

# EMGT 4990: Emergency Management Capstone

Emergency Management and Disaster Science  
University of Nebraska at Omaha

Spring 2020

**Instructor:** Dr. Thomas Jamieson  
**E-mail:** [tjamieson@unomaha.edu](mailto:tjamieson@unomaha.edu)  
**Office:** CPACS 114D  
**Student Hours:** MW 4-5.00pm, or by appointment  
**Lectures:** M 5.30-8.10pm, CPACS 121

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## Course Description

This course fulfills the Emergency Management Capstone senior project demonstrating expertise on a specific issue area and/or problem in emergency management. The student will be required to construct and execute a research project analyzing a contemporary operational, economic, or managerial issue within emergency management utilizing an appropriate research or analytical methodology. Both a written report and PowerPoint presentation will be presented as part of the course requirements.

Research is something that takes practice and work – it is much more difficult to apply concepts to an original research project than it is to learn their definitions. The course is structured around practicing and developing your research skills so that you can find your own voice, your own argument, and accurately execute your Capstone project.

## Course Information

- The course is worth 3 credit hours
- This course is intended for upper-division Emergency Management majors and students completing concentrations and their undergraduate studies.
- The prerequisite for this course is completion or concurrent enrollment of PA 3000 / CRCJ 3000; EMGT 3040, EMGT 3080, EMGT 4060; Writing in the Discipline course; all with a C- or better; Instructor's Permission Required, and junior or senior standing.
- This class requires an adequate computer with Microsoft Word and PowerPoint (or equivalents), and access to reliable online web service provision.

## Course Purpose, Goals and Objectives

- Perform unbiased analysis of a contemporary issue in Emergency Management and Disaster Science through use of acceptable methodology.

- Demonstrate ability to use technical resources, including the library, and emergency management databases.
- Show familiarity with contemporary emergency management issues.
- Use critical thinking skills and interpersonal skills throughout the course.
- Demonstrate competency in technical writing through the preparation of a formal project research paper.
- Articulate expertise in project area via Power Point and answer technical questions on area of emergency management as well as research methods and analysis procedures.

## Diversity Statement

There must be a clear respect for diversity maintained in the class. This includes respect for people related to gender, sexual orientation, religious identity, disability, age, socio-economic status, ethnicity, race, culture and other differences. All of us have something to offer, and together, we can cultivate a classroom environment where individuals of varying opinions, experiences, and backgrounds are able to learn in a supportive and inclusive setting.

## Required Text

There is one required textbook for the course:

- Trochim, W. M. K. & Donnelly, J. P. (2006). *The Research Methods Knowledge Base* (3rd ed.). Mason, OH: Atomic Dog.

The following book is strongly recommended, especially if you are conducting qualitative research:

- Phillips, B. D. (2014). *Qualitative Disaster Research: Understanding Qualitative Research*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press.

## Course Instructional Methods

This course will be delivered through lectures and course materials are distributed on Canvas. Help can be found via the HELP link in Canvas.

## Written Communication Skills Component

The American Psychological Association (APA) Manual of Style (6th ed.) is the uniform standard for citation of sources for the Emergency Management and Disaster Science Program.

## Computer and Technology Component

It is important that students are able to utilize computer technology to succeed at the university and in the Emergency Management and Disaster Science career field. Students will use word processing software for assignments; e-mail for communication and assignments, including sending and receiving file attachments; and conduct library database searches. Students may utilize the UNO Computer Labs on campus for assignments.

## Policies and Expectations

### Attendance

Attendance is important to succeed in this and any course in college. Your attendance is measured by your participation in lectures and completion of online activities.

### Late Work

Late assignments will automatically be penalized 10% if they are submitted after the due date. Assignments will not be accepted if they are more than 24 hours late without making prior arrangements with the instructor. For example: if an assignment is due on Friday at 11:59 PM turned in on Saturday at 1:00 PM, a B paper would be dropped to a C. If the student does not submit the paper until Monday at 07:00 AM, no credit will be given for the assignment.

If you are unable to submit an assignment on time due to circumstances outside your control, please contact me **prior to the deadline** and we can discuss accommodations.

