MGMT E-5090:
CRISIS MANAGEMENT AND EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS
(#13601)

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COURSE THEMES AND FOCUS

News headlines, dramatic photographs, and video tell us about the lives lost, destruction, and hardship generated by many types of severe emergencies:

- **Natural disasters** (hurricanes, tsunamis, earthquakes, floods, forest fires),
- **Technology, infrastructure, and systems failures** (major industrial accidents, bridge collapses, power or cyber system blackouts, airline and train crashes),
- **Infectious Disease** (Ebola, MERS, H1N1, SARS, West Nile virus, avian flu), and
- **Purposeful, human-initiated disasters** (terrorism, bioterrorism, riots).

Such crises challenge society to respond creatively to novel situations with very high stakes. Lives, property, and critical resources are at risk.

Today, traditional emergency responders (police, firefighters,
and emergency medical teams) have to be ready for these emergencies; but an even wider range of public sector responders must also be prepared (including, for example, state and local public health, transportation, and public works agencies). No less do private business firms and nonprofit organizations like universities have to be prepared for extreme events. Moreover, concerned individuals need to understand the dynamics of severe emergencies in order to thoughtfully exercise their responsibilities as citizens – including to vote for qualified candidates for public office and assess budgets for emergency capacity building.

In the United States and many other countries, committed people are working hard to improve crisis-response capabilities. But what is required to help individuals, agencies, and the emergency management system as a whole prepare well and perform effectively in future crises?

Getting truly ready is extremely difficult because responders have to function in two modes – preparing both for what we will term “routine emergencies” and for the rarer but more difficult true “crises.” In a crisis, taking action is urgent, but the tactics and methods that work in confronting everyday emergencies may be inadequate – or even counterproductive. Crisis conditions can lead to confusion about the correct course of action, decision-making delays, failures of communication, conflicts or unintentional interference among response organizations, flaws in execution of response action, and undesirable citizen reactions. Response leaders confronting crises therefore must operate in a different mode than that appropriate for routine emergencies; they must make decisions with participation of a wider range of stakeholders, developing new solutions by combining elements of several kinds of routine response or by innovating in their strategies and tactics. Effective improvisation is frequently crucial to handle the novel elements of crisis. More expansive communication methods are also frequently essential.

To help improve emergency preparedness, this course develops a managerial perspective on crisis management. The course carefully examines:

- The distinctive challenges of dealing with very large (“landscape-scale”) disasters;
- The stresses that crisis situations place on individual and group decision making;
- The problems of communication that arise within the group of initial responders, among other organizations mobilized by the crisis, and between officials and the public-at-large;
- Methods of coordinating the diverse organizations likely to be involved in emergency response – organizations that come from different professions, agencies, levels of government, and the private sector; and
- The contrasting leadership and organizational strategies for responding, on one hand, to “routine” emergencies and, on the other, to the novel, unanticipated “crisis” emergencies for which prior preparations may be inadequate or counterproductive.

In taking this managerial view, the course seeks to identify and explain the skills and systems that must be deployed in times of crisis; considers how to set a course of action, mobilize and coordinate resources, and rally support; and – quite importantly – asks how organizations can effectively prepare in advance for crises.

**Course Format – “Live” and “Distance Learning” Options**

The course will meet “live” once a week on **Mondays from 5:30 to 7:30 PM** in Room 306, 1 Story Street, on the Harvard campus in Cambridge. The course will also be available electronically both in “real-time” internet streaming or as on-demand, recorded class sessions available on the web.
Class sessions will mix lecture and discussion, with an emphasis on the latter. Most sessions will involve analysis of a detailed case study of an emergency management situation, but other assigned readings will also be discussed. I will have plenty to say but will rarely lecture for an entire class meeting. Instead, I prefer to run most class sessions as discussions with lots of participation. Comment, disagreement, participant-to-participant discussion are all “in bounds” and will make our time together more productive and livelier.

As noted, through the Extension School’s Distance Education Program, Mgmt E-5090 classes at Harvard each week are recorded and made available to all registered students via the internet. Some students will thus be taking the course exclusively or partially online, via real-time streaming video or recorded lectures posted on the web about one day after a class occurs “live” in the classroom. If distance students view the real-time streaming video, they will also be able to participate in an online “chat room” with other distance students, which will be moderated by David Giles, the course teaching fellow. Students can access the chat room by signing into the course website.

Note that when class session videos are posted to the course website (usually about 24 hours after the live class), they will be available to both “distance” and “in class” students throughout the semester. So a student who normally attends classes “live” will be able to view a session that s/he has missed or review material that was covered during a class attended “live.” Only students officially registered for the course will be able to access the video postings on the course website.

ACCESSIBILITY

The Extension School is committed to providing an accessible academic community. The Disability Services Office offers a variety of accommodations and services to students with documented disabilities. Please visit www.extension.harvard.edu/resources-policies/resources/disability-services for more information.

