



# DEMS 3702 | *Comprehensive Emergency Management Integrating Critical Knowledge with Practice*

Winter 2020 | Dr. Eric Kennedy | Tues, 4-7pm, HNE B15 | [ebk@yorku.ca](mailto:ebk@yorku.ca)

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## What this course is all about...

If you were the director of emergency management for a city and a hurricane was heading your way, what steps would you need to take?

If you got called onto your province's Incident Management Team, what would you need to do in the emergency operations centre to keep people from dying?

If your boss told you to plan an exercise for how your business would manage a disaster affecting the supply chain, how would you organize it?

This course is all about getting you ready for the life-and-death, high-pressure decisions you might face in the world of emergency management... and learning more about the field along the way!

## Course Resources



Questions?  
[ebk@yorku.ca](mailto:ebk@yorku.ca)



No textbook.  
Readings on Moodle.



Office Hours By Appointment  
Atkinson Room 249



## Damage in Mississippi after Hurricane Katrina in 2005.

(Image: NOAA, public domain, available at <http://www.katrina.noaa.gov/helicopter/images/katrina-pascagoula2-miss-2005.jpg>)

## Course Purpose

By the end of the course, you should have developed several abilities:

1. You will develop a deep knowledge of core concepts, standards, and practices in emergency management (EM). This means being able to have a conversation with experts in the field (e.g., talking intelligently about the models they're using); to operate effectively in an incident management setting (e.g., slip into any role on an Incident Management Team); and produce key EM products (e.g., emergency management plans or after action reviews).
2. You will develop rigorous critical thinking skills about the practices within the world of EM. This includes things like critically assessing data or models you're given; scrutinizing the strengths and weakness of an emergency management plan; and figuring out how to work within (and improve!) policies and procedures.
3. You will be better able to perform under pressure, including stress, time constraints, competing perspectives, and the consequences of the emergency you're facing.
4. You will be able to work more effectively with teams to collaboratively manage these stressful situations.

## Learning Goals

I have very high expectations for the four goals listed on the left. When you pass this course, the BDEM program is effectively saying “this student is able to work in a professional EM setting.” Lives might depend on what you do!

To help you succeed at the *knowledge* component, each week I will post a list of what you should know based on the readings, lectures, activities, and assignments. This list won't give you the answers (that's what class and readings are for!), but it can help you review!

After studying that content, your next step should be to practice *thinking critically* about each element. For example, we'll teach you what things go into an emergency management plan (EMP)... but you'll also be expected to evaluate existing EMPs, propose edits to make them stronger, or compare different EMPs. This is where you extend beyond the content I teach.

I'll post slides, learning goal lists, readings, and resources to the course Moodle. I'd recommend studying from these contents, not other sources like OneClass. I'll give you everything for free, with the exact version you need (don't pay for an out-of-date version of what I'll give you free!).

Doing the readings and attending the classes is essential but not enough. What's better? Find a someone else in the course and spend 20-60 minutes sometime during the week to share notes from class & review each goal. Thirty minutes every week is way better than a ten-hour cram session before the exam!



A composite image showing the evolution of a single tornado.

(Image: JasonWeingart, open access, available at [https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Evolution\\_of\\_a\\_Tornado.jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Evolution_of_a_Tornado.jpg))

## Assessment (Exams + Assignments)

With goals of knowledge, critical thinking, performing under pressure, and teamwork, we need to test your learning in several ways. The exams and assignments are individual, while the simulation is a group activity.

To demonstrate that you know the material well,

- 20% comes from a midterm exam
- 30% comes from a final exam

Both of these exams are ‘cumulative,’ meaning that they will test material from the whole course (e.g., content from week 1 could be on the final exam, even if it was already tested on the midterm). This is to help make sure you really *know* the material, rather than just learning and forgetting it.

To demonstrate you have acquired key skills,

- 25% comes from analyzing two existing Emergency Management Plans and writing your own
- 25% from comparing three After Action Reviews and writing your own

On March 17<sup>th</sup> we will run an EM tabletop exercise. This is not graded – it’s a learning experience, not a testing experience! – but (1) your team is depending on you to be there and (2) you need this experience to be able to write the After Action Review. As such, your final grade can be lowered by up to 10% for failure to attend, inadequate preparation, or not participating to your fullest during the simulation.

