



## **Mayhem Media: Aliens, Zombies, and Human Error**

**PAD 3XXX // ONLINE // SUMMER 2018**

Laura Hart

Bellamy Building, Room 651

Office Hours: Tuesdays from 8:00 AM - 10:00 AM

Office: 850.644.9961 Cell: 850.529.7375

Fax: 645-4660

Email: [lhart@em.fsu.edu](mailto:lhart@em.fsu.edu)

### **Course Overview:**

This course uses the creative mediums of literature and film to analyze examples of emergency and disaster management, assisting students in understanding the complexities of this world through a lens of American media. This course will provide examples from film, literature, and the Internet. It will focus on narrative frameworks and historic significance of both nonfictional and fictional events, examining the setting, characters, plot, and moral framing of the stories presented. The course will exhibit both nonfiction and fiction literature, as well as podcasts and contemporary film.

### **Required Course Textbooks and Films**

- *World War Z* by Max Brooks (2006) (the book)
- *Independence Day* (1996) (the film)
- *The Day After Tomorrow* (2004) (the film)
- *All other course materials and readings (or links to the materials) will be available within Canvas.*

### **Course Objectives:**

This course will expose students to the creative implications of media that inform public opinion and individuals' perceptions of emergency management. By the end of this course, students will be able to:

- Formulate arguments regarding ineffective and effective practices within disaster management, as exhibited by fiction and non-fiction examples
- Thoughtfully analyze and make decisions in the presence of a moral dilemma
- Assess and critique media while analyzing traditions within emergency management
- Analyze and critique works of literature, performing comparative analyses of examples
- Formulate cohesive and innovative arguments as they relate to the depictions of emergencies and disasters within media
- Identify topics and formulate concise arguments as they relate to analytical techniques of writing
- Demonstrate the ability to conduct thoughtful and calm discussions in a creative setting

### Course Structure

This is a distance-learning (DL) Course. As such, coordination and course material with students will be managed through Canvas at:

<https://fsu.instructure.com/>

In order to participate fully you will be expected to have an e-mail account and access to the Internet (free to Florida State students). If you do not have an e-mail account, please inform me so that I can assist you in getting signed up. Email is the preferred method of communication with the instructor. The class format consists of presentation and video lectures (including guest lectures)

Additional readings on the weekly topics are encouraged. *The instructor retains the right to assign additional readings during the course of the semester.*

Course material will be presented to the student in a variety of ways, but may include lecture notes, slides, video lectures, and discussion board activities.

### Course Expectations

Students are expected to complete any assigned readings. Students are expected to participate in discussions and activities. If a student encounters any hardship, notify the instructor as soon as possible. If this is impossible, university-required documents should be submitted immediately upon return.

### Late Assignments

Without prior agreement from the instructor, all work is expected to be on time. Late work will receive 40% off after the due date, at the instructor's discretion.

### Grading and Evaluation Criteria

- **Critiques** **30% of semester total**
- **Weekly Discussion Board Posts** **25% of semester total**
- **Media Presentation** **5% of semester total**
- **Midterm Exam** **15% of semester total**
- **Final Exam** **15% of semester total**
- **Creative Project** **10% of semester total**

### Grading Scale:

The scale shown below will be used to determine the final letter grade for the semester. Grades will be recorded and kept in the 'My Grades' section of Blackboard.

Grade	Score	Grade	Score	Grade	Score	Grade	Score	Grade	Score
<b>A</b>	94+	<b>B+</b>	87+	<b>C+</b>	77+	<b>D+</b>	67+	<b>F</b>	Below 60
<b>A-</b>	90+	<b>B</b>	83+	<b>C</b>	73+	<b>D</b>	63+		
		<b>B-</b>	80+	<b>C-</b>	70+	<b>D-</b>	60+		

### **Assignments and Calendar**

The latest schedule and calendar is only available on the course website on Canvas. The instructor will notify the class of any major deviations from or additions to the calendar.

### **Critiques**

Students will submit three critiques over the course of the semester; one on a film, one on a podcast, and one regarding an assigned book. Students are encouraged to be both professional and creative in their responses. Each critique should be two pages single-spaced, or four pages double-spaced, following APA formatting. Each critique is worth 10% of the student's final grade. Students are encouraged to thoughtfully comment on a topic's positive and/or negative attributes, contribute new ideas or hypotheses, or start a related discussion in response to the work. Blatant summaries of the works will not be accepted.