STUDENT INFORMATION

To give me a better idea of your prior educational background, work experience, and personal objectives, please e-mail a resume, plus a cover letter telling me why you are taking the course. (My e-mail address is on the first page of the syllabus.) I am most interested in your prior education and work experience. This information helps me better target what I am doing in class and get acquainted with you much faster. If you don't have a reasonably up-to-date resume, please don't bother constructing one; just tell me the basic story in your letter. If you are a distance education student, please let me know your location – city, state, country – since otherwise I have no way of knowing. Please make sure that you include your e-mail address and phone number so that I can reach you if necessary.

COURSE WEBSITE

The course website should prove a valuable asset whether you are taking the course “live” or over the internet. The website will put in one electronic place a number of resources: downloadable versions of the syllabus, information about the instructor and the course, class PowerPoint slides, assignments, discussion bulletin boards to communicate with classmates, etc. New material will appear at least weekly. The URL for the course website is:
https://canvas.harvard.edu/courses/18390/assignments/syllabus

Please note: Only registered students will be able to access the website. You will need to log in with your Harvard Key (a “pin” provided by the Extension School when you register for the course).

PROGRAM ON CRISIS LEADERSHIP WEBSITE

Howitt and Giles are Faculty Co-Director and Associate Director, respectively, of Harvard Kennedy School’s Program on Crisis Leadership (PCL). PCL’s website contains a wide range of publications – many of which can be downloaded at no cost – as well as a listing of case studies on emergency management. The website also announces term-time PCL events that students located in the Harvard area are welcome to attend. See http://www.hks.harvard.edu/programs/crisisleadership

READING ASSIGNMENTS

The syllabus lists required readings and case study assignments for each class session. Students are expected to read the REQUIRED READING assignments before class. Often the syllabus lists several questions to think about while you are doing your reading. In preparing for class, these questions should help you focus on key points and prepare for class participation. (I don’t want or expect, however, that you will submit written responses to the discussion questions!)

Sometimes class sessions will directly discuss the required readings, particularly the case studies, and discussion questions; at other times some required readings will be mentioned briefly in class or not at all. However, I regard all required readings as important and will hold you responsible for their content in written assignments.

In addition, this syllabus is meant to be a resource for students who wish to go beyond the requirements of the course on selected subjects. On most topics the syllabus lists many SUGGESTED FURTHER READINGS. These are included so that if a topic piques your interest or if in the future you need to delve more deeply into an issue, you will have references. I do not expect that you will read these as we go along in the course, but I hope that many of you will eventually sample the books, articles, and documents included among the suggested readings.

Finding course required readings:

- **BOOKS**: For those students who purchase course readings, which you will find quite convenient, you can purchase the following books at the Harvard Coop in Cambridge or order them from Amazon, Barnes and Noble, or other online booksellers:


- **CASE STUDIES**: Many case studies we use in the course are contained in the Howitt and Leonard book noted above. In addition, some required case studies will be available for free download on the course website. However, other required case studies, for which free download is not permitted because of copyright restrictions, are available for online purchase. A course pack will be available that will enable students to purchase these as a set with a discount. Instructions on how to procure the pack will be sent to students by email and posted on the course website. In addition, links for purchasing these cases individually are provided on the syllabus, under the date for which they are assigned.
• **OTHER READINGS:** Some readings, as indicated on the syllabus, may be downloaded directly from the internet or are available on the course website. Others are available electronically through Harvard’s online library portal, at: [http://sfx.hul.harvard.edu/hvd/az/](http://sfx.hul.harvard.edu/hvd/az/). Instructions on how to then proceed to obtain readings through this portal are provided on the syllabus, under the date for which they are assigned. Please note that to access these readings, you will be asked to enter either your Harvard Key or Harvard ID and PIN numbers.

**NOTE:** Accessing *New York Times* articles: We have assigned *New York Times* articles for a number of class sessions. The *Times*, however, limits how many free articles an individual can read online each month. Therefore, to obtain these articles, you need to access them through the Harvard Library's online subscription, which is available and free to students who have a Harvard Key or Harvard ID number and a PIN. To access the articles, please follow these instructions:

1. Go to [http://e-research.lib.harvard.edu/V?func=find-db-1](http://e-research.lib.harvard.edu/V?func=find-db-1) [**NOTE THAT YOU WILL PROBABLY NEED TO LOG-IN WITH YOUR HARVARD KEY OR HUID AT THIS POINT**]
2. Type Lexis into the "Database Name" field.
3. Click on LexisNexis Academic [this should be the first option that appears]
4. You will then be directed to the search page for the LexisNexis database. Enter the article title into the search field. Click on the result that matches the information for the reading given in the syllabus.

The syllabus also lists “suggested readings” in addition to required ones. Some of these are available for download on the internet. However, we do not have ways of supplying some others of these readings, especially to distance-learning students. Students will have to find these items on their own if you wish to read them.

