School of Community and Regional Planning (SCARP)  
University of British Columbia  
COURSE OUTLINE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course Number</th>
<th>PLAN 531</th>
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<tr>
<td>Course Credit(s)</td>
<td>3.0</td>
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<tr>
<td>Course Title</td>
<td>Planning for Disaster-Resilient Communities</td>
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<tr>
<td>Term</td>
<td>2017-2018 – Winter Term 1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Days/Time</td>
<td>Monday 1:00 to 4:00pm</td>
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Office Hours | by appointment |

**Short Course Description**  
The study of natural disasters from the perspective of risk analysis, risk reduction, and planning for disaster-resilient communities. Focussed primarily on Canada and the U.S. but includes disaster risk globally. No prerequisites.

**Course Format**  
This is a seminar course that meets once a week for 3 hours. Each week, class will begin with an informal lecture. This will be followed by a student-led discussion of the assigned readings and by in-class exercises that reinforce the lecture topic. Occasional guest lectures will provide perspectives from researchers and practitioners on current topics in the field.

**Course Overview, Content and Objectives**  
This course introduces students to the study of disasters, disaster risk reduction, and disaster resilience planning. It addresses such questions as: What causes catastrophes? Why are disaster losses increasing? How can communities become more disaster-resilient? The course focuses primarily on natural hazards (e.g., earthquakes, floods, storms) in the U.S. and Canadian context. It will also consider technological hazards, human-induced disasters, and disasters in the developing country context. Drawing primarily from social science and planning literatures, but also considering natural science and engineering perspectives, the course seeks to develop interdisciplinary insights into the challenge of developing disaster-resilient communities. There are no prerequisites for this course. Students from any disciplinary background are welcome.

**Learning Outcomes**  
By the end of this course, students will be able to utilize theoretical concepts, appropriate terminology, and empirical cases to: (1) describe major trends and patterns in disaster losses and future risk; (2) explain how disaster risk arises from conditions and relationships in the human, built, and natural environments; (3) identify key policies and institutional structures for addressing risk and describe their roles, influences, and limitations; (4) describe and critically assess different tools (including but not limited to planning tools) for reducing risk, facilitating recovery, and fostering resilience at the community scale.
Additional Course Requirements

Attendance
Students are expected to attend all classes. Attendance will be reflected in the participation component of the course grade.

Evaluation Criteria and Grading
The course is graded on a numeric (percentage) basis.

Grading for the course will be based on the following:
- Assignment #1 – Risk factors (40%)
- Assignment #2 – Risk analysis (20%)
- Assignment #3 – Resilience tools (30%)
- Participation and discussion leadership (10%)

Assignment #1 will take the form of an academic paper and class presentation on the complex factors and their interactions underlying natural disaster risk in a specific community of the student's choosing. In Assignment #2, students will work as a multi-disciplinary team to critically review a risk assessment report and make recommendations from the perspective of community resilience planning. This year, the class will focus on seismic risk assessment for the UBC Vancouver campus. Each student will take responsibility for investigating one or more aspects of the overall review, and will contribute to the integrated team paper and presentation. Assignment #3 will consist of a briefing note on a specific resilience plan, strategy, or policy. Alternatively, students can choose to use Assignment #3 as an opportunity to pursue analysis arising out of Assignment #2 recommendations.

Assignments will be graded on the following criteria, as applicable: appropriate application of course concepts; identification and use of relevant sources; originality; clarity and completeness of documentation; clarity of explanation, reasoning and argument; and professional writing/presentation. In the group assignment, the same grade will be assigned to all members of the group; however, in case of extreme disparities in individual contributions, the instructor reserves the right to assign individual marks.

Required Readings and Videos
There is no textbook for this course. Readings will be compiled in a course reader and will be available electronically through Blackboard Connect. Readings will generally consist of academic journal articles and book chapters, with an emphasis on case studies. These will be supplemented by applied examples, textbook overviews, and resources presented in class.

Recommended Readings
For a useful overview and synthesis of the field, students are referred to the following optional reference:


Another useful emerging resource is the Oxford Research Encyclopedia on Natural Hazard Science, online at: naturalhazardscience.oxfordre.com.
**Course Schedule**

I. DISASTERS
(Week 1) Course introduction; Disaster impacts
(Week 2) Conceptual frameworks; Environment and physical hazard

II. VULNERABILITY & RISK
(Week 3) Disasters and development
(Week 4) Vulnerability of communities
(Week 5) *(UBC holiday)*
(Week 6) Vulnerability of people and businesses
(Week 7) Risk factors; student presentations

III. PLANNING
(Week 8) Risk assessment, risk communication, and risk perception
(Week 9) Disaster mitigation and institutional structures
(Week 10) *(UBC holiday)*
(Week 11) Disaster response and recovery
(Week 12) Reducing risk, fostering resilience

**Special Needs**

**Academic Integrity**
The academic enterprise is founded on honesty, civility, and integrity. As members of this enterprise, all students are expected to know, understand, and follow the codes of conduct regarding academic integrity. At the most basic level, this means submitting only original work done by you and acknowledging all sources of information or ideas and attributing them to others as required. This also means you should not cheat, copy, or mislead others about what is your work. Violations of academic integrity (i.e., misconduct) lead to the breakdown of the academic enterprise, and therefore serious consequences arise and harsh sanctions are imposed. For example, incidences of plagiarism or cheating may result in a mark of zero on the assignment or exam and more serious consequences may apply if the matter is referred to the President’s Advisory Committee on Student Discipline. Careful records are kept in order to monitor and prevent recurrences.

A more detailed description of academic integrity, including the University’s policies and procedures, may be found in the Academic Calendar at [http://calendar.ubc.ca/vancouver/index.cfm?tree=3,54,111,0.](http://calendar.ubc.ca/vancouver/index.cfm?tree=3,54,111,0.)