Critiques are due for each topic a week after the topic is available to students. For example, if a student chooses to write a critique of the *Worst Hard Time*, and that course material is released on a Thursday, the completed critique will be due the following Thursday by 11:59 PM.

### **Weekly Discussions**

Discussion questions will be posted weekly to the discussion board on the Canvas site. Students will be expected to produce a reply to the original question, and then thoughtfully comment on two classmates' posts.

### **Media Presentation**

Students will record themselves offering approximately five minutes of dialogue regarding their creative project. This presentation should include their initial inspiration, analytical thoughts inspired by the work, and any related conclusions.

### **Creative Project**

The creative project allows students to do just that- be creative. Students are tasked with constructing a piece of literature, film or audio that inspires thoughtful discourse about a facet of emergency management, using either a fiction or nonfiction example. Students are free to conduct a project on whatever topic they see fit, following approval from the instructor prior to or in Week 6. Specific topics already discussed in class (for example, doomsday preppers) are not eligible.

### **Exams**

The midterm and final exams are not cumulative. Any course material prior to an exam date (either midterm or final)- to include lectures, films, podcasts, readings, and discussions- are potential material and inspiration for each exam. Students will be given a one-week window to complete each exam (for example, if the midterm exam is released on a Monday, students will have until the following Monday at 11:59 PM to submit the completed exam). After beginning the exam, students will have 120 minutes to complete each exam via the online exam issued through the 'Assignments' page on the course Canvas site. Students must submit their own work- no group activity is authorized. Students are strongly encouraged to review the Academic Honor Policy regulations during the first week of classes and prior to completing any exams or assignments.

### **University Attendance Policy**

Excused absences include documented illness, deaths in the family and other documented crises, call to active military duty or jury duty, religious holy days, and official University activities. These absences will be accommodated in a way that does not arbitrarily penalize students who have a valid excuse. Consideration will also be given to students whose dependent children experience serious illness.

### **Academic Honor Policy**

Students are expected to do their own original work. Any student caught cheating, including using papers, reports or tests from other students will be penalized to the full extent allowed by the Student Handbook. Students cannot use previous papers or written work, even parts of these papers, as submission for writing assignments in this course.

The Florida State University Academic Honor Policy outlines the University's expectations for the integrity of students' academic work, the procedures for resolving alleged violations of those expectations, and the rights and responsibilities of students and faculty members throughout the process. Students are responsible for reading the Academic Honor Policy and for living up to their pledge to "...be honest and truthful and...[to] strive for personal and institutional integrity at Florida State University." (Florida State University Academic Honor Policy, found at <http://fda.fsu.edu/academic-resources/academic-integrity-and-grievances/academic-honor-policy>). There is also a short honor code video that I want you to watch, and it is in Canvas, Module 1

The Florida State University Academic Honor Policy has eight different types of violations:

1. **Plagiarism:** Presenting the work of another as one's own (i.e., without proper acknowledgement of the source). For a few tips on avoiding plagiarism please view <http://abacus.bates.edu/cbb/index8698.html?q=node/60#tutorials>
2. **Cheating:** Improper access to or use of any information or material that is not specifically condoned by the instructor for use in the academic exercise.
3. **Unauthorized Group Work:** Unauthorized collaborating with others.
4. **Fabrication, Falsification, and Misrepresentation:** Unauthorized altering or inventing of any information or citation that is used in assessing academic work.
5. **Multiple Submissions:** Submitting the same academic work (including oral presentations) for credit more than once without instructor permission.
6. **Abuse of Academic Materials:** Intentionally damaging, destroying, stealing, or making inaccessible library or other academic resource material.
7. **Complicity in Academic Dishonesty:** Intentionally helping another to commit an act of academic dishonesty.
8. Attempting to commit any offense as outlined above.  
Please be advised that:
  - Re-using your own work from previous courses without instructor approval is also a violation of the Honor Code (#5)
  - Using search engines while taking an online exam – i.e. googling for answers – is a violation of the Honor Code (#2)
    - Taking online exams together, or discussing questions seen on the exam to others is a violation of the Honor Code (#3)

**Wikipedia**

You may not cite Wikipedia as an original source. However, you are encouraged to scroll down to the references section of a given Wikipedia page. There, you will find the original sources for the information you wish to use in your research. You may look up and reference these sources for your assignments.

