



EOH-573 (Section 01) Disaster Planning

Syllabus

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Course Description:

This course provides an overview of strategies for and challenges to planning for all types of disasters; emphasis is placed on biosecurity emergencies such as bioterrorism and outbreaks of emerging infectious diseases. Content includes tools and resources needed to develop and/or evaluate a facility or community all-hazards response plan and create exercises to test this plan.

Course Objectives:

At the conclusion of this course a student will be able to:

- Describe the roles and capacity of various emergency response personnel/agencies
- Explain the Incident Command and National Incident Management Systems
- Specify challenges to disaster planning and interventions to address disaster planning needs in a facility or community
- Develop and assess scenarios for disaster exercises
- Evaluate a facility or community all-hazards response plan using disaster exercises

Course Format: Lectures, seminar discussions, and readings.

Evaluation of Performance:

- Assignment 1 (due Sunday, February 18th).....25%
- FEMA courses (due Sunday, April 1st).....20%
 - NRP Course (IS-800)....5%
 - ICS Course (IS-100)...5%
 - ICS Course (IS-200)...5%
 - NIMS Course (IS-700)...5%
- Special project (due Sunday, April 22nd).....25%
- Online seminar discussion.....30%

According to the Saint Louis University Graduate School, the only final grades allowed are:

- A (≥ 93 points)
- B+ (90 – 92 points)
- B (83 – 89 points)
- B- (80 – 82 points)
- C (73 – 79 points)
- F (≤ 72 points)

Course Policies:

- All class-associated email communication should take place through the course WebCT email.
- The week for class readings, assignments, and seminar discussion is defined as Monday through Sunday at midnight.
- Seminar discussions should begin early in the session to allow for maximum interaction.
- On the weeks for which there is a seminar discussion assignment, students are expected to access the WebCT seminar board at least twice a week unless you notify the instructor in advance of a schedule conflict. This will allow discussion of relevant topics in the electronic seminar.
- The standard for the course professor will be to login to the course at least 3 days of the week and one day during the weekend.
- Responses to all individual comments are not possible although answers to specific questions will be given.
- Students should notify the course professor early if they are unable to participate in a scheduled seminar or assignment during a specific week.
- Students must notify the instructor in advance if some life event or obligation precludes them from submitting an assignment on time. Project due dates are very flexible for military personnel that are deployed; please discuss this with the instructor.
- It is at the instructor’s discretion to allow students to make-up missed assignments.

- All University, Graduate School, and School of Public Health policies and procedures are in effect, including, but not limited to, academic standards, course withdrawals, and course incompletes. Please refer to the:
 - [Catalog of the Graduate School](#)
 - [Office of the Bursar](#) (Student Accounts)
 - [Office of the University Registrar](#) (Student Services)
 - Institute for Biosecurity Policy Statement on Academic and Professional Integrity. Details on the Biosecurity Policy Statement on Academic and Professional Integrity are provided in the Academic Integrity link to the left of your WebCT course page and in the MS in Biosecurity Student Handbook.
 - More information, policies, and guidelines relevant to your education are available on the School of Public Health web site at: [SLU School of Public Health](#). It is your responsibility to become familiar with all information available through this and the Web sites above.

Suggested Text:

1) American Psychological Association. (2001). *Publication manual of the American Psychological Association* (5th ed.). Washington, DC: American Psychological Association.

Texts may be purchased from any online vendor. Examples include [Amazon.com](#), [Barnes and Noble](#), and [ecampus.com](#). Please note that the ISBN numbers listed above are usually associated with the hardback version of the book; you may buy the paperback version of any of the books when it is available.

