## SOCY 4037-581 (Online/Asynchronous):

## Hazards, Disasters, & Society, Spring 2021

**Contact Information**

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Pronouns: she/her

**Communication**

You can reach me by email. Please put “SOCY 4037” in the subject line. I will do my best to respond to emails within 48 hours. I will also hold virtual office hours every Monday from 3:30-4:30pm (MT) starting on February 1. I will also be available other times by appointment.

**Course Description**

This course explores the societal dimensions of hazards and disasters, emphasizing disaster theory and research, key issues in the sociological study of disasters, social vulnerability, the impacts of disasters in the U.S. and worldwide and the U.S. Emergency Management System. The course also investigates how disaster resilience can be achieved in ways that are equitable and just.

**Course Objectives**

Course objectives are organized according to Bloom’s taxonomy. The first phase of the course will emphasize comprehending and applying course concepts to empirical cases of hazards and disasters in society.  The second phase of the course will emphasize using course concepts and materials to analyze, synthesize, and evaluate information on hazards and disasters.

First phase: (Knowledge, Comprehension, Application)

Students will:

* List key definitional terms and the main research methods and data sources used to study hazards and disasters.
* Describe different sociological perspectives used to study hazards and disasters.
* Illustrate how the sociological study of hazards and disaster evolved over time and how it intersects with other disciplines.

Second phase: (Analysis, Synthesis, Evaluation)

Students will:

* Explain major debates in the field, including definitional, ethical, methodological, and theoretical debates.
* Evaluate the state of the field, including how the field should continue to evolve or what new research directions the field should take.
* Critically assess research, media accounts, and popular rhetoric on hazards and disasters.

**Course Outline**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| *Unit* | *Description* |
| 1 | Introduction: Why study hazards and disasters? What is the sociological study of hazards and disasters? |
| 2 | Theoretical perspectives |
| 3 | Social inequality, disaster vulnerability, and disaster resilience |
| 4 | Doing disaster research: ethics, challenges, and blind spots |
| 5 | U.S. emergency management systems and disaster governance |
| 6 | Addressing hazards and disasters: Adaptation, transformation, and equity |
| 7 | Addressing hazards and disasters: Final Project |

**Required Texts**

There are no required texts for this course. All reading materials will be posted on canvas.

**Method of Instruction**

This course is entirely online and asynchronous. I will provide and post all course materials.  The course material is broken into 7 units. The course is intended for you to be able to move through material at your own pace; however, you will need to devote time each week to reading and reviewing material so that you do not fall behind and so that you give yourself ample time to submit quality work. Each unit will have learning objectives, required readings, video lectures, and additional materials.

For units 1-6, you will submit responses to posted reading questions and discussion questions (details in assignment section). Due dates for these questions are posted on Canvas. For the final unit you will have the option between assignments that will allow you to apply knowledge learned throughout the course. You will also be responsible for 5 short quizzes at the end of units 1-5.

**Student Responsibilities and Class Expectations**

I expect students to stay on top of their assignments. It is your responsibility to get in touch with me quickly if you are struggling with any part of the course. It is your responsibility to let me know before an assignment is due if there are circumstances that prevent you from turning in the material on time. For each day an assignment is late, I will deduct one letter grade.

I expect that this online learning environment will be positive, supportive, courteous, and respectful. Those who fail to adhere to such behavioral standards will be reported to the department chair.

I expect students to troubleshoot technical issues on their own and to make sure assignments are submitted on time. You may contact OIT for technical problems with Canvas: oithelp@colorado.edu, 303-735-4357.

**Assignments**

* *Discussion Board Activity* (210 POINTS): Units 1-6 will have a discussion board. You will be required to post a response to the discussion board prompts I post. Responses to other students are option (but encouraged). Your posts must be thoughtful, logical, respectful, and written in complete sentences. For full credit you must follow all directions listed on the discussion board. Each unit’s discussion board activity is worth 35 points. Your score will be as follows: 35/35 = excellent, 30/35= good, 25/35= meets requirements, 15/35= does not meet requirements.
* *Reading Question Responses* (300 POINTS): There are 13 Reading Response Assignments. You are required to turn in at least 10. You can turn in more, but I will only take your 10 highest scores when calculating your final grade. Each reading response option will list questions based on 1-3 of the unit readings. Each response will be worth 30 points.
  + I will grade the responses using a pass/fail system, meaning that I will either give you full credit (30/30) for a well-written response that indicates you did the reading, gave thought to your responses, and proofread your response for clarity and grammar. I you will give you half credit (15/15) if the response is incomplete, overly-vague, not of good quality, etc.
  + Responses should be about 2-3 pages, double-spaced, using size 12 font and should include specific details/examples from the readings to support your answers. For full points you must also follow all instructions, and you must turn in responses by the specified due date.
  + \*Note\* You should still read all the chapters/articles assigned for every unit, even if you do not turn in a reading response for them.
* *Check-In Quizzes* (250 POINTS): There will be five 50-point check-in quizzes throughout the course. These are designed to assess comprehension of course concepts. Questions will come from the readings, lecture videos, and other unit materials. These quizzes will be open note and book and are timed. Students should look at unit learning objectives to guide study.
* *Final Project* (240 POINTS): For the final project you will pick one project option from a list I will provide. I will provide a grading rubric for each option.