## Readings

Each week, you’ll have 1-2 readings to study before class. We’ll be building on these materials in class each week, so it’s critical that you read them carefully. The readings are also testable materials on the exams!

To reduce the costs you face – and because no book is a perfect resource – there is no required textbook in this course. I’ll post all readings to Moodle. The list there is a definitive guide of what you need to read, and any changes will be communicated at least one week in advance.

Deliverable	Weight	Due Date
Emergency Management Plan	20%	February 7 <sup>th</sup> , 11:59pm via Moodle
Midterm Exam	20%	February 25 <sup>th</sup> , in class
Emergency Simulation	-10% overall deduction for absence	March 17 <sup>th</sup> , 4:00-7:00pm
After Action Review	20%	March 27 <sup>th</sup> , 11:59pm via Moodle
Final Exam	25%	TBD, during exam period



A collapsed bridge in Chile following an earthquake in 2010.

(Image: Dr. Scott Ashford, open access, available at <https://www.flickr.com/photos/oregonstateuniversity/4446836106/>)

## Commonly Asked Questions

### Can I take this class if I'm not in BDEM?

Of course! The lessons we talk about here are relevant for everything from disaster management to business continuity. The only thing that's required is that you know the material from DEMS 2700 well before we start the course: we build on that from day one.

### What will we do in-class?

Each week, there will be a combination of activities. I'll be sharing some short lectures on the topic, designed to help you get up to speed quickly on what you need to know to work in emergency management. We'll also do several activities together to apply this knowledge. Many weeks, we'll break out into groups to discuss and analyze the readings (so, be sure to do them!).

Throughout the semester, we'll be joined by guest experts who work in the field. On those week, you'll be leading the class: we'll run these sessions as "interviews," where you get to ask them any questions you want about EM.

### Is this an easy/hard course?

Easy or hard is relative. The content of this course is challenging, and there is a *lot* to learn every week. Plus, each assignment/exam will require you to have mastered the concepts. For the critical thinking material especially, you need to attend class. But, my goal as a professor is to do everything I can to help you succeed at the class. If you're willing to study hard, I'll invest in helping you learn it all!

### How are the grades calibrated?

Assignments and exams are graded as follows:

- B+/A/A+ means that you've mastered >90% of the content; can think critically beyond what we've talked about; and are prepared for an entry-level EM job.
- B means that you've mastered most (>80%) of the class content; can think critically about issues we discussed; and would be ready for an internship in an EM-related field.

Our goal is to get you to those levels. There's a lot to learn, but I'll try to make it as interesting and engaging as possible!

### Do I really need attend/to do the readings?

To be frank, it's possible to do well on the *content* of the class by studying on your own, doing the readings, and reviewing the learning goals.

BUT, content is only part of what we're doing: I also expect you to apply this knowledge. The students who have done best on this part of the course have attended regularly, done the readings, and reviewed material briefly a day or two after class. Remember: our goal isn't that you learn the stuff just for a day for the exam... it's that you don't screw up and cost lives, dollars, or damage in the real world!

### Can I submit assignments late?

Because I try to return feedback quickly, I'll accept assignments up to 7 days late. A deduction of 5% per day past the original due date applies.



The splash screen of the Peyta ransomware, used in cyberattacks in the mid 2010s.

## My Commitments to You

I care about making sure that this course is a good experience for you. No matter who you are, or what perspectives you bring, I want to ensure that you are both challenged by the material and able to learn, grow, and perform to the best of your abilities. I design my classes to be universally accessible so that everyone can accommodate how they need to, without needing to disclose.

- I offer a no-questions-asked, 24 hour extension on both of your assignments (EM plan + after action review). All you need to do is email me by the due date to receive this automatically (no confirmation required).
- I'm happy to work with you to develop an extension/plan for these assignments, if you need more than 24hrs. The earlier you tell me, the more flexibility I can give you.
- To prevent unintentional bias, I grade all assignments blinded. Please never put your name on an exam or assignment: student numbers only!
- I'll always post all resources (e.g., slides, study guides) to Moodle after class so that you can access them to review what we did. Previous students have commented they learn best when taking notes in class by hand, then reviewing with these resources.

If you think you might need other adjustments to maximize your learning in this class, please speak with me! I'm very happy to work with you, and the earlier you reach out, the more we can do.