**A NOTE ON THE CASE STUDY METHOD**

This course relies heavily on the “case study method.” Case studies are descriptions of management situations, often ending with a problem or dilemma for the manager to solve. In the process of dissecting the problem during discussion and assessing the options available to the manager for solving it, we will learn a good deal about emergency management in general – not just about that particular situation.

The best way to prepare a case study for class involves several steps:

- Look at the discussion questions listed on the syllabus to orient you to the issues. Class discussion will later engage these or related discussion questions.
- Next, read the case through.
- Then return to the questions, develop some tentative answers based on your reading, and carefully review the case again to test the feasibility and good sense of your ideas.

This thinking in advance will “prime” you to listen acutely to classmates’ comments and participate in class discussions.

**WRITTEN ASSIGNMENTS**
The course requires three written analyses. The first two assignments (each approximately 1000-1200 words in length) will be due in electronic form on or before September 19 and November 7 at the time that class starts. In each instance, I will post a detailed assignment sheet on the course website a few weeks prior to the due date – i.e., on August 29 and October 17.

The final assignment (similar in length to the first two) will be posted on the web on November 28 and will be due electronically on Monday, December 19.

**Grading**

Course grades will be based on the *quality* of both written work and active participation in the course. Each of the three written assignments will count for 25% of your final grade; and course participation will count for an additional 25%.

(1) **Written work:** In grading your written assignments, which I do personally, I consider both your ability to recognize and apply the theoretical concepts about emergency preparedness and crisis management that are developed in readings and class sessions *and* how well you can relate these concepts to the “fact” situations of the case studies that are covered in course reading assignments.

In addition, your written assignments are graded on qualities of good writing: organization, strength and precision of reasoning, and clarity of expression. I recognize that some international students have less experience in writing in English than native speakers, so for those students I make some allowance in reading their assignments. However, the basic principles of strong substantive content, good organization, clear reasoning, and effective expression must be in evidence in all students’ papers. (I will post on the course website a memo with more information about how to think about written assignments in the course.)

Because the schedule for assignment completion is set at the beginning of the semester and is very clear, I am strict about receiving papers on time. Late papers will definitely be accepted, but I may apply a grade penalty appropriate for the degree of lateness.

(2) **Class Participation:** In giving overall term grades I take account of students’ class participation in addition to writing assignments. Active participation in the course produces educational benefits for all. First, through participation, a student actively engages with readings and lectures, as well as her/his classmates’ comments, and improves her/his ability to frame thoughts cogently and persuasively. Second, it contributes to the education of others by giving them the benefit of each student’s experience and ideas.

Therefore, students are expected to contribute to our collective learning by participating in one or more methods of interactive class discussion. Class participation, as noted above, will count for 25% of a student’s term grade.

The course will have three ways to participate, including ways appropriate for distance students:

- **In-class participation:** In traditional fashion, classroom sessions will afford students *in the room* the opportunity to ask questions, comment, and engage in interactive dialogue with the instructor and other students.

- **“Chat room” during live classes:** During classroom sessions, students watching the live video feed online will have the opportunity to log into a “chat room” where they can ask questions, comment, and engage in dialogue with other students in a forum moderated by the course teaching fellow, David Giles. The link for accessing the chat room is available on the course website.

- **On-line Discussion Forums:** The course website will have a section of “Discussion Forums” — where students will be able to post responses to questions and issues related to
course topics. Some of these forums will be initiated by David Giles and me; but students may request that we start additional ones. Students may comment on or give examples (or counter-examples) of things discussed during class, disagree with ideas presented by the instructor or classmates, or introduce additional concepts that have not been covered in class. All of this will be well “in bounds” and welcome.

All students – including distance students – will be expected to participate in one or more of the modes described. Distance students will understandably be limited to the electronic participation modes. Some may find it feasible to participate only through the Discussion Forums, which are the means of participation best suited to distance-learning students who cannot attend class in real-time either in person or through the chat room. That will be perfectly acceptable. Access to these Forums will be available 24/7 -- and therefore not subject to the “tyranny” of the real-time class schedule. However, some form of regular participation through at least ONE of the methods described above is a course requirement.

Please note that I assess participation primarily in terms of the quality of contributions, not simply the quantity. I expect regular, thoughtful, substantive participation and will grade participation accordingly.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

You are responsible for understanding Harvard Extension School policies on academic integrity (www.extension.harvard.edu/resources-policies/student-conduct/academic-integrity) and how to use sources responsibly. Not knowing the rules, misunderstanding the rules, running out of time, submitting “the wrong draft”, or being overwhelmed with multiple demands are not acceptable excuses. There are no excuses for failure to uphold academic integrity. To support your learning about academic citation rules, please visit the Harvard Extension School Tips to Avoid Plagiarism (www.extension.harvard.edu/resources-policies/resources/tips-avoid-plagiarism), where you'll find links to the Harvard Guide to Using Sources and two, free, online 15-minute tutorials to test your knowledge of academic citation policy. The tutorials are anonymous open-learning tools.