**Submission Policies**

All assignments must be submitted online through canvas. Please make sure you submit papers as word documents or PDFs. It is your responsibility to make sure that you successfully upload your assignments. If you have troubles with Canvas, contact CU IT Service Center at 303-735-4357.

**Grading Criteria and Points Breakdown**

There are 1000 points students can earn this semester. At the end of the semester, I will divide your total points by 1000, and the resulting percentage will constitute your grade.

**Grading Scale**

Grades will be assigned as follows

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| *Table - Grading Scale* | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| **Letter Grade** | A | A- | B+ | B | B- | C+ | C | C- | D+ | D | D- | F |
| **Percentage Grade** | 94-100 | 90-93 | 87-89 | 83-86 | 80-82 | 77-79 | 73-76 | 70-72 | 67-69 | 63-66 | 60-62 | <60 |

**Course Plagiarism Policy**

Plagiarism is considered a violation of the University Honor Code Policy and is subject to disciplinary action.

**Inclusivity**

The University of Colorado Boulder Department of Sociology emphasizes the importance of ***diverse***voices and experiences for strengthening our teaching, research, and service to broader communities. As a department committed to***justice*** and ***equity***, our goal is to create an environment that welcomes and supports everyone. As an instructor I honor this commitment and strive to make our shared class experience inclusive and welcoming to all.

Professional courtesy and sensitivity are especially important with respect to individuals and topics dealing with race, color, national origin, sex, pregnancy, age, disability, creed, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, veteran status, political affiliation or political philosophy.  Class rosters are provided to the instructor with the student's legal name. I will gladly honor your request to address you by an alternate name or gender pronoun. Please advise me of this preference early in the semester so that I may make appropriate changes to my records.

**Netiquette**

All students should be aware that their behavior impacts other people, even online. I hope that we will all strive to develop a positive and supportive environment and will be courteous to fellow students and your instructor. Due to the nature of the online environment, there are some things to remember.

1. Always think before you write. In other words, without the use of nonverbals with your message, your message can be misinterpreted. So please think twice before you hit submit.
2. Keep it relevant. There are places to chat and post for fun everyday stuff. Do not stray from the discussion in the assigned questions.
3. Never use all caps. This is the equivalent of yelling in the online world. It is not fun to read. Only use capital letters when appropriate.
4. Make sure that you are using appropriate grammar and structure. In other words, I don’t want to see anyone writing “R U” instead of “are you”. There are people in the class that may not understand this type of abbreviation, not to mention it does nothing to help expand your writing and vocabulary skills. Emoticons are fine as long as they are appropriate. A smile ☺ is welcome, anything offensive is not.
5. Treat people the same as you would face-to-face. In other words, it is easy to hide behind the computer. In some cases, it empowers people to treat others in ways they would not in person. Remember there is a person behind the name on your screen. Treat all with dignity and respect and you can expect that in return.
6. Respect the time of others. This class is going to require you to work in groups. Learn to respect the time of others in your group and your experience will be much better. Always remember that you are not the only person with a busy schedule, be flexible. Do not procrastinate! You may be one that works best with the pressures of the deadline looming on you, but others may not be that way. The same is true for the reverse. The key to a successful group is organization, communication and a willingness to do what it takes to get it done.

Source: The Core Rules of Netiquette

**Accommodation Statement**

If you qualify for accommodations because of a disability, please submit your accommodation letter from Disability Services to your faculty member in a timely manner so that your needs can be addressed.  Disability Services determines accommodations based on documented disabilities in the academic environment.  Information on requesting accommodations is located on the [Disability Services website](http://www.colorado.edu/disabilityservices/students). Contact Disability Services at 303-492-8671 or [dsinfo@colorado.edu](mailto:dsinfo@colorado.edu) for further assistance.  If you have a temporary medical condition or injury, see [Temporary Medical Conditions](http://www.colorado.edu/disabilityservices/students/temporary-medical-conditions) under the Students tab on the Disability Services website.

#### Religious Observances

[Campus policy regarding religious observances](https://www.colorado.edu/policies/observance-religious-holidays-and-absences-classes-andor-exams) requires that faculty make every effort to deal reasonably and fairly with all students who, because of religious obligations, have conflicts with scheduled exams, assignments or required attendance.  In this class, please notify me so we can make necessary arrangements.

