THE MODERN WORLD IN ANTHROPOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVE
(The Anthropology of Disaster)
Anthropology 300U
CRN: 46459
MWF 10:15 – 11:20; SH 212
Winter 2017

Dr. Michele Gamburd
Office: 141-H Cramer Hall
Email: gamburdm@pdx.edu
Office hours: W 1:30 – 2:30
F 12:00 – 1:00

TA: Liat Mayer
Email: lmayer@pdx.edu
Office: Cramer Hall 141-S
Office hours: W 11:30-12:30

COURSE DESCRIPTION
This class presents an upper division introduction to cultural diversity in a global context, using disaster as a lens through which to study social relations and ethical responsibility. We begin by discussing and then challenging the distinctions between natural hazards and disasters, man-made and natural events, and sudden and slow-moving catastrophes. Turning to the topic of political economy, we consider the effects of preexisting inequalities (e.g., race, ethnicity, class, and gender) and vulnerabilities (poverty, marginality), and examine individual, family, and community resilience as a function of social networks and social capital. We explore psychological predispositions in assessing the risk of potential disasters and discuss the importance of knowledge and the anxiety of uncertainty in the aftermath of catastrophes. The course concludes with an analysis of successes and failures in the administration of humanitarian aid. Students will have ample opportunities for in-class discussion and debate and will interact with representatives from the City of Portland and Providence Health and Services on potential Portland disasters and local emergency management planning.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES
In conversation with the Anthropology Department’s Undergraduate Program Learning Outcomes, by the end of this course, students will be able to master skills in the following areas:

1. Communication.
   a. Writing. Students should be able to write well. Their skills in this area should include, at a minimum, the ability to craft a well-structured argument, appropriately create and use introductions and conclusions, write paragraphs with topic and summary sentences, and reliably and accurately use citation and reference formats.

2. Critical thinking. Students should show mastery of analytic thinking. They should be able to distinguish between fact and opinion, demonstrate mastery of content by crafting descriptive summaries, deploy evidence to support or refute arguments, and understand the relationship between theory and data. For this course, use of critical thinking will include the ability to:
   a. Define natural hazard and disaster and apply the definitions to particular events
   b. Understand what anthropology can contribute to the study of and response to disasters
   c. Understand and analyze the effects of disaster on the built environment, human
health, and social relationships
d. Identify and critically assess structural determinants of vulnerability and resilience
e. Understand, analyze, and use anthropological theories about cultural diversity and the social construction of identity as they relate to governance in disaster response
f. Understand and analyze how humans assess risk and react to uncertainty
g. Create, assess, and critique representations of disaster in the popular press, creative fiction, and academic writing.
h. Evaluate the role of the anthropologist in critiquing and facilitating the administration of humanitarian aid

Students who are taking Anth 300 to fulfill a Junior Cluster requirement will find that the course relates in the following ways to the University Studies goals:

- **Communication**: Students will enhance their capacity to communicate in various ways—for this course, writing a scholarly essay and communicating in creative writing or other creative media.
- **Inquiry and critical thinking**: Students will learn various modes of inquiry through interdisciplinary curricula—problem-posing, investigating, conceptualizing—in order to become active, self-motivated, and empowered learners. For this course, see critical thinking goal above.
- **The diversity of human experience**: Students will enhance their appreciation for and understanding of the rich complexity of the human experience through the study of differences in ethnic and cultural perspectives, class, race, gender, sexual orientation, and ability. In this course, we accomplish the goal through the lens of disaster.
- **Ethics and social responsibility**: Students will expand their understanding of the impact and value of individuals and their choices on society, both intellectually and socially. For this course, students will gain understanding of vulnerability, resilience, and the role of public policy in disaster risk management.

**D2L (Desire 2 Learn – Online Learning Management System)**

Students can access D2L using an Odin username and password to login at [https://d2l.pdx.edu](https://d2l.pdx.edu). Use of D2L will be demonstrated on the first day of class. Please run a system check (as prompted by D2L when logging in) if you encounter difficulties in accessing this resource. If problems persist, contact the instructor or the OIT Help Desk immediately.

