

EMDS 5800-02 Disaster Risk Reduction

Instructor Information

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Course Description, Structure, and Objectives

This Seminar in Emergency Management and Disaster Science focuses on the theories, strategies, and techniques employed by communities to prevent disaster risk and reduce their exposure to hazards. As climate change alters these hazards and their risks, this course emphasizes the integration of climate change adaptation with disaster risk reduction. Examining U.S. and international case studies, we will consider the theories underpinning the approaches and effectiveness of these mitigation tools in varying contexts. 3 credit hours, face-to-face delivery.

How to Succeed in this Course

UNT strives to offer you a high-quality education and a supportive environment, so you learn and grow. As a faculty member, I am committed to helping you be successful as a student. To learn more about campus resources and information on how you can be successful at UNT, go to unt.edu/success and explore unt.edu/wellness. To get all your enrollment and student financial-related questions answered, go to scrappysays.unt.edu.

Communication Expectations: Canvas is our learning management system and all assignments, lectures, grades and course-related material will be communicated through Canvas. Email is the best contact method and I generally respond within 24-hours during the week (48-hours on the weekend). Graded materials are typically returned within one to two weeks following the due date depending on the length of the assignment. Check your UNT email regularly for updated course information. When sending an email, include a subject line, greeting, the course, section number, and sign it with your name. By practicing your email communication with your instructors and fellow classmates now, you'll be more prepared for your careers after graduate school. Check out these links for help with [Writing Professional Emails](#) or [Online Communication Tips](#).

ADA Accommodations: The University of North Texas makes reasonable academic accommodation for students with disabilities. Students seeking reasonable accommodation must first register with the Office of Disability Access (ODA) to verify their eligibility. If a disability is verified, the ODA will provide you with a reasonable accommodation letter to be delivered to faculty to begin a private discussion regarding your specific needs in a course. You may request reasonable accommodations at any time; however, ODA notices of reasonable accommodation should be provided as early as possible in the semester to avoid any delay in implementation. Note that students must obtain a new letter of reasonable accommodation for every semester and must meet with each faculty member prior to implementation in each class. Students are strongly encouraged to deliver letters of reasonable accommodation during faculty office hours or by appointment. Faculty members have the authority to ask students to discuss such letters during their designated office hours to protect the privacy of the student. For additional information, refer to the [Office of Disability Access](http://www.unt.edu/oda) website (<http://www.unt.edu/oda>). You may also contact ODA by phone at (940) 565-4323.

Supporting Your Success and Creating an Inclusive Learning Environment

Every student in this class should have the right to learn and engage within an environment of respect and courtesy from others. We will discuss our classroom's habits of engagement and I also encourage you to review UNT's student code of conduct so that we can all start with the same baseline civility understanding ([Code of Student Conduct](#)) (<https://policy.unt.edu/policy/07-012>).

Required/Recommended Materials

- Required readings assigned and posted on the course website
- This course has digital components. To fully participate in this class, students will need internet access to reference content on the Canvas Learning Management System and access to Microsoft Office suite. If circumstances change, you will be informed of other technical needs to access course content. Information on how to be successful in a digital learning environment can be found at [Learn Anywhere](#) (<https://online.unt.edu/learn>).