## Your Commitments to Us

As a member of this community, you have a few responsibilities as well:

- If you are struggling to understand material, please talk to me early! We can set up a time to meet (in person or virtually) to help make sure you're comfortable and confident.
- I understand you might need to miss a class. If you're going to be away, please (1) complete the readings, (2) get notes from a classmate, (3) make notes based on the learning goals and slides from that week, and then (4) spend 20-30 minutes reviewing with a classmate to make sure you got the material. If you still have questions after these steps, I'd be happy to meet with you to help!
- Academic honesty is **incredibly** important, and this class has a zero-tolerance policy for infractions. You could receive an immediate zero on your assignment (or worse!) if you:
  - > Use an idea without citing it
  - > Copy & paste words without quotation marks and citations
  - > Attempt to cheat/gain unfair advantage
  - > Have someone else do your work for you
- Bring your whole self to the class (e.g., arrive on time, take notes, put electronics away, don't pack up until lecture is over). Whether we have guest speakers, activities, or a lecture, you'll get out of this class what you invest into it. I'll do my best to make this class as useful, educational, and fun as possible – please help!



Twenty one people were killed in Boston in 1919 by an eight foot wave of molasses.

(Image: Public domain, available at <https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:BostonMolassesDisaster.jpg>)

## Course Schedule

Each week in the class is on a different theme in emergency management. Weeks are subject to change based on guest speakers, current news, class preference, etc. Readings will be posted to Moodle.

Week	Theme	Notes
1/Jan 7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Course Introduction</li> <li>• EM as Knowledge Management</li> </ul>	
2/Jan 14	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Institutions, Jurisdictions, &amp; Responsibilities</li> </ul>	
3/Jan 21	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Funding and Standards</li> </ul>	
4/Jan 28	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Comprehensive Emergency Management Plans</li> </ul>	
5/Feb 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Forecasting &amp; Prediction</li> </ul>	Emergency Management Plan due Feb 7 <sup>th</sup> , 11:59pm on Moodle.
6/Feb 11	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Emergency Exercises, Part 1: Purpose &amp; Experience</li> </ul>	
Feb 18	<i>Reading week! No class: take a break to ski, read, surf, catch up on readings, etc.</i>	
7/Feb 25	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Emergency Exercise, Part 2: Exercise Design</li> </ul>	Midterm Exam in Class (5:20-6:50pm)
8/Mar 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• After Action Reviews</li> </ul>	
9/Mar 10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Incident Command System &amp; Emergency Operations Centres</li> </ul>	
10/Mar 17	Emergency Simulation. Mandatory attendance: Don't let your team down!	
11/Mar 24	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Public Engagement &amp; Volunteer Management</li> </ul>	After Action Review due Mar 27 <sup>th</sup> , 11:59pm on Moodle.
12/Mar 31	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Program Evaluation</li> <li>• Final Exam Review</li> </ul>	



Toronto, August 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2005: Air France 358 crashes off the end of the runway at Pearson Airport.

(Image: By Paul Cardin, Creative Commons, available at <https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Airfranceflight358.jpg>)

## University Regulations

TL;DR: Talk to me early if there's anything I can do to help you learn, feel comfortable, and succeed!

**Deferred Exams:** Deferred standing may be granted to students who are unable to write their final examination at the scheduled time or to submit their outstanding course work on the last day of classes. Details can be found at <http://myacademicrecord.students.yorku.ca/deferred-standing>

Any request for deferred standing on medical grounds must include an Attending Physician's Statement form; a "Doctor's Note" will not be accepted.

DSA Form: <http://www.registrar.yorku.ca/pdf/deferred-standing-agreement.pdf>

Attending Physician's Statement form: <http://registrar.yorku.ca/pdf/attending-physicians-statement.pdf>

In order to apply for deferred standing, students must register at <http://apps.eso.yorku.ca/apps/adms/deferredexams.nsf>

Followed by handing in a completed DSA form and supporting documentation directly to the main office of the School of Administrative Studies (282 Atkinson) and add your ticket number to the DSA form. The DSA and supporting documentation must be submitted no later than five (5) business days from the date of the exam. These requests will be considered on their merit and decisions will be made available by logging into the above mentioned link. No individualized communication will be sent by the School to the students (no letter or e-mails).