CONTACTING THE INSTRUCTORS

Both David Giles and I will be readily available to help students with course issues. David is a very knowledgeable specialist in emergency management who as teaching fellow can help with many substantive and administrative matters. However, I don’t want you to regard him as a necessary intermediary for contacting or speaking with me. I am happy and expect to have direct contact with students on matters relating to readings, course ideas, or assignments.

For those students in the Cambridge area who will attend classes “live,” I am always available for discussion after class. For both distance learning and in-class participants, I am conveniently available via email at Arnold_Howitt@hks.harvard.edu. This is probably the easiest and fastest way for us to communicate on many matters. David Giles will also be happy to answer questions or discuss course ideas and materials. His email address is David_Giles@hks.harvard.edu.

In addition, I can confer by telephone during the regular workday (note that I am not available evenings other than on class nights); or we can make an office appointment at a mutually convenient time. My phone number is 1-617-495-4571, and David’s phone number is 1-617-496-4165. If we are not in when you call, please leave a voice mail message with your full name (not just your first name!), the course name (we are both involved in other things, so we can’t always figure out which course or project a student is calling about), and a return phone number or email address. We will get back to you as promptly as possible. Please speak slowly and distinctly when leaving
your name and phone number. Poor audio quality of messages sometimes makes it very difficult to decipher this essential information and therefore hinders us in getting back to you.

As noted above, we will also establish online “Discussion Forums” so that students will be able to conduct discussions with each other directly. We will not be responding to these online posts, however; this is primarily a method for students to talk about the course with each other.

My mailing address and office location are different:

- **Mailing address:** Arnold M. Howitt, Ash Center for Democratic Governance and Innovation, Harvard Kennedy School, 79 John F. Kennedy Street, Mailbox 74, Cambridge, MA 02138. **David Giles**’ mailing address is the same.

**Office Location:** My office is physically located in the Ash Center for Democratic Governance and Innovation suite at 124 Mt. Auburn St., Room 266. **David Giles** is in Room 235. These offices are on the building’s 2nd floor North, accessed by the elevator from the main lobby in the front of the building. **Please note:** This building is NOT in the main Kennedy School complex. It is located nearby—across Mt. Auburn St. from the Harvard Square post office, a short distance from the Harvard Coop and subway station.
# COURSE OUTLINE AND SCHEDULE

## PART I: CHALLENGES OF EMERGENCY RESPONSE

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Assignment</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mon, Aug 29</td>
<td>In the Moment of Crisis – 1st written assignment will be posted</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mon, Sept 5</td>
<td>Labor Day Holiday – No class session</td>
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<td>Mon, Sept 12</td>
<td>Catastrophic Disasters</td>
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<td>Mon, Sept 19</td>
<td>Emergent Crises – 1st written assignment due</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mon, Sept 26</td>
<td>The Genesis and Aftermath of Crisis</td>
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## PART II: CRISIS DECISION-MAKING

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<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Assignment</th>
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<tr>
<td>Mon, Oct 3</td>
<td>Decisions Under Pressure</td>
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<td>Mon, Oct 10</td>
<td>Columbus Day Holiday – No class session but Special video-only class: The Dynamics of Group Decision-Making</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mon, Oct 17</td>
<td>Dealing with Novelty, Cognitive Bias, and Organizational Bias – 2nd written assignment will be posted</td>
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## PART III: COORDINATION OF EMERGENCY RESPONSE

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<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Assignment</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mon, Oct 24</td>
<td>The Challenges of Coordination during Emergencies; Incident Management Systems I</td>
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<td>Mon, Oct 31</td>
<td>Incident Management Systems II</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mon, Nov 7</td>
<td>IMS and the Politics of Crises – 2nd written assignment due</td>
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## PART IV: CRISIS COMMUNICATION

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<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Assignment</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mon, Nov 14</td>
<td>Crisis Communication</td>
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<td>Mon, Nov 21</td>
<td>Leadership and Crisis Communication</td>
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## PART V: IMPROVING PREPAREDNESS AND RESPONSE

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<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Assignment</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mon, Nov 28</td>
<td>Preparedness Planning – Final assignment will be posted</td>
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<td>Mon, Dec 5</td>
<td>Responding to Terrorism: Boston, Paris, San Bernardino, Orlando</td>
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<td>Mon, Dec 12</td>
<td>Responding to Novel Challenges</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mon, Dec 19</td>
<td>High Performance in Crisis Response – Final assignment due</td>
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**READING ASSIGNMENTS**

**PART I: CHALLENGES OF EMERGENCY RESPONSE**

**IN THE MOMENT OF CRISIS**
(Monday, August 29)

As requested on p. 3, please email me:

1. A brief letter about why you are taking the course, and
2. Your resume (or include a brief description of your educational and professional background in your letter).

