

POLS 5382 Disaster Resilience



Spring 2016

Dr. Ashley Ross

Sam Houston State University

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COURSE DESCRIPTION

The course explores the concept of disaster resilience and how resilience is measured and assessed. Specifically the topics of disasters and hazards, social and physical vulnerability, resilience, adaptive capacity, coordination, and social capital are covered. In the course, students engage in resilience assessments through

independent research. Students not enrolled in the Master of Political Science program must obtain the Department of Political Science Graduate Director's permission to enroll in this course. Credit 3.

“Knowing that keeping development out of hazardous areas is not realistic, researchers have suggested building a disaster-resilient community as a more effective approach...” Masterson et al 2014, page 1.

COURSE INFORMATION

Course Number: POLS 5382-01

CRN: 22781

Credit Hours: 3 hours

Semester & Year: Spring 2016

Department: Political Science

Class Time: online

Class Location: online

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

Students completing this course will be able to:

1. Define disasters, vulnerability, and resilience.
2. Identify the social, economic, institutional, organizational, ecological, community capital, and infrastructure components of disaster resilience.
3. Describe how resilience is a set of capacities and a process.
4. Describe the important of social capital for disaster resilience.
5. Assess vulnerability and resilience of communities of various scales.



ABOUT DR. ASHLEY ROSS

Dr. Ashley Ross received a BA in Political Science and Speech Communications from Texas A&M University in 2003, a MA in Political Science from Louisiana State University in 2006, and a PhD in Political Science from Texas A&M University in 2010. In graduate school her education focused on Comparative Politics of Latin America. Since her research has shifted to examine disaster resilience of the Gulf Coast with current projects focused on resilience in rural communities. She also studies comparative public policy in multiple areas, including climate change and education. Her work has been published in *The American Journal of Political Science*, *Social Science Quarterly*, and *State Politics and Public Policy*. Her book, *Local Disaster Resilience*, was published in 2014 with Routledge. In 2015 she was named a NSF Next Generation Hazards fellow.

REQUIRED MATERIALS

Local Disaster Resilience,
Ashley Ross, 2014, Routledge.
ISBN: 9781138194441

Planning for Community Resilience, Hicks Masterson et al., 2014, Island Press.

ISBN: 9781610915854

Additional readings are available on Blackboard.

PROFESSOR CONTACT INFORMATION

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COURSE GRADES

Your final course grade is comprised of the following assignments:

25% Reading
Reaction Papers

15% Weekly
Discussion
Participation

25% Assessment
Projects

20% Resilience
Report

15% Resilience
Presentation

FINAL COURSE GRADES

Final course letter grades are assigned as follows:

A = 90.0 – 100.0

B = 80.0 – 89.9

C = 70.0 – 79.9

D = 60.0 – 69.9

F = 59.9 and below

READING REACTION PAPERS

Independent reading is the most fundamental part of this course. To keep you accountable for the reading, to demonstrate your comprehension to Dr. Ross, and to keep a record of what you have learned—you will complete a reading reaction paper each week.

The reaction paper should papers should detail two “take-away” points – main ideas presented – from each reading. These should be big ideas and not details. You should

also include your reaction to the reading—did you agree or disagree, find something particularly interesting, etc?

There are 12 reading reaction papers due throughout the semester, comprising 25% of your final course grade. You turn these in on Blackboard.

Grades will be posted on Blackboard within one week of the assignment due date. See Blackboard for the rubric used to grade reaction papers.

WEEKLY DISCUSSION PARTICIPATION

You are required to participate in weekly class discussions about the reading. There are two options for discussions: 1) Google Hangouts chat or 2) Discussion board posts. See Blackboard for more information on these options as well as the rubric for grading.

There will be 12 graded discussions throughout the semester. Your participation will be graded according to the rubric shown on Blackboard. Your lowest 2 discussion grades will be dropped; the average of your top 10 discussion grades will comprise 15% of our final course grade.

ASSESSMENT PROJECTS

With a partner you will complete 5 resilience assessment projects: in a place of your choosing 1) Hazard exposure, 2) Physical resilience, 3) Social resilience, 4) Hazard mitigation plans, and 5) Coordination . The details of these projects will be distributed via Blackboard on March 10. These projects are worth 5% each, comprising 25% of your final course grade.

RESILIENCE REPORT & PRESENTATION

With a partner you will compile a report that details the findings of your assessment projects and make an overall evaluation of resilience in a place of your choosing. You will also prepare a presentation that summarizes your findings to share with the class.

The requirements of the report and presentation will be provided via Blackboard on March 10. The resilience project counts toward 20% of your final course grade and the presentation 15%.



Research shows that group projects can help students develop a host of skills that are increasingly important in the professional world (Caruso & Woolley, 2008; Mannix & Neale, 2005).

GRADING POLICIES

Late assignments are not accepted except in the event of an emergency or excused absence, which includes: participation in a university-affiliated activity, a religious holiday (and travel related to that holiday), death or major illness in your immediate family, participation in legal proceedings, injury or illness too severe to allow completion, or required participation in military duties.

To receive an assignment deadline extension, you should notify me by email

prior to the due date if possible. In cases where advance notification is not feasible, you should provide notification by the end of the second working day after the due date. If needed, you must provide additional documentation substantiating the reason for the missing the due date. Make-up assignments must be completed on the day agreed upon by Dr. Ross.



