American Public University System

School of Public Service and Health
EDMG530
Economics of Disaster
3 Credit Hours
8-Weeks
Prerequisite(s)

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Course Description (Catalog)

This course is a study of the economics associated with international, national, state, or local level disaster. Students will study, analyze, and conduct research on the direct and indirect economic losses associated with disaster. The course will cover the economics associated with both public and private institutions.

Course Scope

This course is a study of the economics associated with international, national, state, or local level disaster. Students study, analyze, and conduct research on direct and indirect economic losses associated with disaster. The course explores the economics associated with both public and private institutions and is intended to support the critical evaluation of difficult economic issues that confront decision makers as well as that influence future approaches to emergency management. As such, this course assists students’ in solidifying their understanding of disasters, and develops the necessary abilities supportive of contributing to the growing emergency management profession.
STUDENT WARNING: This course syllabus is from a previous semester archive and serves only as a preparatory reference. Please use this syllabus as a reference only until the professor opens the classroom and you have access to the updated course syllabus. Please do NOT purchase any books or start any work based on this syllabus; this syllabus may NOT be the one that your individual instructor uses for a course that has not yet started. If you need to verify course textbooks, please refer to the online course description through your student portal. This syllabus is proprietary material of APUS.

Course Objectives

After successfully completing this course, you will be able to:

- LO-1. Describe the true costs of natural and human-caused disasters on the economy.
- LO-2. Explain the responsibility of citizens in understanding and securing disaster insurance.
- LO-3. List at least three federal programs that provide financial disaster recovery relief.
- LO-4. Identify and discuss common post-disaster problems.
- LO-5. Describe how hurricanes, floods, earthquakes, fires develop and explain the true scale of their aftermath.

Course Delivery Method

This course is delivered via distance learning and will enable students to complete academic work in a flexible manner, completely online. Course materials and access to an online learning management system will be made available to each student. Online assignments are due by the last day of each week and include Discussion Forum questions (accomplished in groups through a threaded discussion forum) and individual assignments (submitted for review by the faculty member). Assigned faculty will support the students throughout this course.

The nature of an online course requires a significant amount of independent work. The student will be provided with structure, resources, guidance, and instructor experience for learning the course material. The student, however, is responsible for managing time, completing assignments on time, completing the readings, and making inquiries as needed to complete the course effectively.

It is important for the student to check their e-mail and posted course announcements for each week’s work. Additional readings, internet work and assignments will be posted online at the beginning of each week of the course. Assignment due dates will be posted with assignment directions. All assignments will have due dates of a week or more, therefore, no extensions or last-minute exceptions are anticipated. The student is expected to complete all work on time.

Due to the busy schedules of the students, all discussion forum assignments are asynchronous, meaning you are not required to be on-line at a specific time with the professor or other students. Instead, you may post your comments or questions in the Forum.

Course Materials

Supporting Materials:
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Supplementary Materials:


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**Evaluation Procedures**

Grades for this course will be based upon graded forums, written assignments and a final course exam. As such, extensive, active and sustained participation is essential. There are seven weekly forums including an initial introductory biography submission which will be graded and that are accessible in the Forums section of the course. The biography need be a minimum of 250 words and must be submitted to the appropriate forum prior to the conclusion of the first week of class. In the case of each weekly forum the student must respond to the topic of discussion and further reply to the postings of a minimum of two other classmates as part of their total grade. Written assignments are to be completed prior to the close of a course week assigned and are to be submitted through the appropriate weekly written assignment window accessible via the Assignments section of the course.

The grading will be based on participation and completion of seven graded discussion Forums, four written assignments and a final essay exam.

The final grade for the course will be calculated as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade Instruments:</th>
<th>Points</th>
<th>% of Final Grade</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Forums (7*)</td>
<td>100 pts each</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Written Assignments (4**)</td>
<td>100 pts each</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final Exam(**)</td>
<td>100 pts</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>1200 pts</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
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*Includes introductory biography submitted as a forum submission in week 1. A grading rubric located under the Course Tools > Resources > Rubrics folder guides evaluation and grading of forum assignments less the biography.

**A grading rubric located under the Course Tools > Resources > Rubrics folder guides evaluation and grading of written assignments and exam essays.

If you have an issue with the grade you received, please consult the instructor. All grading issues will be resolved within a week of turning back the assignment.

**Grading**

Please refer directly to the “Policy” link under the “Links” tab within your classroom for the Grading Scale.