Please provide information about your previous education and work experience and include your mail address, e-mail address, and phone number, in case I need to contact you during the semester. If you are a distance education student, please let me know your primary location – city, state, and country.

**Please Note:** The assignment sheet for the first written assignment, due September 19, will be posted on the course website prior to class time.

**Required Readings:**

http://www.hks.harvard.edu/var/ezp_site/storage/fckeditor/file/pdfs/centers-programs/programs/crisis-leadership/Acting%20in%20Time%20Against%20Disaster.pdf


**Discussion Questions:**

1. How would you define the category of events we loosely call “crises”? What features of a situation characterize a crisis?
2. How does a crisis affect the people who are responding to it?
3. In a crisis, does performance typically rise to the occasion or degrade?
Snapshots of Recent Disasters:


Suggested Further Reading:


James Reason, Managing the Risks of Organizational Accidents (Ashgate, 1997).


Basic Textbooks and Essay Collections:


Piers Blaikie, Terry Cannon, Ian Davis, and Ben Wisner, *At Risk: Natural Hazards, People’s Vulnerability, and Disasters* (Routledge, 1994).


Monday, September 5: Labor Day Holiday – No class session

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**CATASTROPHIC DISASTERS**  
(Monday, September 12)

IF YOU HAVEN’T DONE SO ALREADY, PLEASE EMAIL (1) a brief letter about why you are taking the course, (2) your resume (or include a brief description of your educational and professional background in your letter), and (3) contact information.

**Required Readings:**


Case study: Cheng (Jason) Qian, “China’s Blizzards of 2008” (Harvard Kennedy School, Ash Center for Democratic Governance) (available for download on the course website).


**Discussion Questions:**

1. In retrospect, what steps should the US government, state and local governments, and private organizations have taken in advance as Hurricane Katrina loomed?

2. Could China have been better prepared for the blizzards?

3. What factors constrained their ability to take steps in advance?

4. How might the US’s post-Katrina, China’s post-blizzard, and Japan’s post-3.11 emergency responses be improved?

**Suggested Video:**

“China’s Blizzards of 2008” [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dB6EVoKdOA](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dB6EVoKdOA)

**Suggestions for Further Reading**


**Emergent Crises**
(Monday, September 19)

First Written Assignment is due by class time.

**Required Readings:**


**Discussion Questions:**

1. What challenges of operational capacity did Toronto’s SARS crisis create for the region’s public health and hospital systems? Were these similar or different from the Ebola epidemic in Liberia?

2. How did the SARS crisis affect non-health emergency responders?

3. What should jurisdictions outside the Toronto area have been doing as Toronto’s SARS crisis deepened?

4. What implications does Toronto’s experience with SARS have for jurisdictions preparing for future incidents of emergent infectious disease or contagious agents loosed by bioterrorists?

5. Does the Ebola epidemic have implications for developed nations or only for developing ones?
Suggested Video/Movie Viewing:


*Contagion*, director Steven Soderbergh’s 2011 film, presents a largely realistic portrait of what could happen if a highly lethal emergent infectious disease began to spread. Well worth seeing!

Suggested Further Reading:


*The Future of Emergency Care: Emergency Medical Services at the Crossroads* (Institute of Medicine, National Academies of Science, 2007).


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**THE GENESIS AND AFTERMATH OF CRISIS**

(Monday, September 26)

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**Required Readings:**

Case study: Kirsten Lundberg, “Sinking of the Sewol: South Korea’s 2014 Ferry Disaster” (A and B) (Harvard Kennedy School, Program on Crisis Leadership, 2015) (available for download on the course website).


Edward Wong and Austin Ramzy, “China Keeps Lid on Information, as Hopes Dim in Yangtze Ship Disaster,” *NY Times* (June 3, 2015).


Arjen Boin, Allan McConnell, and Paul ‘t Hart, eds., Governing After Crisis: The Politics of Investigation, Accountability, and Learning (Cambridge University Press, 2008), pp. 3-30. All but pages 12-13, 19-20, & 26-27 of this essay are available at the following site: https://books.google.com/books?id=HIXYacNFcL0C&printsec=frontcover#v=onepage&q&f=false

Discussion Questions:

1. How did actions taken long before the Sewol capsizing affect the likelihood of an accident?
2. What flaws in emergency preparedness and response did the Sewol capsizing reveal?
3. Why and how did this emergency turn into a crisis for the government?
4. What similarities and differences are there between the Sewol tragedy and the Oriental Star sinking in the Yangtze?

Part II: Crisis Decision Making

DECISIONS UNDER PRESSURE
(Monday, October 3)

Required Readings:


See an animation of U.S. Airways Flight 1549 and hear voice recordings from the cockpit and flight controllers at http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qiATqDUEP6k

Gary Klein, Sources of Power: How People Make Decisions (MIT Press, 1999), Ch. 1, 3-5, 7, & 10; pp. 1-6, 15-74, 89-109, 147-158.


