This version was posted on October 20, 2009, to reflect changes in the schedule

Department of Public Administration—School of Public and International Affairs
North Carolina State University

PA 553: Disaster, Crisis and Emergency Policy and Management

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Class Web Site is: http://www4.ncsu.edu/~tabirkla/PA553_Fall09.html

Office Hours: Thursdays, in Caldwell 219, 3:00 to 4:30 pm, or by appointment any time after 1:00 pm Monday through Thursday. To schedule an appointment, click the “Tungle” link on my home page or click on http://tungle.me/birkland

This course is an introduction to policies and practices intended to prepare for, respond to, recover from, and mitigate the damage done by natural disasters, industrial accidents and terrorist attacks in the United States. The costs posed by these hazards continue to challenge managers at all levels of government and in the private sector. The September 11 terrorist attacks and by Hurricane Katrina symbolized these challenges and made them much more visible than ever before.

This course is not a homeland security course. This course draws on a rich body of knowledge from political science, sociology, engineering, and many other disciplines. The focus will be on natural disasters, but terrorism will also be considered. The September 11 attack caused the United States and state and local governments to reorient their emergency management operations. A key question we will consider this semester is whether and to what extent the all-hazards approach makes sense in a post-September 11 world.

This course is not about how to put out fires or rescue people from rooftops. First responders render important services to our nation and our communities. But we cannot understand broader questions of disaster policy and management by focusing solely on the role of first responders. Indeed, the popular focus on first responders and on disaster response has distorted public understandings about the role of all actors in disasters. Thus, this course is not a basic managerial course. It is a broad overview of policy, management, and, social science related to hazards and disasters.

The disaster studies field is very fluid, with many people and groups involved in shaping research and application. After taking this course, you will be able to be a knowledgeable participant in discussions about disaster mitigation, preparedness, response, recovery, and other sociotechnical aspects of disasters. In my career I have gotten to know many people in this field, including many of the authors whose work you will read this semester. I really enjoy learning from and working with this remarkably dedicated group of scholars and emergency managers. I hope you will share my excitement in being part of this very important aspect of public policy and management.

Course goals
By the end of this course, you will be able to:

• Engage in the discussion of what differentiates events, hazards, disasters, and catastrophes, and why this differentiation matters.
• Understand the social, political, and economic context of disaster policy
• Understand the meaning of common terms in the field, such as mitigation, preparedness, response, and recovery
• Understand the relationships between policies intended to address natural disasters and those intended to address terrorism
• Understand the interorganizational and intergovernmental managerial challenges inherent in disaster and crisis policy and management
- Participate in the development of crisis and management plans for public, private, and nonprofit organizations
- Use the skills necessary to communicate about hazards, disasters, and risks in a clear and professional manner.

**Course Requirements and Grading**

This there are both mandatory and recommended readings on the syllabus. There is a heavy reading load in this course; it is commensurate with graduate level instruction in a complex policy and managerial problem. But I have selected readings that I think are stimulating and that represent some of the best work in this field. Some readings may only require a quick skim, while others will deserve greater attention.

The required textbooks are for sale at the NCSU bookstore, and are on two hour reserve at D.H. Hill Library. They are all available at very good prices from amazon.com and other on-line sellers (I like both powells.com and, for obscure books, alibris.com). The method by which I will make the other readings, in PDF format, available to you will be described on the first day of course. I strongly urge you to bring a thumb drive to the first day of class to download all the files to your computer.

Everyone is expected to be prepared to discuss the weekly readings and to participate in discussion. Because this is a graduate seminar, not a lecture course, your performance will be very much assessed by your participation (not just attendance) in this class. In other words, if you attend regularly, do all the work, but do not participate in course discussion, you cannot earn an A in this course.

**Weekly Response Papers**

Each student in the course will write three short response papers (not more than 1000 words) on the readings assigned for the week. Using the appropriate library resources, you will also find at least one other scholarly or technical article on that week’s topic and will incorporate the article into the paper. Such articles are not to be drawn from the popular press, newsletters, blogs, and the like. These articles must be highly useful materials from which the class would benefit. You will submit to me, with the response paper, a copy of the article you found and a link to its location online, if any. I will share this with the class. Part of your mark on the response papers will be based on the quality of the scholarly work you bring to the response paper.

