

SOCI 4113/5115 FA*
SOCIOLOGY OF DISASTER
Fall 2022

Seminar: Tuesdays 2:30-5:30pm

Location: AT 2006

Instructor: Dr. Sanders

Office hours: Tuesdays before seminar and by appointment

Email: D2L (not lakeheadu.ca email)

COURSE DESCRIPTION

SOCI 4113/5115 covers the fundamentals of sociological research on disasters by exploring the following: *What is a disaster? How and why do they occur? Which groups are most affected and why? What are the social, economic, and community consequences?* To address these questions we begin with the history of the field. Next, we learn about the foundations of sociology of disaster theory including key terms and “myths” about disasters. Finally, we turn to current theorizing of social vulnerability to disasters and individual and community resilience. Films and case studies of major disasters are used to explore main concepts and theories, and will also serve as the foundations of student presentations.

STUDENT LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- To develop a general understanding of important concepts and research results in the sociology of disaster;
- To develop understanding of how key sociological theories and concepts are used to understand the impacts of disasters;
- To identify how social stratification affects disaster risk and recovery outcomes;
- To apply disaster theories and concepts to an original analysis of a disaster in Canada;
- To hone oral presentation skills including participating in question/answer sessions;
- To articulate thoughtful discussion questions and engage in open discussion of course material with peers.

COURSE READINGS

The following textbook available in print or digital versions through the LU bookstore:

- Tierney, Kathleen. 2019. *Disasters: A Sociological Approach*. Cambridge: Polity Press.
- Klinenberg, Eric. 2002. *Heat Wave: A Social Autopsy of Disaster in Chicago*. Chicago: University Press.
- Supplementary readings posted to D2L.

* This is an abridged syllabus. See D2L folder or contact instructor for unabridged version.

ORGANIZATION OF THE COURSE

This course is run as a seminar, though it will occasionally include short lectures with PowerPoint slides and audio/visual materials. You will be expected to carefully read all assigned material before class and to share your thoughts and perspectives during class discussion.

COURSE EVALUATION AND SUMMARY OF TESTS AND ASSIGNMENTS

Detailed guidelines will be provided for all assignments and you will have in-class time to ask questions about expectations.

Description	Final Submission Date	Weight
Assignments	Ongoing	25%
Seminar participation	Ongoing	25%
Midterm	Oct 07	25%
Presentations	Nov 08/29	25%

Writing assignments are based on assigned readings and include take-home essay questions, analytic briefs, and in-class exercises. Work is evaluated on the extent to which comprehension of course material is demonstrated (i.e., is it evident that you read) as well as grammar and organization, clarity of writing, and application and originality (i.e., not rote repetition). Late assignments will be penalized 10% per day including weekends. Assignments are intended to prepare students for seminar discussion and therefore cannot be made up for full credit.

Seminar participation is key to the success of the course and your final mark relies on careful preparation and active participation in discussions. This means articulating thoughtful questions and answers to questions, and engaging in respectful discussion of course material during seminar. It may also include facilitating class discussion and presenting summaries or discussion questions. I do not expect that you will do these tasks perfectly from the start, but I do expect you to demonstrate improvement over the semester. Please note that participation marks cannot be made up as the purpose of the mark is to demonstrate that you have understood the assigned material, are prepared to discuss that material with your classmates, and are engaged in discussion about the topic for that day. This is the point of the seminar experience and cannot be made up regardless of why the session was missed.

The midterm is a short analytic reflection of a disaster case study (approx. 3-5 pages). The case study and specific writing guidelines will be distributed in class.

Two **oral presentations** (approx. 15-20 min) are assigned. The first is an analysis of a disaster film and the second is an analysis of an actual historical disaster event. An important part of the presentations is a Q&A session in which students are evaluated on ability to pose questions to speakers as well as answer audience questions. Due to the nature of the assignments, presentations cannot be made up for full credit.

COURSE POLICIES

Email: I encourage you to deal with issues related to your course assignments in person during class or class breaks. For more in-depth discussion of course issues, please see me during office hours or make an appointment. Email should be succinct and require only a brief response. Email should also be professional, attending to spelling, grammar, and punctuation, and avoiding “texting” jargon and use of emojis, etc. In addition, please include a proper greeting, such as "Dear Dr. Sanders," and a closing that includes your full name, such as "Sincerely, Joe Biden." In the subject heading, please include the Course Number: SOCI 4113/5115. Please note that I will only respond to emails sent from a Lakehead university email account.

Grades and feedback: I will provide written feedback on tests and assignments that are submitted by the due date. For late work, I will provide oral feedback during office hours or by appointment. I do not discuss grades by email or provide detailed breakdowns of graded work by email. All grade inquiries must be during office hours or by appointment.

Attendance: There is no greater predictor of doing well in a course than attending classes. As this is a seminar course, students are expected to be present in class each week. In the event that we must shift to a Zoom format for seminar, I consider it common courtesy for cameras to be on during discussions. Plus, active cameras help me evaluate attendance and participation. Zoom backgrounds are available if you have privacy concerns.