#### Classroom Behavior

Students and faculty each have responsibility for maintaining an appropriate learning environment. Those who fail to adhere to such behavioral standards may be subject to discipline. Professional courtesy and sensitivity are especially important with respect to individuals and topics dealing with race, color, national origin, sex, pregnancy, age, disability, creed, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, veteran status, political affiliation or political philosophy.  Class rosters are provided to the instructor with the student's legal name. I will gladly honor your request to address you by an alternate name or gender pronoun. Please advise me of this preference early in the semester so that I may make appropriate changes to my records.  For more information, see the policies on [classroom behavior](http://www.colorado.edu/policies/student-classroom-and-course-related-behavior) and the [Student Code of Conduct](http://www.colorado.edu/osccr/).

#### Sexual Misconduct, Discrimination, Harassment and/or Related Retaliation

The University of Colorado Boulder (CU Boulder) is committed to fostering a positive and welcoming learning, working, and living environment. CU Boulder will not tolerate acts of sexual misconduct intimate partner abuse (including dating or domestic violence), stalking, protected-class discrimination or harassment by members of our community. Individuals who believe they have been subject to misconduct or retaliatory actions for reporting a concern should contact the Office of Institutional Equity and Compliance (OIEC) at 303-492-2127 or [cureport@colorado.edu](mailto:cureport@colorado.edu). Information about the OIEC, university policies, [anonymous reporting](https://cuboulder.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_0PnqVK4kkIJIZnf), and the campus resources can be found on the [OIEC website](http://www.colorado.edu/institutionalequity/).

Please know that faculty and instructors have a responsibility to inform OIEC when made aware of incidents of sexual misconduct, discrimination, harassment and/or related retaliation, to ensure that individuals impacted receive information about options for reporting and support resources.

#### Honor Code

All students enrolled in a University of Colorado Boulder course are responsible for knowing and adhering to the Honor Code. Violations of the policy may include: plagiarism, cheating, fabrication, lying, bribery, threat, unauthorized access to academic materials, clicker fraud, submitting the same or similar work in more than one course without permission from all course instructors involved, and aiding academic dishonesty. All incidents of academic misconduct will be reported to the Honor Code ([honor@colorado.edu](mailto:honor@colorado.edu)); 303-492-5550). Students who are found responsible for violating the academic integrity policy will be subject to nonacademic sanctions from the Honor Code as well as academic sanctions from the faculty member. Additional information regarding the Honor Code academic integrity policy can be found at the [Honor Code Office website](https://www.colorado.edu/osccr/honor-code).

**Requirements for COVID-19**

If you are coming to the CU Boulder campus for any reason, please be aware of the following policies.

In Case of Illness

 If you are unable to complete work while quarantining or sick, please alert your faculty member as soon as possible so that arrangements can be made for you to complete the course.

If you are able to complete work while quarantining or sick, stay in touch with faculty in case this situation changes. Because of FERPA student privacy laws, you may, but are not required to, state the nature of your illness when notifying faculty.

If Coming to Campus

As a matter of public health and safety due to the pandemic, all members of the CU Boulder community and all visitors to campus must follow university, department and building requirements, and public health orders in place to reduce the risk of spreading infectious disease. Required safety measures at CU Boulder relevant to the classroom setting include:

* maintain 6-foot distancing when possible,
* wear a face covering in public indoor spaces and outdoors while on campus consistent with state and county health orders,
* clean local work area,
* practice hand hygiene,
* follow public health orders, and
* if sick and you live off campus, **do not come onto campus** (unless instructed by a CU Healthcare professional), or if you live on-campus, please alert CU Boulder Medical Services.

Students who fail to adhere to these requirements will be asked to leave class, and students who do not leave class when asked or who refuse to comply with these requirements will be referred to [Student Conduct and Conflict Resolution](https://www.colorado.edu/sccr/).

**Student Resources**

There are additional university resources if you are experiencing hardship due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Those needing emergency financial assistance should explore offerings through the Student Emergency Fund (<https://www.colorado.edu/studentaffairs/student-emergency-fund.>).

Those experiencing food insecurity are urged to contact the CU Boulder Food Assistance Committee (food@colorado.edu) and explore their website for more information (https://www.colorado.edu/volunteer/food-assistance/campus-resources).

Those struggling with stress, anxiety, and uncertainty of any kind are strongly encouraged to reach out to Counseling and Psychiatric Services (303-492-2277). More information on the resources related to mental health can be found here: https://www.colorado.edu/counseling/.

