In the respective readings for the week, there were several topics at hand which had underlying meanings that were related to mitigation and planning. Haddow and et al discussed the various programs that the federal government has which provides services to those during times of need. It also describes how the federal government plays and important role in the funding process for these programs. It makes a noted attempt on describing the very confusing NRP and outlines how the federal government implements related acts during times of emergencies when the states are overwhelmed and can not respond. Olshanksy’s main points were that individuals can make a difference if the initiative is taken to meet with important decision makers regarding various stages of legislation for emergency preparedness. Examples provided were the legislative enactments in Arkansas and Oregon, and the persistence of those advocates for these bills as well as the lawmakers whom backed them. Also mentioned were that professional networks and also social contacts that were effective when seeking partnerships for
advocacy. The main ideas of the article were to identify problems and solutions in emergency management, and have a message/solution that is always clear and consistent.

Cutter stated in her article that the one size fits all approach is the least effective in improving resilience to hazards. This article defined the concept of social vulnerability stating that it can be the product of social inequalities as well as the environment. It used the concept enhancing resiliency through the process of mitigation and planning, however, from class discussion that approach may not be the most effective. In the Terry article, it described the failures of technology and the failures of human control and determined which was more problematic for society. One important finding of the article was that technology can not provide a guarantee of perfect safety and that society as a whole should determine the risks that are associated with these aspects and address them. The keys of EM in relationship to technology are to recognize the dangers that may exist and develop strategies to lessen the probability of them happening. Farley’s article highlighted attention given by the public and media to a risk of an earthquake and determined the lasting effect and if the downward trend would continue or changes with time.

Important connections between the readings were the importance of mitigation and planning and the implications they may have on those involved directly and indirectly. Each article approaches the concept differently ranging from the individual aspect to social, environment and technology. One of the more positive articles highlighted how one person can make a difference in the emergency management field when very few are interested in its incentives for society overall. This shows that society is more reactive in its concerns which are mainly driven by the dollar and not by the
obligation to protect the health and safety of its citizens. Critical points that should be addressed in the future are in times of recession or when the overall economy is not providing funds as needed to operate programs through the federal government, can state/local government handle the task of mitigation/planning/recovery for disasters? And if so- should they hold this responsibility permanently with the federal government serving only as a source of reference? A related point of interest would be for the state government to examine federal programs such as the IHP, DUA, and Crisis Counseling to determine if these programs should exist at the state level. A statement during class lectures validated by the readings is that a proactive response is very much warranted in the field of emergency management. When managers have the ability to recognize the potential of such emergencies and develops various strategies to combat them, the likelihood of them reoccurring, is almost slim to none.

Future research should be devoted to the social vulnerability of certain areas and groups and also determine if current planning is compatible to various forms of disasters. Cutter’s second article discusses the mitigation and planning conducted in New Orleans prior to Katrina and also describes how social vulnerability was ignored in determining actions because of the difficulty in providing an accurate scale/measure. Special needs populations, as termed by the article, are very important in disasters and catastrophes and should be addressed further to avoid similar instances from reoccurring. Cutter states that in order to reduce impacts of a disaster, social vulnerability should be reduced and living conditions improved. While this may seem feasible in some aspects, the solution lies much deeper than this.