Course Requirements/Schedule

- **Discussion Participation:** Class discussions will be based on the assigned readings from the reading library. I expect everyone to speak about the readings in each class at least twice. Due to the size of the class, some weeks I'll organize you into smaller discussion groups. In general, preparedness for high-quality participation includes reading all assignments; be able to summarize key points from the readings, understand their methods, and identify points made by the authors that you agree, disagree, or question. The goal of the discussion is to advance our collective knowledge, simply agreeing or reiterating what someone has already said does not advance the discussion nor earn credit for that week's discussion. I will excuse one discussion week without penalty or drop the lowest score if all discussions are attended.
- **Current Event:** Each student is expected to share one real world example or current event found in news/popular media related to the weekly assigned topic with the class. Students will share via a 5-7 minute overview presentation by describing the project, challenges/benefits, and related it to class reading material.
- **Comparative Policy Analysis:** Research identifies that improving the quality of life outside of a disaster is one of the most effective risk reduction strategies for when disasters occur (Wisner et al., 2004). In this group assignment, students will examine how state-level policies on land ownership can reduce risk to mobile homeowners, a vulnerable population, before and in the event of a disaster. How these policies define and categorize mobile homeowners' and their rights during periods of non-disaster directly contribute to their exposure to hazards and ability to mitigate the effects of a disaster. Working in teams, students will conduct a comparative policy analysis of 15 states to assess state level policies that provide pathways to land ownership for this vulnerable population.
- **From Research to Practice Project:** Translating complex research into easily digestible formats for the everyday user is a skill, one that must be practiced. For this assignment, you will translate one disaster risk reduction topic of your choice so that it is accessible to a lay audience. Select one article from our reading library and two additional, related peer-reviewed articles to create a public-facing product for the audience of your choice (can be general public, practitioners, policy makers, just not academics). The final project can be an ArcGIS Story Maps, brochure, social media information campaign, podcast (with script), blog, or other approved product. Regardless of format, the final product must have 750-1000 words text (or script) and include one graphic/visual representation of the research. Final projects will be shared in class during the final exam period.

Assessing Your Work

A: 90% or greater

C: 70-79.9%

F: 0-59.9%

B: 80-89.9%

D: 60-69.9%

Your grades in this course are earned, at the end of the semester I only report earned credit. I will not add any points or tenths of a point to your grade. I will not respond to any emails at the end of the semester asking for unearned points to boost your grade.

Students will be notified by Eagle Alert if there is a campus closing that will impact a class and calendar is subject to change, [Emergency Notifications and Procedures Policy \(https://policy.unt.edu/policy/06-049\)](https://policy.unt.edu/policy/06-049).

Course Calendar

(Subject to change with warning)

August 24: Introductions

- Review syllabus and course expectations
- Readings for next week: Syllabus

August 31: What is Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR)?

- Readings for next week: Syllabus; [UNDRR Integrating Disaster Risk Reduction and Climate Change Adaptation in the UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework pgs 1-15](#); [Sendai Framework for DRR](#)

September 7: DRR Frameworks

- Readings for next week:
- Patricola & Wehner 2018; Abatzoglou & Williams 2016; Gleick, 2014

September 14: Changing Climate, Changing Risks

- Readings for Next Week: Collins 2018; Lei et al. 2013

September 21: Resilience & Development as DRR

- Readings for Next Week: King et al. 2014; Piggott-McKellar & Vella 2023; Jesse 2020

September 28: Relocations as Adaptation

- Readings for Next Week: DeVries, 2017; Greer et al. 2021; Zavar and Fischer 2021

October 5: Relocations and Vulnerable Populations

- Readings for next week: Rumbach et al., 2020; Vogel and Henstra, 2015

October 12: Relocations and Public Policy

- Comparative Policy Analysis practice activity in-class
- Comparative Policy Analysis assignment due next class
- Readings for next week: Nohrstedt et al. 2021; Jurjonas et al. 2021

October 19: Public Policy and DRR

- Readings for next week: Zimmermann & Keiler 2015; King et al. 2016; Mockrin et al., 2020

October 26: Land Use as DRR

- Readings for next week: Koningsveld et al., 2008; Jamero et al., 2019; Crichton et al., 2020

November 2: Living in place

- Readings for next week: Kousky et al. 2013; Miller 2020

November 9: Eco-DRR

- Green infrastructure
- Readings for next week: Osti et al. 2009; Franklin et al. 2018

November 16: Eco-DRR

- Blue infrastructure

November 23: No Class- Thanksgiving break

November 30: Memory as DRR

- Readings for next week: Nunn 2020; Sakakibara 2008

December 7: Memory as DRR

December 14: Final exam

- Share “From Research to Practice” Project with class

Attendance and Participation

Because we only meet once a week, every class meeting is essential to your success. *As this course involves collaboration and weekly discussions, participation is essential to learning. Our activities require you to be actively engaged in discussions and group work. I understand tardiness and absences may occur. If you are late to class, please drop me an email to let me know the circumstances. If you must miss class, please let me know prior to your absence.*