These response papers should summarize the readings, draw connections between them, and note the questions they raise and criticisms of their shortcomings. These are due to the instructor no later than noon the day before the class meets; I will distribute them via the web site on Wednesday afternoons or Thursday mornings, and everyone in the class is expected to read the papers before class. These papers will often serve as the starting point for our course discussions, and will be extremely useful study guides for the final written exam.

For the article you find on your own, please email it to me so that I can post it on the class readings. The point of this aspect of the assignment is to ask you to bring to our attention readings that might illuminate or conflict with the findings in the readings I have included in the course.

**Final Paper**

The final paper is due on December 11. This is an independent research paper of between 20 and 30 pages (assuming double-spaced, one-inch margins, and Times New Roman or Georgia 11 point type). This paper should explore an important matter of social science or public policy relevant to disasters. To help you find the right focus and tone, you might imagine that you are writing your term paper for publication in a journal such as the *Journal of Homeland Security and Emergency Management*, *International Journal of Mass Emergencies and Disasters*, *Natural Disasters Review*, *Disasters*, *Journal of Contingencies and Crisis Management*, or similar journals. You may also aim your paper toward professional journals or toward mainstream social science and public administration journals if you like. Such journals include *Public Administration Review*, *Journal of Public Administration Research and Theory (JPART)*, *Journal of Public Policy, Policy Studies Journal*, and the like.

I would be happy to work with you to help you publish a paper you write for this course; of course, I do not expect you to publish your final paper! But you might find that you have identified a topic worthy of publication. You don’t need to publish to earn an A, of course! An “A” paper is not a paper that is published, but is a paper that, with some work could be publishable.
Paper topics will be developed in consultation with the instructor, but the topics are entirely open within the broad bounds of the material covered in this course. I have also posted a list of things I think are interesting on the class website to give you some ideas. You must email me a tentative title and description of your paper by the end of the third week of the semester.

Please meet with me in my office early (before week 4) to discuss your research paper. All students must meet with me in person at least once on or before week 6. But don’t wait that long—some paper topics will simply not be acceptable in this course, and you will want to know right away if your project is viable. Please schedule meetings with me by using http://tungle.me/birkland.

Start on this project now! This will give you plenty of time to browse the library, order interlibrary loan materials, and to do all the things you need to do to produce a quality paper Please see me if you plan to interview people for your paper, as we need to comply with University human subjects rules.

I welcome collaborative papers—I would be thrilled to see collaboration! If two or more of you (up to no more than four) want to write a slightly lengthier paper as a group, this is a fine idea, and I will work with you to make this work for you.

Final Take-Home Exam

The final take-home exam will be distributed in class, via email and on the web at the end of the final seminar, and will be due to me via email no later than midnight on December 13. (Indeed, no written work will be accepted in other than electronic form.) This is a firm deadline. This will not be a particularly odious examination, but it is intended to motivate you to focus on all the materials in the class and to provide you the opportunity to synthesize and summarize what you have learned. Of course, this is an open book, open note exam, and you may discuss the exam broadly with your classmates—but the work you do must be your own.

E-mail requirement and Paper Submissions

I will communicate with you through your NCSU email address and will, if you like, send copies of email to an alternative addresses if you provide it to me. I will communicate with you via e-mail to explain readings, alter reading assignments (which may happen as I come across new and interesting information), distribute materials for in-class exercises, and to discuss other issues that might arise in class. Any documents shared via email will also be shared on the website. Failure to check e-mail or the web site will not constitute an acceptable reason for missing course information. Please note that I will generally answer emails within 36 hours of receipt—please do not expect an immediate (within 4 hours) response. Of course, I will try to answer email quickly. For urgent matters, call me at my office after 1 pm on Monday-Friday.

All email addressed to me should have a subject line that starts with PA553, such as “PA553: Question about the final exam.” Failure to include PA553 in the subject line will greatly delay any replies.

Of course, I am pleased to meet with you in my office during office hours or by appointment.

All written work is to be sent to me as a document in any of the following formats: .docx, .doc, .rtf, or .pdf. No other formats will be accepted, and they will be returned. Every paper must follow this naming convention:

Lastname_finalexam.doc (or whatever format you choose)
Lastname_response1.doc (replace 1 with 2 or 3 as appropriate)
Lastname_finalpaper.doc

Papers that do not conform to this standard will be returned unread.