Discussion Questions:

1. Was the situation that Capt. Sullenberger faced after Flight 1549’s takeoff a “routine emergency” or a “crisis”?
2. Can we understand Capt. Sullenberger’s performance in terms of Gary Klein’s models of decision making?
3. How might organizations prepare their key personnel for situations like the one that confronted Capt. Sullenberger?

Suggested Video and Further Reading:

Documentary on the landing of US Airways 1549 and the rescue of the passengers: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5SL1A2d2e7M

Daniel Kahneman, *Thinking, Fast and Slow* (Farrar, Straus, & Giroux, 2011), esp. 234-244.


THE DYNAMICS OF GROUP DECISION-MAKING
(Monday, October 10)

No class session because of Columbus Day Holiday – But there will be a class video posted (from a previous year of the course) that will focus on the following material:

Film Viewing:

*Thirteen Days* (2000), directed by Roger Donaldson and starring Kevin Costner, is a reasonably historically accurate dramatization of the Cuban Missile crisis of 1962. It is easily rented on DVD, streamed in a number of internet locations, or borrowed from many public libraries. Please view this film in advance of class to get the story of the Cuban missile crisis.

Required Reading:


Discussion Questions:

1. How well do you think the Ex Com functioned during the Cuban Missile Crisis?
2. Why was President Kennedy dissatisfied with the options initially presented to him for responding to the Soviet missiles in Cuba?
3. How did President Kennedy get his advisers to invent and assess other options?

Suggested Further Reading:


Ernest R. May and Philip Zelikow, eds., *The Kennedy Tapes: Inside the White House During the Cuban Missile Crisis* (W.W. Norton, 2002).

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**DEALING WITH NOVELTY, COGNITIVE BIAS, AND ORGANIZATIONAL BIAS**

(Monday, October 17)

2nd written assignment – due November 7 -- will be posted on the course website.

Required Readings:


Joseph W. Pfeifer, “Understanding How Organizational Bias Influenced First Responders at the World Trade Center,” in Bruce Bongar, *et al.*, eds., *Psychology of Terrorism* (Oxford University Press, 2007), pp. 207-215. Available at [http://books.google.com/books?id=GoJ-P13rUkQC&pg=PA207&lpg=PA207&dq=joseph+pfeifer,+organizational+bias&source=bl&ots=3NIPqy0vtf&sig=AzR8U5PYAAAnOCWCxPGzpBCTaCA&hl=en&ei=01xHTNCMFYGclgfArcS1BA&sa=X&oi=book_result&ct=result&resnum=1&ved=01hBAAAAJwEwGoS8QfNQv8C0EHYQ_AQlMQ939FRU&usg=AOpVZs941lKWN9C4tErcVi6h94eZ8](http://books.google.com/books?id=GoJ-P13rUkQC&pg=PA207&lpg=PA207&dq=joseph+pfeifer,+organizational+bias&source=bl&ots=3NIPqy0vtf&sig=AzR8U5PYAAAnOCWCxPGzpBCTaCA&hl=en&ei=01xHTNCMFYGclgfArcS1BA&sa=X&oi=book_result&ct=result&resnum=1&ved=01hBAAAAJwEwGoS8QfNQv8C0EHYQ_AQlMQ939FRU&usg=AOpVZs941lKWN9C4tErcVi6h94eZ8)

Case studies: Kirsten Lundberg, “Fears and Realities: Managing Ebola in Dallas” (Kennedy School of Government, 2055.0) and “Epilogue” (Kennedy School of Government, 2055.1). Available for purchase at:

**Discussion Questions:**

1. CDC employed a variety of approaches to "Team B" at different times and under different circumstances. Which of these seemed most successful and helpful? Why?

2. What do you see as the key success factors (e.g., design of the mechanism, who it reports to, nature of its relationship to other parts of the organization, nature of the circumstances in which it is being employed) that would be likely to determine whether a Team B approach made a significant contribution to managing a crisis?

3. If you were designing a Team B mechanism for your organization, what would its characteristics be?

4. What explains the Dallas hospital’s mistakes in recognizing Ebola when Eric Duncan first presented himself for care?

5. Once Ebola was diagnosed, to what extent were Texas health care and public health officials “protecting” themselves from being surprised by further novelty?

**Suggested Further Reading:**


Part III: Coordination of Emergency Response

THE CHALLENGES OF COORDINATION DURING EMERGENCIES:
INCIDENT MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS I
(Monday, October 24)

Required Readings:


Discussion Questions:

1. What coordination and jurisdictional problems did responders to the 1992 LA riots encounter? What factors made coordination so difficult?
2. Did the Pentagon emergency response encounter similar or additional problems of coordination?
3. To what extent and in what ways was the Incident Command System (ICS) an effective way of coping with these problems?
4. What prerequisite preparations were necessary for these results to occur?

