

PA 553  
Final Exam  
Fall 2009

Instructions:

Answer only *one* of the following two essays. Your answer should not exceed 2,500 words, although a few words over will not be counted against you. These questions are very broad, and there is no obvious one "right" answer to these questions. Indeed, I am not sure how I would answer them yet! Rather, I pose these because I am interested in your answers; what I will be evaluating is your skill in gathering evidence for your argument and applying it to the questions. The evidence upon which you should draw includes class reading, response papers and, where appropriate, your own research papers. I do not expect you to do outside research for these essays.

This essay should be written as if it will be printed, with your name on the document, page numbers, etc. **Please clearly indicate on the first page which of the questions you are answering.** You may, if you like, also submit a paper copy as a backup. I will grade and return the emailed copy, but if I cannot find the email I will look to the paper copies.

My grading criteria will include the quality of the evidence, the quality of the logic of your answer, and, of course, the quality of the writing itself. Better papers will reflect engagement with the class readings and, if appropriate, your research projects. Lesser papers will reflect little or no familiarity with the readings and the ideas contained therein. As always, writing matters.

The exam is due by Wednesday, December 16, at 5:00 pm. You need not turn in the paper copy by that time—the email copy will suffice. I will reply by email to acknowledge that I have received your papers. No late exams will be accepted under any circumstances, including but not limited to job responsibilities, car trouble, computer trouble, or other things that do not constitute an immediate threat to health, life, or property. Please plan your time accordingly.

This paper will be due to me via email no later than 5:00 pm on Wednesday, December 16

The questions can be found on the next page.

## Essay One

Emergency management and disaster policy have undergone significant changes since both the September 11 attacks, and since Hurricane Katrina struck the Gulf in 2005. I have—like many other scholars—claimed that many of the changes that were triggered by September 11 impaired federal, state and local government abilities to mitigate, prepare, respond to, and recover from disasters.

However, these criticisms may be too strong. It is difficult to believe that every policy change since September 11 has been a bad idea, has been poorly executed, or should be repealed.

In this essay, assess the state of disaster policy in the United States as it stands today. In addressing this question please address the following elements:

1. Describe federal emergency management policy before September 11.
2. Describe the policy changes that affected emergency management after September 11.
3. Consider what we learned about federal disaster policy in Hurricane Katrina. What aspects of policy worked well? Which aspects did not work well?
4. What policy changes, if any would you recommend beyond those made in the years after Hurricane Katrina? Or, have the necessary corrections been made, and should the policy simply be allowed to be implemented?

## Essay Two

As we learned this semester, one can divide the disaster cycle into four broad stages: mitigation, preparedness, response, and recovery. Of these four stages, to which stage is the greatest attention paid by federal state and local policymakers? Explain why this is the case. Then, consider whether this level of attention is appropriate. In particular, should more attention be paid by the federal government to other aspects of the disaster cycle? What form would that additional attention take? What would be the benefits of this additional attention?