WILMINGTON UNIVERSITY
BEHAVIORAL SCIENCE

FACULTY MEMBER: TER M:

COURSE TITLE: Special Topics: Disaster and The Media
COURSE NUMBER: SOC 351

TEXTBOOK(S):

OFFICE HOURS AND METHOD OF CONTACT:

PREREQUISITES: Successful completion of SOC 101 or PSY 101

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

This course will use popular movies and television coverage so as to focus on understanding the role of the media in shaping public response to disasters. Because mass media has such a presence in the everyday lives of citizens, developing knowledge of how media shapes public perceptions, and how media can be utilized to mobilize the public are at the core of this course. This course will require watching several disaster movies in class. Students will develop greater understanding of disaster response by completing several Emergency Management Institute (EMI) modules.

I. MAJOR INSTRUCTIONAL GOALS

GOAL A: Students will identify types of disasters.

Learning Outcomes: The student will:

A-1: Identify forms of natural disasters.

A-2: Identify forms of man-made disasters.

A-3: Identify acts of terrorism as disasters.

A-4: Discuss how disasters are covered in the media.

GOAL B: Students will analyze how media portray disasters and influence disaster responses.

Learning Outcomes: The student will:

B-1: Identify media responses to disasters in print media, online media, film, and television.

B-2: Compare and contrast human responses to disasters in various media.
B-3: Connect human responses to disasters with sociological/psychological theory.

GOAL C: Students will explore differences in how the media portrays fictional vs non-fictional disasters.

Learning Outcomes: The student will:

C-1: Compare and contrast a fictional disaster instance with the media coverage of a non-fictional disaster.

C-2: Explain the differences in "factual" accounts of causes of the disaster.

C-3: List the differences between fictional and non-fictional depictions of disasters in how emergencies are managed.

C-4: Discuss how first responders are portrayed in the media.

C-5: Discuss the role of first responders in emergencies.

GOAL D: Students will analyze potential disasters in their own geographic areas.

Learning Outcomes: The student will:

D-1: Describe past disasters that have occurred in a nearby geographical area.

D-2: Identify hazards and potential disasters in their geographic environment.

D-3: Analyze how the public might respond to a likely natural or technological disaster in their area.

GOAL E: Students will use appropriate written and oral communication skills.

Learning Outcomes: The student will:

E-1: Communicate information orally using acceptable standard American English grammar.

E-2: Present written information using standard APA style.