**Dean of Students**

The office of the Dean of Students is your best source for all information regarding policies and procedures, especially those relating to the Honor Code. If you are struggling with life events and these are impacting your classes the Dean of Students is your advocate. Their primary focus is making sure every student succeeds so please contact them if you are ever struggling and need help. They can be found at <http://deanofstudents.fsu.edu/>

**Americans with Disabilities Act**

Students with disabilities needing academic accommodation should:

- (1) register with and provide documentation to the Student Disability Resource Center; and
- (2) bring a letter to the instructor indicating the need for accommodation and what type.

Please note that instructors are not allowed to provide classroom accommodation to a student until appropriate verification from the Student Disability Resource Center has been provided.

This syllabus and other class materials are available in alternative format upon request.

For more information about services available to FSU students with disabilities, contact the:

Student Disability Resource Center  
874 Traditions Way  
108 Student Services Building  
Florida State University  
Tallahassee, FL 32306-4167  
(850) 644-9566 (voice)  
(850) 644-8504 (TDD)  
[sdrc@admin.fsu.edu](mailto:sdrc@admin.fsu.edu)  
<http://www.disabilitycenter.fsu.edu/>

**Free Tutoring from FSU**

On-campus tutoring and writing assistance is available for many courses at Florida State University. For more information, visit the Academic Center for Excellence (ACE) Tutoring Services' comprehensive list of on-campus tutoring options at <http://ace.fsu.edu/tutoring> or contact [tutor@fsu.edu](mailto:tutor@fsu.edu). High-quality tutoring is available by appointment and on a walk-in basis. These services are offered by tutors trained to encourage the highest level of individual academic success while upholding personal academic integrity.

**OP Rule**

Successful completion of the courses applied to the EMHS Certificate is defined as a grade of C or higher. Students who receive grades lower than a C in any courses must repeat that course if they wish to have it apply to the EMHS certificate.

**Course Delivery**

Selected videos and podcasts will be provided to students via Canvas, to include media clips and course lectures. During a standard course week, dedicated students should expect to spend roughly 3-6 hours a week watching, reading, and reviewing assigned course materials posted to Canvas. If at any point a student requires assistance or clarity in the assignment or evaluation criteria presented, they may contact the instructor via email (Laura Hart at [lhart@em.fsu.edu](mailto:lhart@em.fsu.edu)).

**Contact Hours**

There will be a weekly discussion board posted within Canvas. Successful completion of the discussion board requires an original post and a response to two classmates' responses. Students will be presented with questions that require critical thought within a creative element. Sample questions include:

- *This week, you watched the Day After Tomorrow. Write 400 words about what you think the recovery process would look like a year later. Who would be leading the effort? What would be different? Why?*
- *Are there disasters for which doomsday preppers have not prepared? What is an item that they might forget in their preparations?*

The instructor will also hold "office hours" online throughout the workweek via email at [lhart@em.fsu.edu](mailto:lhart@em.fsu.edu), and will be available by telephone at 850-645-8802. Students are encouraged to utilize email first, as that is the swiftest method by which to reach the instructor.

**Syllabus Change Policy**

Except for changes that substantially affect implementation of the evaluation (grading) statement, this syllabus is a guide for the course and is subject to change with advance notice.

**Course Schedule**

In this course, each week will feature a different topic for discussion- but will ultimately refer to one of the four basic tenets of emergency management: preparedness, response, recovery, or mitigation. Students are encouraged to read ahead, as some works are much longer than others.