The course syllabus, assignment sheets, discussion forums, and links to class readings will be available on D2L. Students may read the materials online or print copies for use during class discussions. All student reading responses and essays will be submitted through D2L.

**CLASS REQUIREMENTS**

Students taking this course pass-no-pass are required to earn at least a ’C-' to pass. The following assignments will form the basis for evaluating performance. Due-dates are listed on the calendar at the end of this syllabus. Further instructions for each activity will be posted on D2L.

- **Reading responses (10%)**: Three short reading responses are due throughout the term. These responses should be submitted before the beginning of the class (= by 10:15AM) on the day we will discuss the readings or topic.
- **3-4 page essay (25%)** on hazards and disasters.
- **Creative endeavor and reflection essay (25%)**. Write a fictional story or screen play, or craft a piece of artwork or music about a disaster. Write an essay relating your work to anthropological theories on identity, vulnerability, and resilience (Section 2).
- **Media analysis (25%)**. Analyze media coverage of a contemporary disaster in light of course readings on uncertainty, knowledge, and risk (Section 3).
- **2-3 page essay (15%)** on relief and recovery (Section 4).

**Policies**

Please retain for your own records a copy of all the work you submit. All written work must be completed to receive a passing grade in this class. Late papers will lose one letter grade for each day past due except in the event of severe illness or emergency; the clock stops ticking when the student contacts the instructor to arrange a new deadline. Requests for extensions on deadlines should be made in writing ahead of the due date.

*Plagiarism* (intellectual theft) is a serious academic offense. Students are responsible for reading the Anthropology Department handout on academic honesty and the student code of conduct, both of which are also linked on D2L. Note that PSU supports the plagiarism-check program Turnitin, and this function is linked to assignment Dropboxes on D2L. Suspected infractions will be turned over to the Office of the Dean of Student Life for investigation. Please ask the instructor or contact the Writing Center if you have any questions about plagiarism.

*Courteous use of technology* is allowed in the classroom, including accessing reading materials on laptops or tablets and typing notes into an electronic document. Checking email and accessing social media websites is disrespectful and distracting; students who engage in these activities while class is in session will be asked to shut down their technology immediately and will be barred from using it for the remainder of the quarter. All cell phones should be silenced during class.

Anthropology majors should seek advising at least twice a year from faculty members in the Anthropology Department for advice related to meeting graduation requirements and achieving career goals.

**Access and Inclusion for Students with Disabilities**

PSU values diversity and inclusion; we are committed to fostering mutual respect and full participation for all students. My goal is to create a learning environment that is equitable, useable, inclusive, and welcoming. If any aspects of instruction or course design result in barriers to your inclusion or learning, please notify me. The Disability Resource Center (DRC) provides reasonable accommodations for students who encounter barriers in the learning environment.

If you have, or think you may have, a disability that may affect your work in this class and feel you need accommodations, contact the Disability Resource Center to schedule an appointment and initiate a conversation about reasonable accommodations. The DRC is located in 116 Smith Memorial Student Union, 503-725-4150, drc@pdx.edu, http://www.pdx.edu/drc.

- If you already have accommodations, please contact me to make sure that I have received a faculty notification letter and discuss your accommodations.
- Students who need accommodations for tests and quizzes are expected to schedule their tests to overlap with the time the class is taking the test.
- Please be aware that the accessible tables or chairs in the room should remain available for students who find that standard classroom seating is not useable.
For information about emergency preparedness, please go to the Fire and Life Safety webpage (http://www.pdx.edu/environmental-health-safety/fire-and-life-safety) for information.