### Retakes

If an assignment is returned to the student to be redone, it will be assessed a 15% penalty each time it must be redone. It is in the student's best interest to read/listen to assignment directions carefully so as to complete the assignment correctly the first time.

### Extra Credit

The course will offer two opportunities for extra credit, each worth 25 points. Students will receive 25 points of extra credit upon completion of an anonymous survey at the end of the semester, the results of which will be used by the instructor for future course development. All students will also receive 25 points of extra credit if at least 80% of the class completes automated course evaluations.

No other opportunities for extra credit are currently scheduled, but this is subject to change — students will be notified if additional opportunities arise.

## Academic Integrity

### Important Values for Future Emergency Management and Disaster Science Professionals

Academic integrity is a serious issue in higher education and will be treated as such by the Emergency Management and Disaster Science Faculty. The nature of the Emergency Management and Disaster Science requires core values be instilled in its future professionals. The industry, and thus the Faculty, place a strong emphasis on such values as integrity, ethics, honesty, respect, accountability, and honor. To prepare future industry professionals who demonstrate these characteristics, the Faculty of the Emergency Management and Disaster Science Program enforce a "Zero Tolerance" policy regarding violations of academic integrity.

### UNO and Emergency Management and Disaster Science

The UNO Academic Integrity policy outlines many infractions of academic integrity, as well as the academic and disciplinary sanctions for violations. The policy can be found in the UNO Undergraduate Catalog and on-line at: <https://catalog.unomaha.edu/undergraduate/>. All students must comply with this policy. This policy also specifies that an academic unit may have additional standards of conduct. Supplementary violations for all Emergency Management and Disaster Science courses include, but are

not limited to: 1) Lying to misrepresent a situation; 2) Submitting one's own work, in whole or in part, more than once for academic credit; 3) Cheating or copying from another person on assignments, quizzes, or exams; 4) Dishonesty in recording attendance; and 5) Plagiarism.

### **Penalties for Violations**

The instructor will determine course consequences for violations of academic integrity. The penalty may range from awarding zero (0) points for the exam, quiz, or assignment, to a failing grade for the course. The instructor will document the instance and forward it to the Undergraduate Committee of the School. The Undergraduate Committee will consider all violations of academic integrity for two purposes: 1) To track repeat activity which will receive the most severe penalties; and 2) To make a recommendation to the Vice Chancellor regarding university disciplinary action, including suspension or expulsion from UNO. The documentation will be retained.

### **Disability Services and Accommodations**

Reasonable accommodations are provided for students who are registered with Accessibility Services Center (ASC) and make their requests sufficiently in advance. For more information, contact ASC (Location: H&K 104, Phone: 402.554.2872, Email: [unoaccessibility@unomaha.edu](mailto:unoaccessibility@unomaha.edu)).

### **Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS)**

Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) are free and confidential for enrolled students. For more information, contact CAPS at 402.554.2409, H&K 102, Monday – Friday, 8am - 5p.m. Please also visit the website: [caps.unomaha.edu](http://caps.unomaha.edu) to learn more.

### **Writing Center**

The UNO Writing Center offers free one-on-one consultations with trained consultants to all students, faculty, and staff. Their goal is to help writers improve their writing skills and confidence in all types of writing, in all subject areas, and at all stages of the writing process. For more information about their hours and locations or to schedule an appointment, go to [writingcenter.unomaha.edu](http://writingcenter.unomaha.edu) or visit them at their main location in Arts and Sciences Hall, Room 150.

### **Social Science Research Commons (SSRC)**

The Social Science Research Commons (SSRC) is a space for students, faculty, and community members to build opportunities & support networks for interdisciplinary research. Located in Arts & Sciences Hall (ASH) 304, the SSRC is an initiative of the social sciences to promote academic partnership and collaboration by offering a network of support for UNO/UNMC students and faculty as they work to master critical research tools and methodologies.

The SSRC currently offers: 1) Open lab hours in which students and faculty can consult with Sociology Graduate Assistants and/or the Social Sciences Librarian, Omer Farooq (e.g., about SPSS, survey design, research question development); 2) Monthly methodological workshops (e.g., on Qualtrics, Social Network Analysis, working with big data); 3) A network of research methods/statistics professors/experts is being created through the SSRC to both support student research and develop interdisciplinary connections among faculty; and 4) A meeting space for classes and research/instructional groups who need a computer lab.

