

ECON 351 ST:DISASTERS AND ECONOMIC POLICY

Trimester 1, 2015

COURSE OUTLINE

Names and Contact Details

Course Coordinator/lecturer: Professor Ilan Noy (pronounced ee-lan)
Office: room 201 Rutherford House, Pipitea Campus
Email: ilan.noy@vuw.ac.nz
Office hours: Tuesday 11:30-12:30pm and Thursday 9:30-10:30am or by appointment
(Please contact me by email to arrange an appointment)

Course Administrator: Alice Fong
Office: room 318 Rutherford House, Pipitea Campus
Email: alice.fong@vuw.ac.nz

Trimester Dates

Teaching Period: Monday 2nd March – Friday 5th June
Study Period: Monday 8th June – Thursday 11th June
Examination Period: Friday 12th June – Wednesday 1st July (inclusive)

Withdrawal from Course

1. Your fees will be refunded if you withdraw from this course on or before Friday 13th March 2014.
2. The standard last date for withdrawal from this course is Friday 15th May. After this date, students forced to withdraw by circumstances beyond their control must apply for permission on an '*Application for Associate Dean's Permission to Withdraw Late*' including supporting documentation. The application form is available from either of the Faculty's Student Customer Service Desks or [online](#).

Class Times and Room Numbers

Lectures: Tuesday & Thursday 10.30-11.20am in RHLT 3

Expected Workload

Total number of hours of work expected from students is 150.

Prescription

The economic aspects of disaster management and policy, including these topics: the economic history of natural disasters; the literature on the economics of natural disasters; a comparison with other types of economic shocks (finance, wars).

Course Learning Objectives

1. Analyse the history of disasters and their differing economic impacts.
2. Distinguish between direct, indirect, short, and long-run impacts on different facets of the economy and the micro and aggregate levels.
3. Evaluate ex-ante mitigation policy and its cost-benefit.
4. Appraise post-disaster interventions and their efficacy.

Course Content

Possible topics to be covered:

(the final list will also depend on the availability of guest lecturers and their specific expertise)

- History of disasters and their economic impact
- Disaster risk management
- Economic vulnerability to disasters
- Prevention/mitigation of disaster impact
- Disaster impact on poverty and inequality
- Political factors in determining vulnerability
- Post disaster growth and reconstruction
- Long-run growth and disaster risk
- Fiscal policy and disaster risk management
- Foreign aid and disasters
- Insurance (implicit and explicit – fiscal, household)
- Climate change and disaster risk
- International aspects of disasters (migration, remittances, and aid)
- Human behavioural during and after disasters

Readings

All the required sources mentioned below are available on blackboard as pdf files.

1. *Natural Hazards, UnNatural Disasters: The Economics of Effective Prevention* (2010). World Bank Press.
2. "The Economics of Natural Disasters – A Survey" by Ilan Noy and Eduardo Cavallo. *International Review of Environmental and Resource Economics* (2011), 5(1), 63-102.
3. CES-ifo Forum on Natural Disasters (2010).
4. Other readings posted on Blackboard

Books on specific disaster cases or topics (for general interest – not academic):

Isaac's Storm by Erik Larson (on the 1900 Galveston, Texas hurricane)
The Last Day by Nicholas Shrady (on the 1755 Lisbon earthquake)
The Big Truck that Went By by Jonathan Katz (on the 2010 Haiti earthquake)
Haiti after the Earthquake by Paul Farmer (on the 2010 Haiti earthquake)
The Year without Summer by William Klingaman (on the 1815 Tambora, Indonesia eruption)
Krakatoa by Simon Winchester (on the 1883 Karakatoa, Indonesia eruption)
Rising Tide by John M. Barry (on the 1927 Mississippi floods)
The Great Earthquake and Firestorm by Philip Fradkin (on the 1906 San Francisco earthquake)
A Crack in the Edge of the World by Simon Winchester (on the 1906 San Francisco earthquake)
The Worst Hard Time by Timothy Egan (on the 1930s Dust Bowl in the US)
Zeitoun by Dave Eggers (on the 2005 New Orleans hurricane).

Assessment

The Assessment Handbook will apply to all VUW courses: see

<http://www.victoria.ac.nz/documents/policy/staff-policy/assessment-handbook.pdf>

Assessment for this course:

1. A 5-minutes (group or individual) presentation on a topic relevant to a policy regarding a Wellington Earthquake scenario. The presentations will all be done on Friday, 29th May, 9:00-2:00pm.
30% - Learning Objectives 2 & 4
 2. 2 short papers (2 pages each). Due on 2/4/15 and 7/5/15.
30% - Learning Objectives 2 & 3
 3. Attendance and participation
10% - Learning Objectives 1 to 4
 4. Final research paper / exam. Due TBD
30% - Learning Objectives 1 to 4
- Guidelines for items (1), (2), & (4) will be provided on blackboard.

Penalties

I expect that students will attend all classes and participate in class discussions. Students who miss more than TWO classes unexcused will have their attendance/participation grade marked down by 2 percentage points (of final grade) for each additional class missed.

For late submission of assignments you will be marked down 8 percentage points for this assignment's mark for every day of delay (unless the delay was pre-approved). I will not accept any assignment with a delay of more than 5 days.

Use of Turnitin

Student work provided for assessment in this course may be checked for academic integrity by the electronic search engine <http://www.turnitin.com>. Turnitin is an on-line plagiarism prevention tool which compares submitted work with a very large database of existing material. A copy of submitted materials will be retained on behalf of the University for detection of future plagiarism, but access to the full text of submissions will not be made available to any other party.

Mandatory Course Requirements

No mandatory requirements.

If you cannot complete an assignment or sit a test or examination, refer to www.victoria.ac.nz/home/study/exams-and-assessments/aegrotat

Class Representative

A class representative will be elected in the first class, and that person's name and contact details made available to VUWSA, the course coordinator and the class. The class representative provides a communication channel to liaise with the course coordinator on behalf of students.

Communication of Additional Information

I will contact you via email through the blackboard system. It is your responsibility to make sure you receive these emails in an up-to-date email address. If you need to contact me, do it exclusively by email (if the VUW email system is down, you can contact me at noy@hawaii.edu).

Student feedback

Student feedback on University courses may be found at www.cad.vuw.ac.nz/feedback/feedback_display.php

Link to general information

For general information about course-related matters, go to <http://www.victoria.ac.nz/vbs/studenthelp/general-course-information>

Note to Students

Your assessed work may also be used for quality assurance purposes, such as to assess the level of achievement of learning objectives as required for accreditation and academic audit. The findings may be used to inform changes aimed at improving the quality of VBS programmes. All material used for such processes will be treated as confidential, and the outcome will not affect your grade for the course.