ACADEMIC

DISHONESTY

You are expected to engage in all academic pursuits in a manner that is above reproach and to maintain complete honesty and integrity in the academic experiences both in and out of the classroom. Students found to engage in academic dishonesty in any form are subject to disciplinary action. University faculty and representatives may initiate disciplinary proceedings against a student accused of any form of academic dishonesty, including but not limited to, cheating on an examination or other academic work, plagiarism, collusion, and the abuse of resource materials. For the university policy, see: www.shsu.edu/syllabus.

STUDENT WITH DISABILITIES

Sam Houston State University complies with the Americans with Disabilities Act in making reasonable accommodations for qualified students with disabilities. Students with disabilities that might affect their academic performance are expected to visit with the Office of Services for Students with Disabilities located in the Counseling Center. The Counsel-

ing Center may be reached at (936) 294-3786. Once registered, please meet with me as soon as possible so that we can make all needed accommodations in the class. All disclosures of disabilities are kept confidential. For more information, see: <http://www.shsu.edu/dept/disability/>.

STUDENT ABSENCES ON RELIGIOUS HOLIDAYS

Section 51.911(b) of the Texas Education Code requires that an institution of higher education excuse a student from attending classes or other required activities, including examinations, for the observance of a religious holy day, including travel for that purpose. Section 51.911 (a) (2) defines a religious holy day as: “a holy day observed by a religion whose places of worship are exempt from property taxation under Section 11.20....” A student whose absence is excused under this subsection may not be penalized for that absence and shall be allowed to take an examination or complete an assignment from which the student is excused within a reasonable time after the absence.

University policy 861001 provides the procedures to be followed by the student and instructor. A student desiring to absent himself/herself from a scheduled class in order to observe (a) religious holy day(s) shall present to each instructor involved a written statement concerning the religious holy day(s). The instructor will complete a form notifying the student of a reasonable timeframe in which the missed assignments and/or examinations are to be completed. For more information, see: www.shsu.edu/syllabus.

COURSE SCHEDULE

Dates subject to change with advance notice. Reading reaction papers and Learning Activities due Tuesdays on Blackboard by 11:59pm. Weekly Discussion day and time TBA.

| Date | Topic | Reading | Assignments & Activities |
|------------------------------------|---|--|--|
| Week 1: Jan. 13 - 19 | Course Introduction | None | 1. Review syllabus 2. Discussion board 3. Course survey |
| Week 2: Jan. 20 – 26 | Disasters Defined | 1. Perry 2007 2. Tierney et al 2001, Chapter 1 3. Gregg & Houghton 2006 | 1. Reading Reaction Paper 1 2. Learning Activity 1 3. Discussion 1 |
| Week 3: Jan. 27 – Feb. 2 | Resilience Defined | 1. Masterson et al Chapters 1 & 2 2. Paton 2006 3. Paton & Johnston 2006 | 1. Reading Reaction Paper 2 2. Learning Activity 2 3. Discussion 2 |
| Week 4: Feb. 3-9 | Resilience & Disaster Phases | 1. Ross Chapters 1 & 2 2. Masterson et al Chapter 3 3. Norris 2008 | 1. Reading Reaction Paper 3 2. Learning Activity 3 3. Discussion 3 |
| Week 5: Feb. 10 - 16 | Adaptive Capacity for Resilience | 1. Ross Chapter 5 2. Cutter et al 3. Peacock et al | 1. Reading Reaction Paper 4 2. Learning Activity 4 3. Discussion 4 |
| Week 6: Feb. 17 – 23 | Resilient Response & Recovery | 1. Ross Chapter 6 2. Stewart et al 2009 3. Tierney et al 2001, Chapter 3 | 1. Reading Reaction Paper 5 2. Learning Activity 5 3. Discussion 5 |
| Week 7: Feb. 24 – Mar. 1 | Social Capital | 1. Aldrich 2012 2. Carpenter & Montoya 2011 3. Colten | 1. Reading Reaction Paper 6 2. Learning Activity 6 3. Discussion 6 |
| Week 8: Mar. 2-4 | Resilience Axioms | 1. Vale & Campanella 2005 | 1. Reading Reaction Paper 7 2. Group & place selections |
| Spring Break March 5-15 | | | |
| Week 9: Mar. 16-22 | Assessing Hazard Exposure | 1. Masterson et al Chapter 4 2. Peducci et al 2009 | 1. Reading Reaction Paper 8 2. Group Activity 1 3. Discussion 7 |
| Week 10: Mar. 23-29 | Assessing Physical Vulnerability & Resilience | 1. Masterson et al Chapter 5 2. Johnston et al 2006 | 1. Reading Reaction Paper 9 2. Group Activity 2 3. Discussion 8 |
| Week 11: Mar. 30-Apr. 5 | Assessing Social Vulnerability & Resilience | 1. Masterson et al Chapter 6 2. Buckle 2006 | 1. Reading Reaction Paper 10 2. Group Activity 3 3. Discussion 9 |
| Week 12: Apr. 6 – 12 | Assessing Hazard Mitigation Plans | 1. Masterson et al Chapter 7 2. King 2006 | 1. Reading Reaction Paper 11 2. Group Activity 4 3. Discussion 10 |
| Week 13: Apr. 13-19 | Assessing Coordination | 1. Drabek 2007 2. Kendra & Wachtendorf 2007 | 1. Reading Reaction Paper 12 2. Group Activity 5 3. Discussion 11 |
| Week 14: Apr. 20-26 | Research | None | None |
| Week 15: Apr. 27-May 3 | Research | None | None |
| Week 16: May 4 | Resilience Presentations | None | 1. Resilience Report 2. Presentation 3. Discussion 12 |