## **Maverick Food Pantry**

UNO's Maverick Food Pantry aims to contribute to UNO's culture of caring by providing resources to those in immediate need and connecting them with additional resources in the greater Omaha area for long-term support. The Maverick Food Pantry offers food and personal hygiene products to UNO faculty, staff members, and currently-enrolled students by providing healthy, organic, and culturally sensitive items. Requests for food packages can be submitted through an easy online form twice a week.

## **Workload**

For classroom courses, the expectation associated with a 3 credit hour class includes 3 hours of in-class work each week, and an additional 6 hours of outside-the-classroom work each week. Students not prepared to devote the required effort to this course should consider dropping prior to the university withdrawal date.

## **Incompletes**

An incomplete grade will not be normally issued for this course. However, documented circumstances beyond a student's personal control may warrant one (extended illness, major surgery, death in immediate family). Each instance will be handled based on the circumstances, provided the instructor receives written documentation.

## **Assignments and Course Content**

### **Weekly Tasks**

The course is structured around weekly tasks that involve completing the assigned readings, attending the lectures, completing weekly homework assignments, and working on the research paper in the expectation your workload will remain relatively constant throughout the semester. Each week's materials will be posted on Canvas at the beginning of the week.

### **Readings**

Each week, please complete the assigned readings before the lecture. Please note that additional readings may be assigned each week.

### **Lectures**

Lectures will be presented in CPACS 121, with slides also made available via Canvas. Information from the readings and/or the lectures will be used for the weekly quizzes on Canvas.

## **Assignments**

### **Homework Assignments**

Homework assignments will be administered to apply student knowledge of course materials to an element of the Capstone project. These tasks will hone your skills and develop your knowledge that will help you better execute your research project. These will be due by 11.59pm on the Friday evening each week.

No.	Homework Assignment
1	IRB Training
2	Topic Outline
3	Measurement Strategy
4	Literature Review
5	Data Collection Strategy
6	Design Sketch
7	Alternative Approaches
8	Interpretation of Findings
9	Statistical Analysis
10	Full Draft Paper

## Research Design

The research design involves describing in detail how you will collect data and analyze that data to answer your research question. A good research design helps solve a lot of problems before they appear later on in the empirical analysis. A guide will be provided on Canvas to help you develop your research design.

## Peer Review

Every student's paper will be circulated to two randomly-selected members of the class, and they will provide anonymous feedback to the student as would-be peer reviewers. The Professor will also provide feedback at this stage, so everyone will receive feedback from three people to help them revise their paper. Further instructions about peer review and how to conduct these reviews will be made available on Canvas ahead of the due date.

## Student Presentations

Students will construct slides and present their paper to the class in the final weeks of the semester to get feedback ahead of submitting the final version of the paper.

## Final Paper

Finally, the final 20-30 page paper will be submitted by May 1. Specific instructions and rubrics will be discussed in class and posted on Canvas during the semester.

# Evaluation

## Grading System

Task	Points
<i>Weekly Tasks</i>	
Homework Assignments (10 x 20 points each)	200 points
<i>Assignments</i>	
Research Design	200 points
Peer Review	100 points
Student Presentations	100 points
Final Paper	400 points
<b>Total</b>	<b>1000 points</b>

Every effort is made to make the grading system and rubrics as transparent and fair as possible. You may contest a grade up to one week after it is returned. If you believe that there has been an error on your

assignment or exam, please wait 24 hours after receiving the grade. After that period, please submit a written description of the error you believe occurred along with the assignment or exam to the instructor for re-grading. Clerical errors and outright mistakes will be corrected; decisions about the amount of partial credit to give for an answer will not be revisited. **Please note that your grade could increase, decrease, or remain the same upon reconsideration.**

## Grading Scale

Percentage	Letter Grade
98.5 - 100	A+
93.0 - 98.4	A
90.0 - 92.9	A-
87.0 - 89.9	B+
83.0 - 86.9	B
80.0 - 82.9	B-
77.0 - 79.9	C+
73.0 - 76.9	C
70.0 - 72.9	C-
67.0 - 69.9	D+
63.0 - 66.9	D
60.0 - 62.9	D-
0 - 59.9	F

## Important Information

### Grading Philosophy

Students should be aware that the instructor grades assignments according to the description in the UNO Catalog.