Department Policies

Course Evaluation

Required: The dates students can complete the SPOT assessment are **the final two weeks of the semester**. This is your opportunity to evaluate the instructor. Students can complete the on-line course evaluation at my.unt.edu

Cheating and Plagiarism Policy and Definitions

Department and University regulations regarding academic honesty will be strictly enforced. The UNT Code of Student Conduct and Discipline (www.unt.edu/csrr) defines cheating and plagiarism “as the use of unauthorized books, notes, or otherwise securing help in a test; copying other’s tests, assignments, reports, or term papers; representing the work of another as one’s own; collaborating without authority with another student during an examination or in preparing academic work; or otherwise practicing scholastic dishonesty.”

Penalties

Normally, the minimum penalty for cheating or plagiarism is a grade of “F” in the course. In the case of graduate departmental exams, the minimum penalty shall be failure of all fields of the exam. Determination of cheating or plagiarism shall be made by the instructor in the course, or by the departmental faculty in the case of departmental exams.

Cases of cheating or plagiarism on graduate departmental exams, papers, theses, or dissertations shall automatically be referred to the departmental Curriculum and Degree Programs Committee. Cases of cheating or plagiarism in ordinary course work may, at the discretion of the instructor, be referred to the Curriculum and Degree Programs Committee in the case of either graduate or undergraduate students. This committee, acting as an agent of the Department, shall impose further penalties, or recommend further penalties to the Dean of Students, if they determine that the case warrants it. In all cases, the Dean of Students shall be informed in writing of the case.

Cheating and plagiarism will not be tolerated in this course. A student caught cheating or plagiarizing, or knowingly assisting, will receive a zero on the assignment and an “F” for the course. I also will report the student(s) to the Office of Academic Integrity for further review.

Appeals

Students may appeal and decision under this policy by following the procedure laid down in the UNT Code of Student Conduct and Discipline.

UNT Policies

Academic Integrity Policy

Academic Integrity Standards and Consequences. According to UNT Policy 06.003, Student Academic Integrity, academic dishonesty occurs when students engage in behaviors including, but not limited to cheating, fabrication, facilitating academic dishonesty, forgery, plagiarism, and sabotage. A finding of academic dishonesty may result in a range of academic penalties or sanctions ranging from admonition to expulsion from the University.

ADA Policy

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Emergency Notification & Procedures

UNT uses a system called Eagle Alert to quickly notify students with critical information in the event of an emergency (i.e., severe weather, campus closing, and health and public safety emergencies like chemical spills, fires, or violence). In the event of a university closure, please refer to Blackboard for contingency plans for covering course materials.

Retention of Student Records

Student records pertaining to this course are maintained in a secure location by the instructor of record. All records such as exams, answer sheets (with keys), and written papers submitted during the duration of the course are kept for at least one calendar year after course completion. Course work completed via the Blackboard online system, including grading information and comments, is also stored in a safe electronic environment for one year. Students have the right to view their individual record; however, information about student's records will not be divulged to other individuals without proper written consent. Students are encouraged to review the Public Information Policy and the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) laws and the University's policy. See UNT Policy 10.10, Records Management and Retention for additional information.

Acceptable Student Behavior

Student behavior that interferes with an instructor's ability to conduct a class or other students' opportunity to learn is unacceptable and disruptive and will not be tolerated in any instructional forum at UNT. Students engaging in unacceptable behavior will be directed to leave the classroom and the instructor may refer the student to the Dean of Students to consider whether the student's conduct violated the Code of Student Conduct. The University's expectations for student conduct apply to all instructional forums, including University and electronic classroom, labs, discussion groups, field trips, etc. Visit UNT's [Code of Student Conduct](https://deanofstudents.unt.edu/conduct) (<https://deanofstudents.unt.edu/conduct>) to learn more.

Access to Information - Eagle Connect

Students' access point for business and academic services at UNT is located at: my.unt.edu. All official communication from the University will be delivered to a student's Eagle Connect account. For more information, please visit the website that explains Eagle Connect and how to forward e-mail [Eagle Connect](https://it.unt.edu/eagleconnect) (<https://it.unt.edu/eagleconnect>).