Students with approved DSA will be able to write their deferred examination during the School's deferred examination period. No further extensions of deferred exams shall be granted. The format and covered content of the deferred examination may be different from that of the originally scheduled examination. The deferred exam may be closed book, cumulative and comprehensive and may include all subjects/topics of the textbook whether they have been covered in class or not. Any request for deferred standing on medical grounds must include an Attending Physician's Statement form; a "Doctor's Note" will not be accepted.

**Academic Honesty:** The Faculty of Liberal Arts and Professional Studies considers breaches of the Senate Policy on Academic Honesty to be serious matters. The Senate Policy on Academic Honesty is an affirmation and clarification for members of the University of the general obligation to maintain the highest standards of academic honesty. As a clear sense of academic honesty and responsibility is fundamental to good scholarship, the policy recognizes the general responsibility of all faculty members to foster acceptable standards of academic conduct and of the student to be mindful of and abide by such standards. Suspected breaches of academic honesty will be investigated and charges shall be laid if reasonable and probable grounds exist.

Students should review the York Academic Honesty policy for themselves at: <http://www.yorku.ca/secretariat/policies/document.php?document=69>

Students might also wish to review the interactive on-line Tutorial for students on academic integrity, at: <https://spark.library.yorku.ca/academic-integrity-what-is-academic-integrity/>

**Grading Scheme and Feedback Policy:** The grading scheme (i.e. kinds and weights of assignments, essays, exams, etc.) shall be announced, and be available in writing, within the first two weeks of class, and, under normal circumstances, graded feedback worth at least 15% of the final grade for Fall, Winter or Summer Term, and 30% for 'full year' courses offered in the Fall/Winter Term be received by students in all courses prior to the final withdrawal date from a course without receiving a grade, with the following exceptions:

*Note: Under unusual and/or unforeseeable circumstances which disrupt the academic norm, instructors are expected to provide grading schemes and academic feedback in the spirit of these regulations, as soon as possible.* For more information on the Grading Scheme and Feedback Policy, please visit: <http://www.yorku.ca/univsec/policies/document.php?document=86>

**In-Class Tests and Exams - the 20% Rule:** For all Undergraduate courses, except those which regularly meet on Friday evening or on a weekend, tests or exams worth more than 20% will not be held in the two weeks prior to the beginning of the official examination period. For further information on the 20% Rule, please visit: <http://secretariat-policies.info.yorku.ca/policies/limits-on-the-worth-of-examinations-in-the-final-classes-of-a-term-policy/>

**Reappraisals:** Students may, with sufficient academic grounds, request that a final grade in a course be reappraised (which may mean the review of specific pieces of tangible work). Non-academic grounds are not relevant for grade reappraisals; in such cases, students are advised to petition to their home Faculty. Students are normally expected to first contact the course director to discuss the grade received and to request that their tangible work be reviewed. Tangible work may include written, graphic, digitized, modeled, video recording or audio recording formats, but not oral work. Students need to be aware that a request for a grade reappraisal may result in the original grade being raised, lowered or confirmed. For reappraisal procedures and information, please visit the Office of the Registrar site at: <http://myacademicrecord.students.yorku.ca/grade-reappraisal-policy>

**Accommodation Procedures:** LA&PS students who have experienced a misfortune or who are too ill to attend the final examination in an ADMS course should not attempt to do so; they must pursue deferred standing. Other students should contact their home Faculty for information. For further information, please visit: <http://ds.info.yorku.ca/academic-support-accommodations/>

**Religious Accommodation:** York University is committed to respecting the religious beliefs and practices of all members of the community, and making accommodations for observances of special significance to adherents. For more information on religious accommodation, please visit: <https://w2prod.sis.yorku.ca/Apps/WebObjects/edm.woa/wa/reqobj>

### Academic Accommodation for Students with Disabilities (Senate Policy)

The nature and extent of accommodations shall be consistent with and supportive of the integrity of the curriculum and of the academic standards of programs or courses. Provided that students have given sufficient notice about their accommodation needs, instructors shall take reasonable steps to accommodate these needs in a manner consistent with the guidelines established hereunder. For more information, please visit the Counselling and Disability Services website at <http://www.yorku.ca/dshub/>

York's disabilities offices and the Registrar's Office work in partnership to support alternate exam and test accommodation services for students with disabilities at the Keele campus. For more information on alternate exams and tests please visit <http://www.yorku.ca/altexams/>

Please alert the Course Director as soon as possible should you require special accommodations.