An A is reserved for those students that have excelled or mastered the material or activity. To receive a grade in the "A" range, you need to demonstrate that you have gone well beyond the criteria of acceptable quality undergraduate work in all aspects of the assignment. The quality of your writing must be polished and professional, your analysis must be of such outstanding quality that I am impressed with your comprehension of the material, your insights on the issues, and the recommendation you present. You must demonstrate that you have far exceeded the expectations of resources used for your projects.

A B is reserved for those students that have met all required areas and went beyond them with, perhaps, a few mistakes. A grade in the "B or B+" range represents acceptable quality undergraduate level work. To earn a grade in this range, your written material must be clearly written, easy to follow, free of spelling and grammatical errors, and formatted according to an accepted style manual. Your analysis should reflect a good understanding of the course material and your ideas and recommendations should follow logically from your analysis and evaluation.

A grade of "B-" or below indicates work that is below undergraduate quality. These grades would be awarded if *either* the material submitted is not well written *or* the analysis presented is too superficial *or* not all required issues are addressed. Grades of C+ or below apply when more than one of the above weaknesses is present.

All written work must be typed or word-processed. Handwritten work will be accepted only on assignments or exercises completed in class. Students are expected to submit assignments that meet professional standards in both content and style. Professional content requires thorough research and the demonstrated ability to articulate logical and insightful arguments and critical thinking skills. Professionalism in style demands that written assignments be professional in appearance, clearly written, and free of grammatical, spelling, and syntax errors.

## **How to Succeed in This Course and In Your Career**

Attendance, participation, and effort will determine your success in this course. Emergency Management and Disaster Science is an industry that commands utmost professionalism and little margin for error.

## **Areas of Concern for the Industry**

The instructor will endeavor to include activities, which foster the development of these critical skills as identified by the industry:

### **Critical Thinking Skills**

Problem analysis, problem solving, judgment and decision making (including resource identification and management)

### **Interpersonal Skills**

Oral and written communication, conflict management, conflict resolution, team building, team maintenance, individual accountability

### **Values and Attitudes**

Ethical standards, integrity, flexibility, versatility, openness to change, curiosity, imagination, creativity, motivation, passion, dedication

## **Policies and Procedures for EMDS Courses**

### **University Policies**

University policies as published in the Undergraduate Catalog will be strictly followed and enforced. It is the policy of the University of Nebraska system to not discriminate on the basis of sex, sexual orientation, disability, race, color, and religion, national or ethnic origin in its educational programs. If a student feels that some form of discrimination has been directed at them, please contact the instructor immediately.

### **Instructor Role in the Course**

- To stimulate thinking, provide enthusiasm, be responsive to students and well prepared for the class.
- To develop and actively protect a class environment in which respect must be shown to everyone in order to facilitate and encourage the expression, testing, understanding, and creation of a variety of ideas and opinions.
- To create and maintain an online learning environment that encourages active participation.
- To grade fairly and explain and clarify subject material.

## **Instructor Contact Information**

Every effort will be made to respond to emails within 24 hours during the week. Any contact made after 5pm on Friday will be returned the following Monday. Please note that weekly assignments are due by the end of Friday evening — please ensure that you review the assignments earlier rather than later.

## **Periodic Course Assessments by Students**

In addition to the students being evaluated, instructors are also evaluated. The primary means is through a course evaluation instrument at the end of the semester. Other forms of assessment may include the TABS assessment of teaching, a peer teaching evaluation, informal requests for feedback in class regarding a specific activity or speaker, or other means.

## **Student Role in the Course**

In order to benefit from a course, both in pursuit of knowledge and grades, regular attendance is required. Students who do not attend class will miss important discussions, assignments, and group interactions. Each student is expected to be prepared for each class, having read any assignments prior to class.

To receive full participation points, the student must communicate with the instructor by meeting appropriate deadlines and conforming with all requirements as stated in the syllabus. Students are expected to be familiar with all academic policies outlined in the UNO catalog, student handbook, and major area handbook.