Student Evaluation Administration Dates

Student feedback is important and an essential part of participation in this course. The student evaluation of instruction is a requirement for all organized classes at UNT. The survey will be made available during weeks 13, 14 and 15 [insert administration dates] of the long semesters to provide students with an opportunity to evaluate how this course is taught. Students will receive an email from "UNT SPOT Course Evaluations via IASystem Notification" (no-reply@iasystem.org) with the survey link. Students should look for the email in their UNT email inbox. Simply click on the link and complete the survey. Once students complete the survey they will receive a confirmation email that the survey has been submitted. For additional information, please visit the [SPOT website](http://spot.unt.edu/) (<http://spot.unt.edu/>) or email spot@unt.edu.

Sexual Assault Prevention

UNT is committed to providing a safe learning environment free of all forms of sexual misconduct, including sexual harassment sexual assault, domestic violence, dating violence, and stalking. Federal laws (Title IX and the Violence Against Women Act) and UNT policies prohibit discrimination on the basis of sex, and therefore prohibit sexual misconduct. If you or someone you know is experiencing sexual harassment, relationship violence, stalking, and/or sexual assault, there are campus resources available to provide support and assistance. UNT's Survivor Advocates can assist a student who has been impacted by violence by filing protective orders, completing crime victim's compensation applications, contacting professors for absences related to an assault, working with housing to facilitate a room change where appropriate, and connecting students to other resources available both on and off campus. The Survivor Advocates can be reached at SurvivorAdvocate@unt.edu or by calling the Dean of Students Office at 940-565- 2648. Additionally, alleged sexual misconduct can be non-confidentially reported to the Title IX Coordinator at oeo@unt.edu or at (940) 565 2759.

Student Support Services

UNT provides mental health resources to students to help ensure there are numerous outlets to turn to that wholeheartedly care for and are there for students in need, regardless of the nature of an issue or its severity. Listed below are several resources on campus that can support your academic success and mental well-being:

- [Student Health and Wellness Center](https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/student-health-and-wellness-center) (<https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/student-health-and-wellness-center>)
- [Counseling and Testing Services](https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/counseling-and-testing-services) (<https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/counseling-and-testing-services>)
- [UNT Care Team](https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/care) (<https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/care>)
- [UNT Psychiatric Services](https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/student-health-and-wellness-center/services/psychiatry) (<https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/student-health-and-wellness-center/services/psychiatry>)
- [Individual Counseling](https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/counseling-and-testing-services/services/individual-counseling) (<https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/counseling-and-testing-services/services/individual-counseling>)

Other student support services offered by UNT include

- [Registrar](https://registrar.unt.edu/registration) (<https://registrar.unt.edu/registration>)
- [Financial Aid](https://financialaid.unt.edu/) (<https://financialaid.unt.edu/>)

- [Student Legal Services](https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/student-legal-services) (<https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/student-legal-services>)
- [Career Center](https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/career-center) (<https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/career-center>)
- [Multicultural Center](https://edo.unt.edu/multicultural-center) (<https://edo.unt.edu/multicultural-center>)
- [Counseling and Testing Services](https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/counseling-and-testing-services) (<https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/counseling-and-testing-services>)
- [Pride Alliance](https://edo.unt.edu/pridealliance) (<https://edo.unt.edu/pridealliance>)
- [UNT Food Pantry](https://deanofstudents.unt.edu/resources/food-pantry) (<https://deanofstudents.unt.edu/resources/food-pantry>)

Academic Support Services

- [Academic Resource Center](https://clear.unt.edu/canvas/student-resources) (<https://clear.unt.edu/canvas/student-resources>)
- [Academic Success Center](https://success.unt.edu/asc) (<https://success.unt.edu/asc>)
- [UNT Libraries](https://library.unt.edu/) (<https://library.unt.edu/>)
- [Writing Lab](http://writingcenter.unt.edu/) (<http://writingcenter.unt.edu/>)
- [MathLab](https://math.unt.edu/mathlab) (<https://math.unt.edu/mathlab>)