PADM-GP 4212

Managing Humanitarian Challenges: Delivery and Logistics

Spring 2023

Instructor Information

- **Instructor:** Kellie Leeson
- **Email:** kcl390@nyu.edu
- **Office Address:** xxx
- **Office Hours:** Tuesdays, 4:30 - 5:30pm virtually and by appointment (which can be in-person or virtual depending on our mutual availability). You can email to request an appointment. I am typically available after class.

Course Information

- **Course Number:** PADM-GP. 4212
- **Meeting Dates**: January 24, January 31, February 7, February 14, February 21, February 28, March 7
- **Class Meeting Times: Tuesdays** 6:45 PM - 8:25 PM
- **Class Location:** 12 Waverly, Room L114
- **Credits: 1.5**
- **Prerequisites:** CORE-GP.1020

Course Overview:

In 2016, the United Nations Secretary General noted in the World Humanitarian Summit Outcome Report that, "Armed conflicts and other violent situations, disasters caused by natural hazards and the impacts of climate change, health threats, soaring inequality and increased fragility marked by extreme poverty and weak institutions are among the factors contributing to the unprecedented spike in humanitarian needs." In 2020, the world was further destabilized by the Covid-19 global pandemic leaving the humanitarian sector further extended and in desperate need of a radical rethink.

This course will examine this evolving landscape and its implications for aid delivery including how it is planned, financed and executed to meet the changing needs of the people in need of assistance. Students will be introduced to the global systems that guide the sector, the

organizations typically involved and how their power dynamics and agendas shape humanitarian response priorities and delivery.

This course will provide a response-centered perspective on humanitarian operations, informed by case studies, lectures, and exercises. Experts in the field may guest facilitate portions of course sessions.

Course Assignments

- **Weekly reading and participation: 25%**

Students are expected to participate in each class - provide input and reflections on the reading, contributions to the discussions and ask questions. In addition to class participation, requirements include one reflection paper and a group project focused on a current issue in the humanitarian space.

- **Reflection Paper: 25%**

Students are asked to choose one of three topics and argue for or against their position. There is no 'right' answer. These are all complex topics that have proponents on both sides of the discussion. This is an opportunity to research a topic and argue a position with said research, data, and examples.

The reflection paper should be 3-pages max; single-spaced, 12-point font, 1-inch margins.

- Are the Humanitarian Principles still relevant? For or Against
- Should the Cluster System be maintained? For or Against
- Should UNHCR maintain the IDP mandate? For or Against

Deadline: February 7th

- **Group Project - Presentation & Paper: 50%**

Students should explore the pros and cons of a global practice issue from theory to operationalization.

Students are to provide a comparative analysis of a global practice issue, explaining what it is, why it was implemented (or why it is being promoted) and how it presents within at least two specific humanitarian contexts.

Students should then explain why it has or has not worked and why, and what else remains to be done, if anything
- Aid Localization
- Risk Mitigation
- Data Privacy in humanitarian settings
- Aid Accountability

- **Paper Outline: 10%**

Student groups will provide an outline for their process, paper and presentation. Format can be chosen by the student groups.

Deadline: February February 14th

- **Presentation and Discussion: 20%**

Student groups will present their analysis and then facilitate a class discussion on the topic (approximately 25 minutes).

Deadline: February 28th

- **Paper: 20%**

Each student group will submit one joint paper (6-pages max; single-spaced, 12-point font, 1-inch margins).

Deadline: March 7th

Class 1 (Jan 25th): The Humanitarian System Infrastructure

Reading:

- [ODI: A History of the Humanitarian System](#)
- [Report of the Secretary General for the World Humanitarian Summit - One Humanity: Shared Responsibility,](#)(skim)
- [Sustainable Development Goals](#)
- [UN OCHA – What are Humanitarian Principles](#)
- [ODI - Cluster Approach Evaluation (](#)executive summary)
- [ALNAP - Learning from disaster](#)(pp. 16-24)
- [CGD: Rethinking the Humanitarian Business Model](#) (or listen to the Displaced podcast listed below)

Listen:

- [Displaced: Jeremy Konyndyk on the humanitarian business model on Apple Podcasts](#) (or read CGD Paper on Rethinking the Humanitarian Business Model)

Class 2 (Feb 1st): Challenges to the system

Reading:

- [CDA Collaborative: Time to Listen: Hearing People on the Receiving End of International Aid](link) (pages 1-7; 33-51; 135-147)
- [Global Policy Journal: Why the DFID-FCO Merger Will Make Aid's Most Transformative Work Impossible and the Battles Ahead, 2020](link)
- [Seman Rejali, ICRC Law and Policy Blog: Race, Equality and Neo-Colonial Legacies](link)
- [Hugo Slim, ICRC Law and Policy blogs: Impartiality and Intersectionality](link)
- [Humanitarian exceptions: A turning point in UN sanctions | Chatham House – International Affairs Think Tank](link)
- [Localization? I hate the word. Decolonization? I hate that even more | Devex](link)
- [Somalia: Hope Springs](link)
- [Forced Migration Review](link) (pages 28-31)

Watch/Listen:
- [ODI - Humanitarian action in 2021: tensions, trade-offs and dilemmas](link)
- [Rethinking Humanitarianism Podcast: Decolonizing Aid](link)

Extra:

- [Humanitarian resistance: its ethical and operational importance](link)
- [ODI - Beyond Neutrality: Alternative Forums of Humanitarian Action](link)

Class 3 (Feb 8th): Getting started: responding to a crisis

Read/Explore:
- [Datafication of the Humanitarian Sector](link)
- [Forced Migration Review](link) (pages 32 - 35)
- [UN OCHA: Humanitarian Assessment](link) (skim site and review at least 3 assessment reports)
- [INEE: Assessments](link) (skim the assessment resources)
- [UNHCR: Needs Assessment Handbook](link) (pp 41-46; 54-56)
- [The Humanitarian Data Exchange](link) (explore the site)
- [SEEP Network list of tools](link)

Watch/Listen:
- [Sphere Standards: Humanitarian Standards](link) (also take some time to look around the Sphere website)
- [FAO: Conflict Sensitive Programming](link)

Class 4 (Feb 14th): Funding the humanitarian system

Reading:
- [Grand Bargain Website](link) (explore the website)
- [GHD: Good Humanitarian Donorship Principles](link)
- [HPG: Reducing the humanitarian financing gap: review of progress since the report of the High-Level Panel on Humanitarian Financing.](link)
- [OCHA: 2019 OCHA Evaluation of CBPFs](link) (Executive Summary)
- [Philanthropy Circuit: APathways to Effectively Operationalize the Localization Agenda](link)

Listen:

- [Rethink Humanitarianism Podcast: Inside the Donor Mindset](#)

Class 5 (February 21th): How services get to the people that need them and are they fit for purpose?
Reading:
- [Coordination in humanitarian relief chains: Practices, challenges and opportunities](#)
- [Logistics Operational Guide](#)(explore the website)
- [Managing Risk in International and Local NGO Partnerships](#)
- [InterAction Blog: New InterAction Research Confirms Global Counter-Terror Efforts Harm and Curtail the Delivery of Humanitarian Aid](#)
- [Trumanitarian - Hearts on Venezuela](#)
- [The New Humanitarian | Is emergency shelter fit for purpose?](#)
- [Measuring self-reliance among refugee and internally displaced households: the development of an index in humanitarian settings | Conflict and Health](#) (discussion section)

Watch:
- PHAP: [Complaints and feedback mechanisms: Making much-needed changes](#)

Class 6 (February 28th): Presentations

Class 7 (March 7th): Where do we go from here?

Reading:
- [The New Humanitarian | Trends driving humanitarian crises in 2023 (and what to do about them)](#)
- [ODI: Time to let go](#)
- [CGD: Refugee Compacts: Addressing the Crisis of Protracted Displacement](#)
- [Forced Migration Review: Climate Crisis and Displacement](#)(pages 10-14)

Watch:
- [European Commission: The Humanitarian Impact of Combined Climate, and Environmental Risks](#)