Students will not participate in disruptive behavior. This includes, but is not limited to, receiving beeper or cell phone calls during class, leaving class early or coming to class habitually late, eating in class, talking out of turn, doing assignment for other classes, reading materials other than those required for this course, sleeping, and engaging in other activities that detract from the classroom learning experience. Infringing on rights of others, that is, anything that disrupts the professor or other students is unacceptable and will result in dismissal from class. For online courses, please view the netiquette guidelines outlined in "Pages."

All students must use their gnav e-mail account. This is necessary to maintain an important notice distribution list for each class.

Students not making satisfactory progress at the mid-term should consider dropping the course. However, the instructor would prefer students consult with them at a scheduled appointment to see if completion of the course is possible.

Assignment deadlines will be communicated to the class through the class schedule and through announcements made in class. Students are expected to attend all classes to receive these important communications. Not all work will be returned; students should make copies of any assignments they wish to keep.

## **Disability**

Students who have a documented disability and need academic accommodations are encouraged to contact the instructor during the first week to discuss their special needs. Accommodations are provided for students with verified disabilities. For more information, contact Accessibility Services in MBCS 126 or 402.554.2872, TTY 554-3799.

## Academic Dishonesty

Academic dishonesty includes the usual kinds of cheating on exams and quizzes, as well as dishonesty in recording attendance. Plagiarism includes not only presenting someone else's work from a source as one's own, but also giving one's work to someone else so that he or she can present it as their own work.

Students are encouraged to work together, exchange notes, discuss ideas presented in the lectures and texts, or give each other feedback, but the final work you submit and/or write on an exam or quiz must be your own interpretation or summation of the material based on your own work — it cannot simply be a repetition of something that you and several others jointly worked on and produced.

Taking credit for someone else's work, or submitting essays and writing exams on material which you did not read, study, or think about, is academically dishonest and constitutes plagiarism. Also, submitting your own work more than once for academic credit is also considered academic dishonesty. If a student violates any of these policies, it is the instructor's discretion to determine the consequence. The penalty could range from awarding zero (0) points for that exam, paper, quiz, or assignment, to giving a failing grade for the course. This is a serious issue in higher education and will be treated as such by the instructor.

## Calendar

All classes will observe the UNO Prep Week policy. Prep week is the week prior to final examinations. No exam constituting more than 20% of the final course grade will be scheduled (except make-up exams, tests in self-paced or distance courses, or lab exams). However, a course paper, project, or presentation that constitutes 20% or more of the course grade may be due during dead week if it is assigned more than 2 weeks in advance.

## Learning Facilities and Resources

Various campus organizations and offices are available to students. See the UNO Student Handbook for additional information.

## UNO Library

Research resource including Academic Search Premier and popular electronic databases. A UNO Library guide is available specifically for locating sources in the library. Website: <http://library.unomaha.edu/>

## UNO Computer Labs

Computer and Data Communication Labs are located throughout the UNO campus with variable hours for student convenience.

## Spring 2020 Course Calendar

The schedule is tentative and subject to change.

### Week 1, 01/13 - 01/17: Introductions & Foundations

- Read EMGT 4990 syllabus
- Read chapter 1 of Trochim and Donnelly (2006)
- Complete Homework Assignment #1: IRB Training (20 points)
  - Due Friday by 11.59pm

**Week 2, 01/20 - 01/24: Sampling**

- NO CLASS ON 01/20
- Read chapter 2 of Trochim and Donnelly (2006)
- Complete Homework Assignment #2: Topic Outline (20 points)
  - Due Friday by 11.59pm

**Week 3, 01/27 - 01/31: Measurement**

- Read chapter 3 of Trochim and Donnelly (2006)
- Complete Homework Assignment #3: Measurement Strategy (20 points)
  - Due Friday by 11.59pm

**Week 4, 02/03 - 02/07: Literature Review**

- Read Knopf (2006)
- Complete Homework Assignment #4: Literature Review (20 points)
  - Due Friday by 11.59pm

**Week 5, 02/10 - 02/14: Survey, Qualitative & Unobtrusive Measures**

- Read chapters 4 & 6 of Trochim and Donnelly (2006)
- Complete Homework Assignment #5: Data Collection Strategy (20 points)
  - Due Friday by 11.59pm