Students with no means of accessing internet should contact the Office of Diversity, Equity and Community Engagement (mignon.macias@colorado.edu) for information on how to acquire an Internet hotspot. Additionally, if you do not have a computer at home, please do not hesitate to contact me and I am happy to connect you with the university channels to request one.

**Course Schedule**

Unit 1 Schedule: Introduction to the Sociology of Hazards and Disasters

(Week of January 25 and February 1)

* Readings:
  + “The Social Significance of Disasters” by Kathleen Tierney.
  + “Disaster Research in Historical Context” by Kathleen Tierney.
  + “Contributions of Technological and Natech Disaster Research to the Social Science Disaster Paradigm” by Duane Gill and Liesel Ritchie.
* See Unit 1 lecture materials.
* Post responses to Discussion Board by January 29.
* Reading Responses 1 and 2 due by February 5.
* Complete Quiz 1 by February 5.

Unit 2 Schedule: Theoretical Perspectives

(Week of February 8 and February 15)

* Readings:
  + “Theoretical Approaches and Perspectives in the Study of Hazards and Disasters” by Kathleen Tierney.
  + “Organizing Hazards, Engineering Disasters? Improving the Recognition of Political Economic Factors in the Creation of Disasters” by William R. Freudenburg, Robert Gramling, Shirley Laska, and Kai T. Erikson.
  + “Race, Ethnicity, Class, and Disaster Vulnerability” by Bob Bolin and Liza Kurtz.
  + “Places as Recovery Machines: Vulnerability and Neighborhood Change After Major Hurricanes” by Jeremy Pais and James Elliot.
* See Unit 2 lecture materials.
* Post responses to Discussion Board by February 12.
* Reading Responses 3 and 4 due by February 19.
* Complete Quiz 2 by February 19.

Unit 3 Schedule: Social Inequality, Disaster Vulnerability, and Resilience

(Week of February 22 and March 1)

* Readings:
  + “The Youngest Survivors” by Lori Peek and Alice Fothergill
  + “Children Youth and Disaster” by Lori Peek and Alice Fothergill
  + “Disaster Vulnerability” by Kathleen Tierney.
  + “Using an Intersectional Approach to Advance Understanding of Homeless Persons’ Vulnerability to Disasters” by Jamie Vickery.
  + “Post-Disaster Development Dilemmas: Advancing Landscapes of Social Justice in a Neoliberal Post-Disaster Landscape” by Anna Brand and Vern Baxter
* See Unit 3 lecture materials.
* Post Responses to Discussion Board by February 26.
* Reading Responses 5, 6, and 7 due by March 5.
* Complete Quiz 3 by March 5.

Unit 4 Schedule: Doing Disaster Research-- Ethics, Challenges, and Trends

(Week of March 8 and March 15)

* Readings:
  + “Methodological Issues in Disaster Research” by William Donner and Walter Diaz.
  + “Studying Children and Youth in Disasters: A Note on Methods” by Alice Fothergill and Lori Peek.
  + “Queering Disasters” by Dale Dominey-Howes, Andrew Gorman Murray, and Scott McKinnon.
* See Unit 4 lecture materials.
* Post Response to Unit Discussion Board by March 12.
* Reading Responses 8 and 9 due by March 19.
* Complete Quiz 4 by March 19.

Unit 5 Schedule: US Emergency Management and Disaster Governance

(Week of March 22 and March 29)

* Readings:
  + "Tipping Points in Policy and Practice" by Susan Cutter
  + "Hurricane Maria in Puerto Rico: Pre-existing Vulnerabilities and Catastrophic Outcomes” by Jennifer Santos-Hernández, Ashley J. Méndez-Heavilin, and Génesis Álvarez-Rosario.
  + “California Wildfires” by David Calkin, Karen Short, and Meg Traci
  + “Loss Reduction and Sustainability” by Melanie Gall
* See Unit 5 lecture materials.
* Post Responses to Discussion Board by March 29.
* Reading Responses 10 and 11 due by April 2.
* Complete Quiz 5 by April 2.

Unit 6 Schedule: Addressing Hazards and Disasters Part I

(Week of April 5 and April 12)

* Readings:
  + “Looking Ahead: A Move Toward Safety, or More of the Same” by Kathleen Tierney.
  + "Why Ecological Revolution?" by John Foster.
  + “Justice Forward: Climate Adaptation and Responsibility” by Kyle Powys Whyte.
  + “Community Resettlement in Louisiana: Learning from Histories of Horror and Hope” by Nathan Jessee.
* See Unit 6 lecture materials.
* Post Response to Discussion Board by April 9.
* Reading Responses 12 and 13 due by April 16.

Unit 7 Schedule: Addressing Hazards and Disasters Part II

(Week of April 19 and April 26)

* Turn in Final Project by April 27.