Suggested Further Reading:


Other Kennedy School Case Studies on Incident Management Problems:

In Howitt and Leonard:

- Susan Rosegrant, “The Shootings at Columbine High School: Responding to a New Kind of Terrorism”

Esther Scott, “The West Nile Virus Outbreak in New York City (B and Sequel)”
Required Readings:

Video: BBC News, “Japan hit by tsunami after massive earthquake (March 11, 2011)  
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=odMF4YhfZCc

Case study: David W. Giles, “The Triple Catastrophe: Japan’s 03/11/11 Earthquake,  
Tsunami, and Nuclear Crisis” (Harvard Kennedy School, Program on Crisis  
Leadership, 2015) (available for download on the course website)

Case studies: Jennifer Weeks, “‘Miracle on the Hudson’: Rescuing Passengers and Raising  
the Plane,” (B) and “‘Miracle on the Hudson’: Epilogue” (C) (Kennedy School of  
Government, 1967.0 and 1967.1). Available for purchase at:  
http://case.hks.harvard.edu/miracle-on-the-hudson-rescuing-passengers-and-raising-the-plane-b/  
and  
http://case.hks.harvard.edu/miracle-on-the-hudson-epilogue/

Arnold M. Howitt, Haruo Hayashi, Hiromi Akiyama, David W. Giles, and Herman B.  
http://www.hks.harvard.edu/var/ezp_site/storage/fckeditor/file/pdfs/centers-  
programs/programs/crisis-leadership/IMS%20For%20Japan_017-  
019%20crj9%201Howitt-Japan_w%20Cover_FOR%20WEB.pdf

Nicholas B. Hambridge, Arnold M. Howitt, and David W. Giles, “Coordination in Crises:  
Implementation of the National Incident Management System by Surface  
Transportation Agencies,” Program on Crisis Leadership, Harvard Kennedy School  
(2015) (available for download on the course website).

Suggested Video:

“Japan’s Killer Quake,” on PBS’s NOVA (March 2011)  
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=izV1FQWy04s

Discussion Questions:

1. What coordination problems arose in Japan’s response to the earthquake, tsunami, and  
nuclear accident in 2011?

2. Would an IMS-like system in Japan have made a difference in the emergency response  
to the triple catastrophe? In what ways?

3. What coordination problems would have remained?

4. What does the Hudson River rescue say about the necessity and efficacy of incident  
management as a method of organizing emergency response? Is this a positive story  
from the point of view of NIMS advocates?

5. Is IMS inherently a centralized system of managing emergency response?

6. Is the idea of “emergence” (also called “self-organizing” response or “intelligent,  
decentralized adaptation”) consistent or inconsistent with the doctrine of IMS?
Suggestions for Further Reading:


### IMS AND THE POLITICS OF CRISIS
(Monday, November 7)

2nd written assignment is due by the beginning of class.

**Required Readings:**


Discussion Questions:

1. How did the politics of the Deepwater Horizon accident complicate the work of the incident management team?

2. How did the politics of the BP spill look to elected officials in Washington? In state capitals? In local governments?

3. Should IMS operations be insulated from politics?

4. Can they be?

Suggested Readings:


http://www.hks.harvard.edu/var/ezp_site/storage/fckeditor/file/pdfs/centers-programs/programs/crisis-leadership/political_control.pdf


National Commission on the BP Deepwater Horizon Oil Spill and Offshore Drilling “Decision-making within the Unified Command” (Staff Working Paper No. 2):


Part IV: Crisis Communication

**CRISIS COMMUNICATION**

(Monday, November 14)
Required Readings:


Discussion Questions:

1. Could the Florida emergency management system have better handled the Hurricane Floyd evacuation? If so, how?

2. How can officials trying to communicate with the public cope with parallel reporting or competition from the news media and social media, both of which may be presenting information that conflicts with official messages?

3. Can emergency managers cope with the following dilemma? In the absence of crisis, the public isn’t motivated to listen to information about emergency precautions or procedures. In the midst of crisis, the window of opportunity to provide information effectively is very narrow.

4. Can crisis managers plan for unanticipated public response – including unexpected action, inaction, or panic?

Suggested Further Reading:


David H. Slater, Nishimura Keiko, and Love Kindstrand, “Social Media, Information and Political Activism in Japan’s 3.11 Crisis,” [Expanded and updated version of “Social Media in Disaster Japan,” by the same authors, in Jeff Kingston, *Natural Disaster and Nuclear Crisis in Japan* (Routledge, 2012).]


**LEADERSHIP AND CRISIS COMMUNICATION**

(Monday, November 21)

**Required Readings:**


Case study: Chelsea Lei, “Typhoon Morakot in Taiwan” (A, B, and C) (Harvard Kennedy School, Ash Center for Democratic Governance and Innovation) (Available for download on the course website)


Discussion Questions:

1. Why did the Taiwan government’s response to Typhoon Morakot become so serious a political liability for President Ma and his administration? How could he have handled public communication more effectively?