Grading

Grading weights are approximately 30 percent for the research paper, 30 percent for the final exam, 20 percent for response papers, and 20 percent for class participation. These weights are subject to adjustment on an individual basis based on exemplary or deficient performance in the course. Late papers will be penalized one letter grade for every day or fraction thereof, weekends and holidays included.

I not will grant incompletes in this course unless particularly extraordinary and compelling circumstances are documented. Because the pace of graduate school is so rapid, you are usually better off taking a slightly lower grade on a paper than seeking an incomplete.
General Information

- I expect excellent, professional writing in this course. I will return any paper ungraded (and as not submitted) if it has more than three significant grammatical, mechanical, or stylistic errors. Please do not treat this notice as the usual "you must write well" admonition. My requirements will likely be more stringent than any you have encountered as a graduate student or an undergraduate. This requirement is as stringent—but not more stringent—than what you should expect in a high-performance professional setting. I will not reward poor writing, because it is unfair to you to give you the impression that poor writing is sound professional writing. Any paper can fail on writing alone, regardless of the brilliance of its underlying ideas.

I am including this information here because I have found good writing is become rarer, even as the need to communicate clearly continues to grow. In recent years I have been seeing writing that would be unacceptable in undergraduate courses. Poor writing block your advancement in your career. Good writing (and good overall communications skills) on the other hand, opens doors to rapid advancement. In survey after survey, employers indicate that they most highly value good communications skills, and they most often lament the poor skills with which students leave higher education and enter the work world.

This admonition also applies to email or other communications—do not send me emails that read like tweets, Facebook entries, text messages, or casual email conversation. Messages addressed to "Hey..." will be ignored. (On the other hand, you may address me as Professor Birkland, Dr. Birkland, or just Tom if you like!)

- Turn off cell phones, Blackberries, etc. before class. You may return calls and receive messages at the mid-class break. If you must be on call—say, for work—I strongly urge you to rearrange your schedule so that you are not on-call during this class. If you must take a call, let me know that you are on call during the break. Answering the call during class will count as an absence.

- Overall, there are no excused or unexcused absences in this course. If you must miss class for a legitimate personal or professional reason, you must email me at least 24 hours before class, explaining the absence. Repeated absences for whatever reason will result in a lower grade for the course.

Students with Disabilities

Reasonable accommodations will be made for students with verifiable disabilities. Students must register with Disability Services for Students at 1900 Student Health Center, Campus Box 7509, 515-7653. http://www.ncsu.edu/provost/offices/affirm_action/dss/

Academic Integrity

Students should familiarize themselves with the university policies regarding academic integrity found in the Code of Student Conduct (www.fis.ncsu.edu/ncsulegal/41.03-codeof.htm) that apply to this class. If you have any questions regarding this policy, please feel free to discuss with me.

To: Students in Public Administration Courses

Public Administration faculty members have observed that some students may be unsure of what constitutes academic dishonesty. The following statement (used with permission) describes a range of behaviors that constitute academic dishonesty “Plagiarism, or presenting another’s works or ideas as one’s own, is a form of stealing. The instructor reserves the right to examine any source used by the student before giving a grade on a paper, and to give an “incomplete” in the course if necessary, to allow time to obtain sources. Students should be prepared to show source material to the instructor for the purpose of verifying information. Academic dishonesty will not be tolerated.

Academic dishonesty includes the following offenses:

1) Claiming as your own work a paper written by someone else (including unpublished papers).
2) Turning in a paper that contains paraphrases of someone else’s ideas but does not give proper credit to that person for those ideas.
3) Turning in a paper that is largely a restatement in your own words of a paper written by someone else, even if you give credit to that person for those ideas. The thesis and organizing principles of a paper must be your own.
4) Turning in a paper that uses the exact words of another author without using quotation marks, even if proper credit is given in a citation, or that changes the words only slightly and claims them to be paraphrases.

5) Turning in the same paper, even in a different version, for two different courses without the permission of both professors involved.

6) Using any external source (notes, books, other students, etc.) for assistance during an in-class exam, unless given permission to do so by the professor."