**Week 6, 02/17 - 02/21: Design**

- Read chapter 7 of Trochim and Donnelly (2006)
- Complete Homework Assignment #6: Design Sketch (20 points)
  - Due Friday by 11.59pm

**Week 7, 02/24 - 02/28: Qualitative, Mixed Methods & Experimental Designs**

- Read chapters 8 & 9 of Trochim and Donnelly (2006)
- Complete Homework Assignment #7: Alternative Approaches (20 points)
  - Due Friday by 11.59pm

**Week 8, 03/02 - 03/06: Research Design**

- NO CLASS ON 03/02
- Complete Research Design (200 points)
  - Due Friday by 11.59pm

**Week 9, 03/09 - 03/13: Analysis, Qualitative & Mixed Methods Analysis**

- Read chapters 12 & 13 of Trochim and Donnelly (2006)
- Complete Homework Assignment #8: Interpretation of Findings (20 points)
  - Due Friday by 11.59pm

**Week 10, 03/16 - 03/20: Analysis for Research Design**

- Read chapter 14 of Trochim and Donnelly (2006)
- Complete Homework Assignment #9: Statistical Analysis (20 points)
  - Due Friday by 11.59pm

**Week 11, 03/23 - 03/27: SPRING BREAK**

- NO CLASS ON 03/23

**Week 12, 03/30 - 04/03: Write Up**

- Read chapter 15 of Trochim and Donnelly (2006)
- Complete Homework Assignment #10: Full Draft Paper (20 points)
  - Due Friday by 11.59pm

**Week 13, 04/06 - 04/10: Peer Review**

- Read Mitchell (2015); Alvarez (2015); Berk, Harvey, and Hirshleifer (2017); Leeper (2016); Miller, Povehouse, Rogowski, Tingley, and Wilson (2013)
- Complete 2x peer reviews (100 points)
  - Due Friday by 11.59pm

**Week 14, 04/13 - 04/17: Student Presentations**

- Student presentations (100 points)

**Week 15, 04/20 - 04/24: Student Presentations**

- Student presentations (100 points)

**Week 16, 04/27 - 05/01: Final Paper**

- Final paper due (400 points)
  - Due Friday by 11.59pm

## References

- Alvarez, R. M. (2015, August). *Tips from a journal editor: being a good reviewer*. Retrieved 2019-08-25, from <https://blog.oup.com/2015/08/good-peer-reviewer-tips-journal-editor/>
- Berk, J. B., Harvey, C. R., & Hirshleifer, D. (2017). How to Write an Effective Referee Report and Improve the Scientific Review Process. *Journal of Economic Perspectives*, 31(1), 231–244. Retrieved 2019-08-25, from <https://www.aeaweb.org/articles?id=10.1257/jep.31.1.231> doi: 10.1257/jep.31.1.231
- Knopf, J. W. (2006). Doing a Literature Review. *PS: Political Science & Politics*, 39(1), 127–132. Retrieved 2019-08-25, from <https://www.cambridge.org/core/journals/ps-political-science-and-politics/article/doing-a-literature-review/00B62000B6760AB78E1BD27E32A94C9F> doi: 10.1017/S1049096506060264
- Leeper, T. J. (2016, August). *Introducing #BeReviewer1: A Hashtag on a Mission*. Retrieved 2019-08-25, from <https://www.thomasleeper.com/2016/08/be-reviewer-one/>
- Miller, B., Povehouse, J., Rogowski, R., Tingley, D., & Wilson, R. (2013). How To Be a Peer Reviewer: A Guide for Recent and Soon-to-be PhDs. *PS: Political Science & Politics*, 46(1). doi: 10.1017/S104909651200128X
- Mitchell, S. (2015, December). *An Editor's Thoughts on the Peer Review Process*. Retrieved 2019-08-25, from <https://thepoliticalmethodologist.com/2015/12/31/an-editors-thoughts-on-the-peer-review-process/>
- Phillips, B. D. (2014). *Qualitative Disaster Research*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Trochim, W. M. K., & Donnelly, J. P. (2006). *The Research Methods Knowledge Base* (3rd edition ed.). Mason, Ohio: Atomic Dog.