Course Outline:

Module 1 (Week 1):	Intro to disaster planning
Module 2 (Weeks 2-3):	Groups/agencies involved
Module 3 (Weeks 4 - 5):	ICS, NIMS & NRP
Module 4 (Week 6):	Surge capacity
Module 5 (Week 7):	Resource assessment and distribution
Module 6 (Week 8):	Security
Module 7 (Weeks 9 - 10):	Quarantine and other legal issues
Module 8 (Week 11):	Laboratory & vulnerable populations
Module 9 (Weeks 12 - 13):	Evaluating a plan and developing an exercise
Module 10 (Week 14):	International issues

Assignment 1 (due Sunday, February 18th):

Interview a disaster planner in your local area (this may include a disaster planner for your city or county public health department, a hospital disaster planner, or local first responder representative). You may ask any other questions that occur to you during the interview, but you must address the following:

- a) Date, time, and length of interview
- b) Name of person interviewed, their position, and a little about their background/experience
- c) Who wrote/is writing their facilities' disaster plan?
- d) What is this person's role in developing or exercising the plan?
- e) When was the last time the plan was updated? How often is it updated? Who is notified when the plan is updated?
- f) What is the biggest current challenge they are facing in developing their plan?
- g) How often does their disaster planning committee/group meet and what types of people (in terms of occupation and agency they represent) attend?
- h) Does their disaster plan include any memorandums of agreement, and if so, with which agencies and for what (people, supplies, etc)?
- i) How often do they exercise their plan? Describe the type of exercises they have hosted (discussion based vs simulation). Have them describe in detail the last exercise they attended. How many people were there? What types of people (in terms of occupation and agency they represent) attended? How long did it last (2 hours vs 2 days)? What can they share in terms of what they learned from that exercise (some information is sensitive and the person may not be able or willing to share it)? What updates were made to their disaster plan following the exercise?

Write a brief summary of the above interview and submit to the instructor via WebCT email. Please follow APA style (in terms of using a running head, cover page, etc), but you will not include citations.

FEMA courses (due Sunday, April 1st):

There are four online courses through FEMA that must be completed and passed as part of this course. These courses are available for free online. This assignment is pass/fail only. Each course/test is worth 5% of the student's overall grade. The student should forward proof of successful completion from FEMA to the instructor.

Courses can be taken before the semester commences. If a student has taken any or all of these courses, they do not need to be repeated. In this case, forward to the instructor the FEMA notification that the course(s) was passed. If only a hard copy of the notification is available, the student can mail or email a copy of the certificate of completion to the instructor.

The FEMA "National Response Plan, an Introduction" Course (IS-800)
<http://training.fema.gov/EMIWeb/IS/is800.asp>

The FEMA “Incident Command System (ICS)” basic course (IS-100)
<http://training.fema.gov/EMIWeb/IS/is100.asp>

The FEMA “Basic Incident Command System” Course (IS-200)
<http://training.fema.gov/EMIWeb/IS/is200fw.asp>

The FEMA “National Incident Management System (NIMS)” basic course (IS-700)
<http://training.fema.gov/EMIWeb/IS/is700.asp>

Take in this order:

- NRP Course (IS-800)
- ICS Course (IS-100)
- ICS Course (IS-200)
- NIMS Course (IS-700)

Special project (due Sunday, April 22nd):

Infectious disease emergency preparedness is extremely difficult to deal with on many levels. Creativity may be just as valuable as general comprehension in dealing with many aspects of preparedness. This assignment is designed to assess your overall comprehension of course materials and apply them in a creative, unique way.

Choice of **one** of the following (20% of grade):

- Development of a scenario for a community-wide tabletop exercise (this can be any infectious agent of your choice).
- Attend a disaster exercise of any size (this can be within a facility or a community) and write a report on the experience summarizing the lessons learned and comparing it to published lessons learned from other exercises.

Option A: Scenario Development

Develop a plausible epidemiological scenario using a CDC Category A bioterrorism agent (anthrax, smallpox, plague, tularemia, botulism, or viral hemorrhagic fever) or emerging infectious disease (SARS, avian influenza, monkeypox, etc). The scenario would need to be appropriate for a community-wide tabletop exercise, meaning that it must involve all of the major responding agencies. This project will require a basic understanding of the pathogen used in the scenario, combined with some insight into the epidemiological trends we could expect to see associated with an outbreak of this pathogen.

The project would consist of the following components:

(a) Background and Assumptions – Summarize the clinical description of the pathogen used in the scenario and the assumptions you used when developing the scenario. [2 – 3 pages].

Assumptions may include such information as the secondary transmission rate (based on published case reports or research articles), responding agencies' roles and activities, etc.