Further details on academic integrity are in NC State University’s Code of Student Conduct (http://www.ncsu.edu/student_conduct). The public administration faculty has agreed that violations of academic integrity must have consequences. Consequently, students who cheat (behaviors cited in point 1 and 6 or similar behavior) may receive at least an F in the course; other forms of dishonesty, similar to those covered in points 2 through 5 may result in at least a 0 for the assignment.

Books
These books are required, and are available at the NCSU bookstore, and may also be available at www.amazon.com, www.alibris.com, www.powells.com, or www.bn.com. Feel free to buy used books provided you are using the current edition.

Cooper, Christopher, and Robert Block. 2006. Disaster: Hurricane Katrina and the Failure of Homeland Security. New York: Times Books. (Amazon.com sells this for about $10.00. You won’t need it until later in the semester, but please buy it ASAP. I will use many examples from it).


Rubín, Claire, ed. Emergency Management: The American Experience 1900–2005. Fairfax, VA: Public Entity Risk Institute. Online ordering from the “Bookstore” link at www.riskintitute.org. You should be able to get it for $30.00. I have asked the bookstore to obtain this as well, and Amazon.com may have copies.


Please note that we may not read every chapter of every book, but we but will read enough that I cannot legally or ethically justify copying large sections of the books.

Course Schedule
The course schedule follows this page.
### Schedule of Readings and Topics

This schedule may change to accommodate guest speakers, new knowledge, or to enhance learning. I will provide you with as much advance warning as possible. “HDR” means *Handbook of Disaster Research*.

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<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Required Reading</th>
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<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>20-Aug</td>
<td>Introduction to the Course</td>
<td>Haddow and Bullock, Chapter 1; HDR 1,2,3</td>
<td>Quarantelli, E.L. 2005. Catastrophes are Different from Disasters: Some Implications for Crisis Planning and Managing Drawn from Katrina [Internet]. Social Science Research Council. 2005 [cited October 21 2005]. Available from <a href="http://understandingkatrina.ssrc.org/Quarantelli">http://understandingkatrina.ssrc.org/Quarantelli</a> [Strongly recommended]</td>
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| 3  | 3-Sep | The Disaster Cycle: Mitigation | Haddow and Bullock Chapter 3  
| 4  | 10-Sep | The Disaster Cycle: Preparedness | Haddow and Bullock, Chapter 6  
| 5  | 17-Sep | The Disaster Cycle: Response | Haddow and Bullock Chapter 4; HDR 10, 11, 12, 13  
Guest speaker: Toddi Steelman, NCSU  

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| 24-Sep | 6 | Policy Shortcomings and Solutions In the disaster cycle | Cooper and Block (whole book)  
Haddow and Bullock: "Katrina: A Case Study."  
Rubin Chapter 6 (Harrald), 7 (Gall & Cutter)  
Guest Speaker |
| 1-Oct | 7 | The Politics of Disaster Policy | Read the Stafford Act at this link [http://www.fema.gov/about/stafact.shtm](http://www.fema.gov/about/stafact.shtm)  
Rubin, Chapters 1-5; Haddow and Bullock Chapter 1; HDR 20, 32  
| 8-Oct | 8 | Fall Break--No class | Fall Break--No class |

Brinkley, Douglas. 2006. *The great deluge: Hurricane Katrina, New Orleans, and the Mississippi Gulf Coast*. 1st ed. New York: Morrow. [This is a controversial book--some folks have argued that this is a poorly written polemic. I will let you draw your own conclusion]  
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<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>15-Oct</td>
<td>The Disaster Cycle: Recovery</td>
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<td>HDR 14, 15, 16, 17, 18</td>
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<td>10</td>
<td>22-Oct</td>
<td>Community vulnerability and resilience</td>
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<td>11</td>
<td>29-Oct</td>
<td>Terrorism as a Hazard</td>
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<td>Haddow and Bullock Chapter 9; HDR 22, 23</td>
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<td>12</td>
<td>5-Nov</td>
<td>No Class</td>
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<td>13</td>
<td>12-Nov</td>
<td>Managerial Challenges: The News Media, Disaster Myths and the Homeland Security Era</td>
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<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>26-Nov</td>
<td>Thanksgiving: No Classes</td>
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<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>3-Dec</td>
<td>Paper Presentations and course wrap up</td>
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