Copyright compliance: I understand and agree that all instructional, reference, and administrative materials to which I am given access in this course (the course materials), whether they consist of text, still or kinetic images, or sound, whether they are in digital or hard copy formats, and in whatever media they are offered, are protected in their entirety by copyright, and that to comply with this copyright and the law.

1. I may access and download the course materials only for my own personal and non-commercial use for this course; and
2. I am not permitted to download, copy, store (in any medium), forward or share, transmit, broadcast, show, post or play in public, adapt, or change in any way any text, image, or sound component of the course materials for any other purpose whatsoever except as expressly authorized, and only to the extent authorized, in writing, by the course instructor. I further understand and agree that, if I infringe the copyright of the course materials in any way, I may be prosecuted under the Lakehead University Student Code of Conduct—Academic Integrity, which requires students to act ethically and with integrity in academic matters and to demonstrate behaviors that support the University’s academic values.

Exam/assignment integrity

Plagiarism: All work must be completed with academic integrity. Please review the LU policy on plagiarism and academic dishonesty, accessible from the LU homepage or the course information folder on the website. Please come to me with any questions or concerns about this policy prior to handing in assignments or taking the tests. I understand and agree that:

1. Unless otherwise allowed by the course instructor, I must complete the assignments in this course without the assistance of anyone else.
2. Unless otherwise allowed by the course instructor, I must not access any sources or materials (in print, online, or in any other way) to complete any course exam.
3. I further understand and agree that, if I violate either of these two rules, or if I provide any false or misleading information about my completion of course assignments or exams, I may be prosecuted under the Lakehead University Student Code of Conduct—Academic Integrity, which requires students to act ethically and with integrity in academic matters and to demonstrate behaviors that support the University’s academic values.

Accommodations: LU is committed to achieving full accessibility for persons with disabilities. This commitment includes arranging academic accommodations for students with disabilities to ensure they have an equitable opportunity to participate in all of their academic activities. If you think you may need accommodations, you are encouraged to contact Student Accessibility Services (SAS) as early as possible. Please visit: <http://studentaccessibility.lakeheadu.ca>

MENTAL HEALTH RESOURCES

As a university student, you may sometimes experience mental health concerns or stressful events that interfere with your academic performance and negatively impact your daily activities. All of us can benefit from support during times of struggle. If you or anyone you know experiences academic stress, difficult life events or feelings of anxiety or depression, **Student Health and Wellness** is here to help. Their services are free for Lakehead Students and appointments are available. You can learn more about confidential mental health services available on and off campus at: lakeheadu.ca/shw

Remember that getting help is a smart and courageous thing to do—for yourself, for those you care about, and for those who care about you. Asking for support sooner rather than later is almost always helpful.

SEMINAR SCHEDULE*

Week 1 (Sep 06): Introduction to Sociology of Disaster

- No assigned readings
- Orienting lecture
- Review syllabus

Week 2 (Sep 13): Social Significance of Disasters

- *DASA*, Chapter 1 (pp. 1-14)
- D2L, Course pack reading

Week 3 (Sep 20): Sociological Research on Disasters

- *DASA*, Chapter 2 (pp. 15-38) and Chapter 4 (pp. 65-98)
- Assignment 1 due Sept 23 (see Assignments folder for questions)

Week 4 (Sep 27): Using Sociological Theory to Study Disasters

- D2L, Course pack reading
- Assignment 2 in class (see Assignments folder for handout)

Week 5 (Oct 04): Regroup, Reflect, and Apply What We've Learned

- No assigned readings
- Assignment 3 due in class (see Assignments folder for handout)
- Midterm assigned (due Oct 07).

Week 6 (Oct 11): Reading Week

- No seminar or assigned readings

Week 7 (Oct 18): Vulnerability and Trauma

- *DASA*, Chapter 6 (pp. 120-166)
- D2L, Course pack reading

Week 8 (Oct 25): Urban Disaster, Risk, and Vulnerability (Part 1)

- *Heat Wave*, Prologue, Introduction, and Chapter 1 (pp. 1-78)
- Assignment 4 due Oct 28 (see Assignments folder for questions)

Week 9 (Nov 01): Urban Disaster, Risk, and Vulnerability (Part 2)

- *Heat Wave*, Chapters 2-3 (pp. 79-164)
- In class discussion to revisit disaster films and disaster topics for Presentations 1 & 2

Week 10 (Nov 08): Mass Media and Disasters

- *Heat Wave*, Chapter 5 (185-224)

* Schedule subject to change as necessary.

- D2L, Course pack reading
- Presentation 1 (see Assignments folder for handout)

Week 11 (Nov 15): Disaster Resilience

- *DASA*, Chapter 7 (pp. 167-214)
- D2L, Course pack reading
- Assignment 5 due in class (see Assignments folder for handout)

Week 12 (Nov 22): Regroup, Reflect, and Apply What We've Learned

- No seminar, no assigned readings
- Prep week, extended office hours

Week 13 (Nov 29): Conclusion and Final Presentations

- No assigned readings
- Presentation 2 (see Assignments folder for handout)

Happy holidays and enjoy the winter break!