(b) Scenario – Summarize in bullet points or narrative the “story” of what is taking place.

The scenario should be broken into at least two pieces: 1) the beginning of the outbreak when patients appear and no one knows what’s going on or an announcement from a terrorist that a bioterrorism attack has taken place, and 2) the story as the outbreak progresses. It could be broken down into three components if you prefer. The scenario should include details on the number of patients, facilities affected, how the community is responding (who is responding and what they are doing), etc. You may be as creative as you like, but the scenario must be feasible/possible (based on sound science and the pathogen you choose). [6 - 9 pages]

(c) Reference list – Must consist of at least 5 relevant references and use the APA (5th edition) reference style. [At least 5 references; no more than 1 page]

Grading criteria for Option A/Scenario Development: a) plausibility (20 points), b) correct response/progression assumptions (25 points), c) thoroughness (35 points), d) logical flow and organization (15 points), and e) adequacy of references (5 points). [9 – 13 pages total]

Option B: Exercise Evaluation Report

Attend a disaster exercise of any size using any type of a scenario (any CBRNE agent, emerging infection, or natural disaster) in any location (this can be within a facility or a community) and write an 8 - 13 page report on the experience. [You may use an exercise you have attended in the past 6 months; if it's been longer than 6 months since you attended an exercise you wish to evaluate, you must discuss it with the instructor before starting.]

The project would consist of the following components:

- (a) Background– Summarize the basic points of the exercise, including the location, who and approximately how many people were involved, and basic information on the scenario, such as the type of disaster and how many victims were involved. [2 pages]. This should be brief; only provide enough detail to cover the overall scope of the exercise.
- (b) Exercise evaluation – Using the RAND Evaluation criteria for exercises (see Required Readings Week 12), evaluate the exercise you attended. [1 – 2 pages].
- (c) Summary of the lessons learned from the exercise – Summarize (in bullet points or narrative) the lessons learned from this exercise. [2 – 3 pages].
- (d) Comparison to other exercises – Compare and contrast the lessons learned from the exercise you attended to those published in the literature (you may use references we read for class or other relevant articles). You must compare your experience with at least 3 published articles on lessons learned from other exercises. [1 – 3 pages].
- (e) Action steps – Briefly provide an action plan for the facility or community involved in the exercise and how they could/should incorporate the lessons learned into their disaster plan(s). [1 - 2 pages].
- (e) Reference list – Must consist of at least 3 relevant references and use the APA (5th edition) reference style. [At least 3 references; no more than 1 page]

Grading criteria for Option B/Exercise Report: a) points easily identifiable, plausible, and accurate (30 points), b) all ideas flow logically; the comparison argument is identifiable, reasonable, and sound (35 points), c) thoroughness (15 points), d) logical flow and organization (15 points), and e) adequacy of references (5 points). [8 – 13 pages total]

Seminar Discussions:

For each module, there will be a threaded discussion question or series of questions and each student is expected to participate in that discussion. All opinions stated in the seminar discussions must be backed up by fact and accompanied with an abbreviated citation.

You must follow the guidelines for participating in threaded seminar discussions.

Seminar guidelines:

- Students must email (through WebCT course email) their answer to the seminar question(s) to the instructor by Thursday at 11:59 pm of the week that the question is posted.

- All student initial answers (that were emailed to the instructor) should be posted to the seminar discussion board by Friday at 11:59 pm of the week that the question is posted. Student must NOT post their answer until Friday at 12:01 am at the earliest. This time gap allows the instructor to receive all answers before students see other students' answers. To receive full points for seminar discussion interaction, students must respond to at least one other student's posting. Interaction responses should be posted by Sunday at 11:59 pm of the week that the question is posted. Comments should make a valuable contribution to the discussion by offering new insights or information. A simple "I agree" or some form thereof is *not* considered a sufficient posting for this class.
- All posts should be maintained under the initial posting (i.e., thread) started by the instructor for that week/session. This is accomplished by hitting "Reply" or "Quote" rather than "Compose message". This will allow for the week/session's postings to be compiled under one post initiated by the instructor. Do not start a new post.