori and Jeannette N. Sutton. 2003. “An Exploratory Comparison of Disasters, Riots, and Terrorist Acts.” *Disasters* 27(4): 319-335.

Erikson, Kai. 1994. *A New Species of Trouble: The Human Experience of Modern Disasters*. New York: W. W. Norton and Company. Pp. 11-23; and pp. 27-57.

Week 5 – Community Impacts of Disasters

Feb. 12-18 Erikson (pp. 99-138; and 139-157)
Erikson (pp. 203-225; and 226-242)

Week 6 – Social Vulnerability

Feb. 19-25 **Exam #1 – February 21st**

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

Week 7 – Disasters, Race, and Social Class

Feb. 26-4 **Exploring Disaster topic selection.**

Bolin, Bob and Liza C Kurtz. 2018. “Race, Class, Ethnicity, and Disaster Vulnerability” in Rodríguez, Havidan, et al. (eds.) *Handbook of Disaster Research* 2nd Edition. Springer.

Lim, Junglim, Scott Loveridge, Robert Shupp, and Mark Skidmore. 2017. "Double Danger in the Double Wide: Dimensions of Poverty, Housing Quality, and Tornado Impacts" *Regional Science and Urban Economics* 65 (2017): 1- 15.

Week 8 – Gender and Disaster

March 5-9 Neumayer, Eric and Thomas Plumper. 2007. "The Gendered Nature of Natural Disasters: The Impact of Catastrophic Events on the Gender Gap in Life Expectancy 1981-2002" *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* 97(3): 551-566.

Jenkins, Pam and Brenda Phillips. 2008. "Battered Women, Catastrophe, and the Context of Safety after Hurricane Katrina" *NWSA Journal* 20(3): 49-68.

March 10-18 Spring Break

Week 9 – Disasters, Language Barriers, and Disabilities

March 19-25 Aguirre, Benigno E. 1988. "The Lack of Warnings Before the Saragosa Tornado." *International Journal of Mass Emergencies and Disasters* 6(1): 65-74.

Stough, Laura M. 2015. "World Report on Disability, Intellectual Disabilities, and Disaster Preparedness: Costa Rica as a Case Example." *Journal of Policy and Practice in Intellectual Disabilities* 12(2): 138-146.

Week 10 – Exploring Disasters

March 26-1 First half of class post presentations by Friday night.

Week 11 – Exploring Disasters (contd.)

April 2-8 Second half of class post presentations by Friday night.

Week 12 – Causes of Disaster

April 9-15 Oliver-Smith, Anthony, et al. 2017. "The Social Construction of Disaster Risk: Exploring Root Causes" *International Journal of Disaster Risk Reduction* 22 (2017): 469-474.

Week 13 - Social Capital and Disaster

April 16-22 Aldrich, Daniel P. and Michelle A. Meyer. 2015. Social Capital and Community Resilience. *American Behavioral Scientist* 59(2) 254–269.

Week 14 – The Future of Disaster

April 23-29 Perrow, Charles. 2006. “Disasters Ever More? Reducing U.S. Vulnerabilities” pp. 521-533 in *Handbook of Disaster Research*, edited by H. Rodríguez, E. L. Quarantelli, and R. R. Dynes. New York: Springer.

Tierney, Kathleen. 2014. “Looking Ahead: A Move Toward Safety, or More of the Same?” pp. 227-248 in Tierney, Kathleen. 2014. *The Social Roots of Risk*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press.

Week 15 – Review and Exam #2

April 30-6 **Exam #2 – May 2, 2018**

Rules of Conduct: Students are expected to assist in maintaining a course environment that is conducive to learning.

- 1) Students are to treat faculty and other students with respect.
- 2) Please familiarize yourself with the Academic Dishonesty policy before submitting any assignments. Cheating on an exam, quiz and/or assignment is an act of dishonesty, as is plagiarism, and will automatically result in a grade of zero.
- 3) See *Student Syllabus Guidelines* <http://www.shsu.edu/syllabus/>

THIS SYLLABUS IS SUBJECT TO CHANGE.