**Week 1: Syllabus & Course Introduction**

- Reading:
  - Syllabus
  - "Federal Emergency Management: A Brief Introduction" (2012) Bruce R. Lindsay, link: <https://fas.org/sgp/crs/homsec/R42845.pdf>
  - "Learning with Media" (1991) by Robert B. Kozma, link: <http://citeseerx.ist.psu.edu/viewdoc/download?doi=10.1.1.91.5693&rep=rep1&type=pdf>

**RESPONSE****Week 2: Aliens**

- Film:
  - *Independence Day* (1996)
- Additional readings posted to Canvas

### **Week 3: Plans & Training**

- Reading:
  - Department of Defense Zombie Defense Plan, link: <https://i2.cdn.turner.com/cnn/2014/images/05/16/dod.zombie.apocalypse.plan.pdf>
  - “Zombie Apocalypse: Can the Undead Teach the Living How to Survive an Emergency?” (2015) by Marjorie Kravand and Fred B. Bryant, link: <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC4612174/>
  - Begin Reading *World War Z* by Max Brooks

## **PREPAREDNESS**

### **Week 4: Video Games and Food Security**

- Reading:
  - Read Chapters 3-5 of *The Worst Hard Time* by Timothy Egan (available on Canvas)
- Video Game:
  - Play *The Oregon Trail*
    - Link: [https://archive.org/details/msdos\\_Oregon\\_Trail\\_The\\_1990](https://archive.org/details/msdos_Oregon_Trail_The_1990)
- Additional video clips and readings posted to Canvas

### **Week 5: Doomsday Preppers**

- Reading:
  - “Straight Disasters: the (hetero)sexual geographics of Hollywood disaster movies” (2017) by Scott McKinnon, link: <https://link.springer.com/content/pdf/10.1007%2Fs10708-016-9697-z.pdf>
- Film:
  - Additional video clips and readings posted to Canvas

### **Week 6: Missiles, Nukes, and Human Error**

- Submit creative project topic for instructor review
- Listening:
  - “Human Error in Volatile Situations” This American Life (2017) Link: <https://www.thisamericanlife.org/634/human-error-in-volatile-situations>
- Reading:
  - *Command and Control* by Eric Schlosser, p. 1-7 (Available on Canvas)

### **Week 7: Midterm Exam**

- The final exam will be released online via Canvas approximately one week before the due date. No late final exams will be accepted.

## RECOVERY

### Week 8: Natural & Unnatural Disasters

- Film:
  - *The Day After Tomorrow* (2004)

### Week 9: Zombies

- Reading:
  - *World War Z* (2006) by Max Brooks

## MITIGATION

### Week 10: Ethics

- Reading:
  - *Five Days at Memorial* by Sheri Fink, Prologue and Chapters 5-7 (available on Canvas)
  - “Media Witnessing: Exploring the Audience of Distant Suffering” in *Media, Culture, & Society* by Maria Kyriakidou, link: <http://journals.sagepub.com/doi/abs/10.1177/0163443714557981>
  - “Bearing witness, journalism, and moral responsibility” in *Media, Culture, & Society* by Sue Tait, link: <http://journals.sagepub.com/doi/abs/10.1177/0163443711422460>

### Week 11: Cults

- Final Exam Review
- Listening:
  - E19: “The Peoples Temple” - Jim Jones, and E20: “The Peoples Temple” Pt. 2 - Jim Jones, *Parcast*, available at: <https://www.parcast.com/cults/>
- Reading:
  - “They’re Freaks!: The Cult Stereotype in Fictional Television Shows, 1958-2008” by Lynn S. Neal, link: [http://www.jstor.org/stable/10.1525/nr.2011.14.3.81?Search=yes&resultItemClick=true&searchText=cult&searchText=indoctrination&searchText=waco&searchUri=%2Faction%2FdoBasicSearch%3FQuery%3Dcult%2Bindoctrination%2Bwaco&refreqid=search%3Ab6c86d53e5a3f055b1611209df12545a&seq=1#page\\_scan\\_tab\\_contents](http://www.jstor.org/stable/10.1525/nr.2011.14.3.81?Search=yes&resultItemClick=true&searchText=cult&searchText=indoctrination&searchText=waco&searchUri=%2Faction%2FdoBasicSearch%3FQuery%3Dcult%2Bindoctrination%2Bwaco&refreqid=search%3Ab6c86d53e5a3f055b1611209df12545a&seq=1#page_scan_tab_contents)
- Film or Podcast:
  - Guest lecture from Alissa Bell

### Week 12: Final Exam

- The final exam will be released online via Canvas approximately one week before the due date. No late final exams will be accepted.