

Group Problems: “Think about disaster experiences you have had prior to enrolling in this course. These may include direct personal experience or a secondary experience through a book, movie, television show, or other type of presentation. Select an example disaster—one for each group member. Then as a group try to complete as many of the details listed below as possible for each example disaster. After each group member has discussed their case, the group will then select the two which they believe are the most unique and informative. These will be reported to the full class.”

The informational categories for each example disaster are:

- a. Type of event (e.g., tornado, hurricane, etc.)
- b. Approximate date
- c. Location
- d. Your main source of information (e.g., personal experience, book, etc.)
- e. Two examples of helping behavior
- f. Two examples of emotional responses
- g. Two examples of gender differences in response
- h. Two examples of disaster preparedness activities that took place prior to the event

## II. CHAPTER 2—THE PROBLEM AND APPROACH

### A. Learning Objectives

1. Identify three social trends that have caused increases in disasters, both frequency and scope of impact
2. Describe three social trends that have increased the potential for catastrophic disasters
3. Illustrate with two specific disaster events, three general types of disasters
4. Identify and illustrate with three specific disaster events for each four types of natural disasters
5. Identify and describe three specific technological disaster events

6. Identify and describe three general types of conflict disaster events; provide at least one specific example of each (date, location, and event)
7. Identify and explain four key principles that characterize the social science knowledge base regarding disasters

## B. Test Questions

### 1. Multiple Choice (**correct answer in bold**)

a. Which of these social trends has contributed to the increase in disasters?

- 1) population growth
- 2) population location, e.g., building in hazardous areas
- 3) transportation related technology
- 4) use of hazardous materials in manufacturing

**5) all of the above**

b. Which of the following developments have contributed to the potential for catastrophic disasters?

- 1) population growth
- 2) population location
- 3) energy related technologies, e.g., nuclear power plants
- 4) climate change

**5) all of the above**

c. By the term “hazard,” most researchers refer to:

- 1) specific disaster events like Hurricane Katrina
- 2) specific disaster events like the war in Iraq
- 3) a class of conditions with the potential for harm**
- 4) only disasters caused by technological failure
- 5) all of the above

d. Which of the following “key principles” characterize the social science knowledge base

- 1) typicality
- 2) objectivity
- 3) patterned variability
- 4) generalization

**5) all of the above**

## 2. Short Answer

- a. Identify three social trends that have caused increases in disasters, both frequency and scope of impact
- b. Describe three social trends that have increased the potential for catastrophic disasters
- c. Illustrate with two specific disaster events each of the three general types of disasters
- d. Identify and describe three specific disaster events for each of four types of natural disasters
- e. Identify and describe three specific technological disaster events
- f. Identify and describe three general types of conflict disaster events; provide a specific example of each (year, location, and event)
- g. Identify and explain four key principles that characterize the social science knowledge base regarding disasters

## 3. Essay Topics

- a. “The Dangers Around You Are Increasing.” Use your community as the key focus and select appropriate examples from your community to illustrate your points.
- b. “Our Community Vulnerabilities.” Describe the key hazards your town confronts. Illustrate these by describing two prior disaster events that have occurred in your town. Within your discussion explain the difference between hazards and disasters.

- c. “Social Science Principles and Disaster Research.” Identify four key social science principles that guide disaster researchers. Explain why adherence to these principles differentiate social science findings from those produced by others such as media reporters or novelists.

### C. Recommended Class Activities and Exercises

1. Divide the class into four discussion groups and proceed with the class exercise using procedures described above (i.e., Chapter 1, Section C.1.)

Assign each group one of the following topical areas: 1) hurricane or tornado disaster; 2) earthquake, volcano, or tsunami disaster; 3) technological disaster; or 4) conflict disaster. Explain that each group is to select one disaster event that has occurred since January 1, 2009, that fits their assigned category. They are then to prepare a group report that contains the following information as best they can.

- a. Type of event
  - b. Approximate date
  - c. Location
  - d. Two examples of: 1) helping behaviors and 2) emotional responses
  - e. Specific ways that their information base on the event reflects or does not reflect the four social science principles that guide disaster researchers.
2. Divide the class into four discussion groups and proceed with the class exercise using the procedures described above (i.e., Chapter 1, Section C.1.)

Assign each group one of the topical areas listed above (e.g., 1) hurricane or tornado disaster). Explain that your community may not have experienced a disaster event recently, but all of these four topical areas reflect some of the hazards that define vulnerability. For their assigned area, how is the danger around you increasing? Identify and illustrate three social trends that are increasing community vulnerability for the type of hazard assigned. What social trends are occurring that may increase the potential for a catastrophic disaster in this community?

## III. CHAPTER 3—HEAR THAT SIREN?

### A. Learning Objectives

1. Describe why disbelief is the initial response to most disaster warnings