2. What did Mayor Giuliani do during the 9/11 crisis that was so successful in relating to the people of New York City?

3. How was he able to respond to people’s needs during the crisis?

4. What do people in crisis need from their leaders?

5. How can leaders prepare themselves to fulfill these needs should a crisis arise?

Suggested Further Reading:

Rudolph W. Giuliani, Leadership (Hyperion, 2002).


Part V: Improving Preparedness and Response
Final assignment – due on December 19 -- will be posted on the course website

Required Readings:


Case study: Read at least two of the following three case studies:


Discussion Questions:

1. How would you characterize the security planning process for the 1999 WTO meetings in Seattle? What, if anything, might have been done better?

2. To what extent were the problems that arose during the protests in Seattle the result of poor planning as opposed to operational shortcomings?

3. Was the planning process for the 2004 DNC in Boston an improvement over the Seattle process? In what ways, specifically?

4. How well would the security plan for the DNC have worked had there been a crisis? What is the rationale for your conclusion?

5. Were New York City’s hospitals deficient in planning for emergencies in the period before Superstorm Sandy? Why or why not?

6. What should the hospitals do in preparation for future severe storms?

Suggested Further Reading:


**RESPONDING TO TERRORISM: BOSTON, PARIS, SAN BERNARDINO, ORLANDO**

**Required Readings:**


Richard Perez-Pena and Adam Goldman, "'It Finally Clicked That This Wasn't an Exercise': Report Recounts San Bernardino Shooting," *NY Times* (September 9, 2016) http://nyti.mes/2czAMDY

Timothy Williams and Michael Wilson, “Police Account of Decisions Made during Orlando Rampage Contains Crucial Gaps,” *NY Times* (June 13, 2016)  


Juliette Kayyem, “Why Keeping Us Safe from Terrorism is So Hard,” CNN (March 22, 2016)  

**Suggested Readings:**

http://www.hks.harvard.edu/content/download/67366/1242274/version/1/file/WhyWasBostonStrong.pdf

Rick Barziel, Frank Straub, George Watson, and Rod Hoops, *Bringing Calm to Chaos: A Critical Incident Review of the San Bernardino Public Safety Response to the December 2, 2015, Terrorist Shooting Incident at the Inland Regional Center* (September 2016)  
http://ric-zai-inc.com/Publications/cops-w0808-pub


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**RESPONDING TO NOVEL CHALLENGES**
*(Monday, December 12)*

**Required Readings:**


http://www.nytimes.com/2013/05/10/opinion/the-next-contagion-closer-than-you-think.html?_r=0

Case study: David W. Giles, “Gridlock in Texas (A): Evacuating the Houston-Galveston Region in Advance of Hurricane Rita” and “Gridlock in Texas (B): Evacuation Planning in the Houston-Galveston Region after Hurricane Rita” (Program on Crisis Leadership, Harvard Kennedy School) (both parts available for download on the course website).
Discussion Questions:

H1N1 in Texas:

1. To what extent was there payoff from the planning and attention that states had given to the possibility of pandemic flu in the years before H1N1 struck?
2. What capacities did the Texas public health system have to develop or enhance in responding to H1N1?
3. What lessons does the H1N1 experience provide in looking ahead to possible emergent infectious disease outbreaks?

Gridlock in Texas (A):

1. What factors made the evacuation of the Houston area so complicated?
2. How could state and local officials have better communicated with the public? Would that have made a difference in how the public responded to the situation?
3. What does this case reveal about the importance (and challenges) of inter-agency and inter-jurisdictional coordination?

Gridlock in Texas (B):

1. What were some of the key lessons learned from the Rita evacuation?
2. How were Ike and Rita similar? How were they different? Did the differences have implications for the effectiveness of the new evacuation plans?
3. How can risk be communicated effectively to the public, especially amidst a high degree of uncertainty and rapidly changing circumstances?

Suggested Further Reading:


Final assignment due by the start of class

Required Readings:

Video of Tuscaloosa Tornado: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mPcUDIXX2G4](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mPcUDIXX2G4)


http://www.hks.harvard.edu/var/ezp_site/storage/fckeditor/file/pdfs/centers-programs/programs/crisis-leadership/Acting%20in%20Time%20Against%20Disaster.pdf

**Discussion Questions:**

1. What do you see as the key drivers of those aspects of Tuscaloosa’s response that were successful? Of those that were less successful?

2. In what ways does the city’s structure for organizing response to a disaster conform to standard and traditional doctrines, structures, and procedures of the National Incident Management System? In what important ways does it seem to differ?

3. What wider lessons would you draw from this experience about preparation in advance and about response in the moment to large-scale risks?

**Suggested Further Reading:**