**Title IX Reporting Obligations**

Portland State is committed to providing an environment free of all forms of prohibited discrimination and sexual harassment (sexual assault, domestic and dating violence, and gender or sex-based harassment and stalking). If you have experienced any form of gender or sex-based discrimination or harassment, know that help and support are available. PSU has staff members trained to support survivors in navigating campus life, accessing health and counseling services, providing academic and on-housing accommodations, helping with legal protective orders, and more. Information about PSU’s support services on campus, including confidential services and reporting options, can be found on PSU’s Sexual Misconduct Prevention and Response website at: http://www.pdx.edu/sexual-assault/get-help or you may call a confidential IPV Advocate at 503-725-5672.

Please be aware that all PSU faculty members and instructors are required to report information of an incident that may constitute prohibited discrimination, including sexual harassment and sexual violence. This means that if you tell me about a situation of sexual harassment or sexual violence that may have violated university policy or student code of conduct, I have to share the information with my supervisor or the University’s Title IX Coordinator or the Office of Affirmative Action. For more information about Title IX please complete the required student module Creating a Safe Campus in your D2L.

**COURSE OUTLINE**

**Section 1: Introduction to the Anthropology of Hazards and Disasters**

Past, present, and potential earthquakes, tsunamis, and volcanic explosions


Anthropological theorizing on disaster


Industrial accidents and pollution: Read EITHER Guillette OR Johnston


Climate Change:

Read TWO of the following THREE pieces (Colopy, Colombi, Wilk)

Section 2: Social Aspects of Disaster – Structural Violence, Vulnerability, and Resilience
Anthropological theorizing about vulnerability and resilience

Psychological and sociological theorizing about vulnerability and resilience

Gender and disaster: Read TWO of the following FOUR (Hyndman, Cupples, Dominey-Howes et al., McSherry et al.)


Case study: Race and Hurricane Katrina

Film: Still Waiting: Life after Katrina, by Ginny Martin and Kate Browne (58 minutes; 2007)


Read ONE of the following TWO on Katrina (O’Neill, Bay)


Section 3: Risk, Knowledge, and Uncertainty


Theorizing about conceptualizing and evaluating risk


Video: The Spill (Frontline, 60 minutes, 2010)

Knowledge and uncertainty
Read ONE of the following FOUR (Lauer, Button, Stephens, Nader & Gusterson)


Read ONE or TWO of the following FOUR (Galchen, Learn, Francis, Haas & Rosman)

Section 4: Risk Management Cycle: Preparedness, Response, Recovery, Mitigation
Aceh – Recovery

Standards, Plans, and Challenges (Readings to accompany guest lectures)


Haiti – Recovery


**COURSE SCHEDULE**

Note: Schedule is subject to change, but assignment due-dates will not be moved earlier.

- Reading responses are due on D2L **before class** (i.e., by 10:15 AM) on the day we discuss the item.
- Assignments are due by 11:59 PM (one minute **before midnight**) on the due date.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Day</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Month</th>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Readings, films, assignments due</th>
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<td>M</td>
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<td>Jan</td>
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<td>Introductions</td>
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<td>Read: The Economist, Takahashi, Schulz</td>
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<td>Read: Hoffman &amp; Oliver-Smith</td>
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<td>Read: Guillette OR Johnston</td>
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<td>Film: Heat - A Global Investigation</td>
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<td>Read: Two out of three on climate change</td>
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<td>Read: Haviland</td>
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<td>Read: Jones &amp; Murphy</td>
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<td>Read: Satterfield, Mertz, &amp; Slovic</td>
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<td>Read: Two out of four on gender &amp; disaster</td>
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<td>Film: Still Waiting - Life after Katrina</td>
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<td>Read: Oliver-Smith</td>
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<td>6</td>
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<td>Read: Anglin, One out of two on Katrina</td>
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<td>Film: Fukushima - The Next Wave</td>
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<td>Read: Ehrlich</td>
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<td>Read: Anglin, One out of two on Katrina</td>
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<td>Read: Button</td>
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<td>Film: The Spill</td>
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<td>Read: 1 out of 4, 1 or 2 out of 4 on uncertainty</td>
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<td>Film: Haiti: Where Did the Money Go?</td>
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<td>Read: Schuller, three short readings on Haiti</td>
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<td>Due: Essay on humanitarianism</td>
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