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**Course Outline**

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<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Topic(s)</th>
<th>Learning Objective(s)</th>
<th>Readings</th>
<th>Assignment(s)</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Mitigation Saves</td>
<td>LO-1: Describe the true costs of natural and human-caused disasters on the economy.</td>
<td>&quot;Multihazard Mitigation Saves: An Independent Study to Assess the Future Savings from Mitigation Activities.&quot; Vol 1 and Vol 2</td>
<td>Assignment 1 (See Below)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Economic and Financial Impacts</td>
<td>LO-4: Identify and discuss common post-disaster problems.</td>
<td>&quot;Questions for the Record from the April 30, 2008, Pre-Disaster Mitigation Hearing.&quot;</td>
<td>Assignment 2 (See Below)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Apathy as a Factor</td>
<td>LO-1: Describe the true costs of natural and human-caused disasters on the economy.</td>
<td>Dr. Erik Auf der Heide's Chapter 2: The Apathy Factor</td>
<td>Assignment 3 (See Below)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week</td>
<td>Topic</td>
<td>LOs</td>
<td>Readings</td>
<td>Assignment</td>
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<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Mitigation Saves</td>
<td>LO-3: List at least three federal programs that provide financial disaster recovery relief.</td>
<td>Political Economy of FEMA Disaster Payments,” St. Louis: The Federal Reserve Bank of St. Louis.</td>
<td>(See Below)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>LO-5: Describe how hurricanes, floods, earthquakes, and fires develop and explain the true scale of their aftermath.</td>
<td>There are five articles required to assess:</td>
<td>Assignment 6 (See Below)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| 4    | Disaster Causes and Costs | - BUYING TORNADO SAFETY: WHAT WILL IT COST?  
- Earthquake Hazards—A National Threat  
- Flood Hazards—A National Threat  
- What Do Forest Fires Really Cost?  
- What is the Price of Catastrophic Wildfire? | | |
| 5    | Open for Business: Business Continuity and Emergency Planning Working Together | LO-6: Explain how Lessons Learned and Post-Disaster Evaluations improve future response performance. | “FEMA Strategic Foresight Initiative” | Assignment 7 (See Below) |
| 6    | LO-8: Discern between commonly perceived causes of disasters and theoretically founded causes of disasters. | “Open for Business” | | |
| 7    | Final Exam | Review all reading assignments and Forum Posts. | | Assignment 8 (See Below) |

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**Week 1 – Mitigation Saves**

Written Assignment:

Read the report entitled, "Multihazard Mitigation Saves: An Independent Study to Assess the Future Savings from Mitigation Activities".

Select two main points from the reading and discuss whether you agree or disagree with the authors' position relative to the points.


Do not paste your work into the comment box rather use the comment box to tell me your assignment is completed or to add a statement or question.
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Proof your work and properly cite sources.

Forum:

Introduction Forum: Introduce yourself to your Classmates following the guidance provided.

Introductory biography must be a minimum of 250 words and submitted before the first week of class.

**Week 2 – Economic and Financial Impacts**

Written Assignment: None.

Forum:

Read the Congressional Testimony by Brent Woodworth, Chairman of the committee that produced the Multihazard Mitigation report you read in Week 1.

Following your review, post your agreement or disagreement with Mr. Woodworth's testimony.

Support your position and in doing so, search the online library utilizing the Course Guide portal for scholarly sources to lead credence and support to your rationale.

Your posting need be minimally 250 words in length and formatted using APA style (6th Ed).

Respond to the postings of at least two of you classmates for fullest credit.

**Assignment 3 – Apathy as a Factor**

Written Assignment:

Review the reading by Dr. Erik Auf der Heide - Chapter 2: The Apathy Factor.

In doing so, consider that apathy may well have a far ranging impact on outcomes.

In extending from the reading, consider and so state your thoughts as to whether or not apathy remains a contributing factor impacting the economics of disasters.

Further, source and cite at least one scholarly source using the online library or through utilizing the Course Guide portal that lends support to your view. Your supporting source need be from 1990 or later.

Your work is to be a minimum of three pages and maximum of five, not including cover and reference pages, both of which are required.
Forum:

Please read the below extract taken from Kunreuther and Useem's (2010) work and provide a response indicating why you might find a book written on the topic to be of interest to the current study of the economics of disaster.

In doing so, support your position with either properly cited arguments/rationale from your earlier readings of Woodworth (2008) or other sources you locate via the online library or through utilizing the Course Guide portal.

Your posting need be minimally 250 words in length, maximally 500 words and be formatted using APA style (6th Ed).

Respond to the postings of at least two of you classmates for fullest credit.

.assignment 4 – FEMA Disaster Assistance Funding

Written Assignment:

Read the “The Political Economy of FEMA Disaster Payments”.
After doing so, prepare an 800 - 1000 word essay in which you react to the premise that FEMA funds are distributed politically rather than on the basis of need.

As has been the practice in earlier assignments, source a minimum of one scholarly source that you locate via the online library or through utilizing the Course Guide portal that supports your position.
In doing so, ensure the relevancy of your supporting source by restricting your search to articles written in 1990 or later.

A cover and reference page are required for this work.

APA (6th Ed) is to be used to guide formatting and citations both of which will be evaluated.

Forum:

Discuss the differences between man-made and a natural disasters in economic terms.

In doing so, support your propositions with evidence / properly cited arguments or rationale from sources you locate via the online library or through utilizing the Course Guide portal.

Further consider if such differences offer implications for insurance, governmental funding and liability or other policy-related issues.
Assignment 5 - Whole Community

Written Assignment: None.

Forum:

This forum represents a two part activity.

You to draft a (fictitious) letter in response to FEMA Administrator Craig Fugate's Whole Community Doctrine memo indicating your position as to whether or not you feel the doctrine will have a positive impact on the economy of disasters.

In doing so, ensure your ‘letter’ is properly formatted and proofed and or course spell check. Your letter (Part 2) should be the logical extension of your detailed assessment and analysis of the Doctrine and its possible impacts to community economies that have been the victims of disaster or that may yet be such and are struggling to prepare for future disastrous events.

In demonstrating having conducted that assessment, prepare a Power Point presentation (Part 1) of 8-10 slides that summarizes the possible impacts of the Whole Community Doctrine on the economy of a community victimized by a disaster or preparing to mitigate against disaster. Consider unintended consequences and second-order effects of the Doctrine.

Post your ‘Letter’ to the forum and upload your PowerPoint presentation as an attachment to the posting.

Assignment 6 – Disaster Causes and Costs

Written Assignment: None.

Forum:

Review the indicated journal articles. Select one. Comment on the article’s primary message regarding economic factors.

In doing so, support your observations and the author’s position with evidence / properly cited arguments or rationale from a source you locate via the online library or through utilizing the Course Guide portal.
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Your posting need be minimally 250 words in length, maximally 500 words and be formatted using APA style (6th Ed).

Respond to the postings of at least two of you classmates for fullest credit.

Assignment 7 – Business Continuity and Emergency Planning

Written Assignment:

Read the "SUMMARY OF STRATEGIC FORESIGHT INITIATIVE DRIVERS".

In doing so, choose two drivers from the list of nine initiative drivers and explain how the two selected have the greatest impact on the costs of managing disasters and therefore on the economy.

Differentiate your selected drivers from the other non-selected drivers and carefully support your position.

Are there ways to further enhance or enhance the effect and resultant impact of your selected drivers? If so, do state.

Your work is to be a minimum of three pages and maximum of five, not including cover and reference pages, both of which are required.

APA (6th Ed) is to be used to guide formatting and citations both of which will be evaluated.

Forum:

‘Open for Business’ is a template small businesses can use to create business continuity plans. It can provide a model for planning to reduce the impact of a disaster on the economy.

After reviewing the attachment, share your thoughts regarding how business continuity planners and emergency management professionals might better partner to reduce the economic impact of disasters. Further comment regarding how business continuity planning depicted in the template might help reduce the cost of disaster to small businesses.

Your posting need be minimally 250 words in length, maximally 500 words and be formatted using APA style (6th Ed).

Respond to the postings of at least two of you classmates for fullest credit.

Assignment 8 – Final Exam

Due by week’s close. Students are to complete assigned essay questions covering topics and concepts related across the breadth of the class.
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Policies

Please refer directly to the “Policy” link under the “Links” tab within your classroom for current University policies.

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Academic Services

ONLINE LIBRARY RESEARCH CENTER & LEARNING RESOURCES

The Online Library Resource Center is available to enrolled students and faculty from inside the electronic campus. This is your starting point for access to online books, subscription periodicals, and Web resources that are designed to support your classes and generally not available through search engines on the open Web.

In addition, the Online Library Resource Center provides access to special learning resources, which the University has contracted to assist with your studies. Questions can be directed to orc@apus.edu.

- **Charles Town Library and Inter Library Loan:** The University maintains a special library with a limited number of supporting volumes, collection of our professors’ publication, and services to search and borrow research books and articles from other libraries.
- **Electronic Books:** You can use the online library to uncover and download over 50,000 titles, which have been scanned and made available in electronic format.
- **Electronic Journals:** The University provides access to over 12,000 journals, which are available in electronic form and only through limited subscription services.
- **Turnitin.com:** Turnitin.com is a tool to improve student research skills that also detect plagiarism. Turnitin.com provides resources on developing topics and assignments that encourage and guide students in producing papers that are intellectually honest, original in thought, and clear in expression. This tool helps ensure a culture of adherence to the University's standards for intellectual honesty. Turnitin.com also reviews students' papers for matches with Internet materials and with thousands of student papers in its database, and returns an Originality Report to instructors and/or students.
- **www.tutor.com:** Students have access to ten free hours of tutoring services per year through www.tutor.com. Information about Tutor.com can be found at Tutor.com, the Online Library, and the Tutorial and Student Study Center, with direct links for students to access services. Active duty military and dependents are eligible for free UNLIMITED tutoring.

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