

Course syllabus

Ledning och samverkan vid samhällsstörningar Introduction to Disaster Response Management

VRSN11, 7,5 credits, A (Second Cycle)

Valid for: 2023/24

Faculty: Faculty of Engineering, LTH

Decided by: PLED BI/RH

Date of Decision: 2023-04-12

General Information

Main field: Disaster Risk Management and Climate Change Adaptation.

Compulsory for: MKAT1

Elective for: RH4, R4

Language of instruction: The course will be given in English

Aim

- to provide the student with knowledge and skills to plan and evaluate prerequisites for management during emergencies and disasters.
- to constitute a foundation for the student with an interest in research associated with the topic.

Learning outcomes

Knowledge and understanding

For a passing grade the student must

- demonstrate knowledge and understanding in the field of disaster response management, including insight in current research and development within the field.
- demonstrate specialized methodological knowledge in the main field of disaster response management.

Competences and skills

For a passing grade the student must

- demonstrate the ability to critically and systematically integrate knowledge and analyze and assess preconditions for disaster response management.
- demonstrate the ability to identify and formulate challenges for disaster response management autonomously and creatively as well as suggest solutions.
- demonstrate the ability in speech and writing both nationally and internationally to report clearly and discuss his or her conclusions and arguments on which they are based in

dialogue with different audiences.

- demonstrate the ability to work constructively in a team and to communicate effectively with people from different disciplines.

Judgement and approach

For a passing grade the student must

- demonstrate the ability to reflect on his or her attitude towards preconditions for disaster response management.
- demonstrate the ability to reflect on ethical, subjective and societal dimensions of preconditions for disaster response management.

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Field description

Disaster response management is a broad and multidisciplinary field. A key element, and a challenge, with any disaster response management effort, is to achieve direction and coordination among multiple actors. Direction refers to e.g. overall goals with mission, or the prioritization of activities. Coordination refers to the need for making things happen in the right order, avoid unnecessary duplications, or create synergies. Direction & coordination is always oriented towards meeting various needs, such as saving lives, need for evacuation, or need for stopping the cause behind the disaster. In order to generate direction and coordination a disaster response manager should understand the contextual conditions associated with disaster response management. Furthermore, she or he needs to understand how decisions typically are made. Finally, the disaster manager needs to understand the requirements for functional leadership and organizational forms.

Course components

The main components of the course consist of:

- Introduction to disaster response management, including theoretical concepts relevant to the field (systems view, complexity theory, direction and coordination as effects)
- Disaster response management systems and processes, including examples from practice
- Problem solving and decision making as key components in disaster response management
- Leadership and collaborative skills in disaster response management

An important prerequisite for achieving the requirements in this course is to enable analyses based on theoretical understanding and practical insights. The practical insights will be made possible through lectures given by experienced practitioners from the field.

The students will also take part in table top exercises focused on practising disaster response management in fictive cases.

The course content is applicable nationally as well as internationally and suitable for those who are interested in working with issues concerning disaster response management at different levels of society. Examples of associated actors are national, regional and local authorities, health care, fire and rescue services, private companies and humanitarian organizations.

The course includes mandatory group project work, which is based on real cases. The project work is to be presented in writing, in the form of a report. Last, the students will be examined through a written examination.

Examination details

Grading scale: TH - (U,3,4,5) - (Fail, Three, Four, Five)

Assessment: Approved written group assignment, and approved written individual examination.

The examiner, in consultation with Disability Support Services, may deviate from the regular form of examination in order to provide a permanently disabled student with a form of examination equivalent to that of a student without a disability.

Parts

Code: 0119. **Name:** Written Examination.

Credits: 5. **Grading scale:** TH. **Assessment:** Approved examination through individual written examination **Contents:** Written examination

Code: 0219. **Name:** Written Home Assignment.

Credits: 2,5. **Grading scale:** UG. **Assessment:** Group assignment with written report, approved individual report.
Contents: Group assignment with written report, individual report.

Admission

Admission requirements:

- Admitted to the Master's Programme in Disaster Risk Management and Climate Change Adaptation or to the Programme Risk Management and Safety Engineering or have a minimum of 150 hp from a five-year engineering programme or from the Fire Safety Engineering Programme at LTH.

The number of participants is limited to: 40

Selection: Completed university credits within the program. Within programs where the course is given as a compulsory course students are guaranteed admission. Thereafter priority is given to students enrolled in programs that include the course in the curriculum.

The course overlaps following course/s: VRSN10

Reading list

- FEMA: National Incident Management System (NIMS). 2017. Access: <https://www.fema.gov/media-library/assets/documents/148019> (Pages: 1-5, 19-41).
- Jensen, J. & Thompson, S.: The Incident Command System: a literature review. 2016. Disasters, 40, 1, 158-182.
- Kahneman, D. : A perspective on Judgement and Choice. 2003. American Psychologist, 58, 697-720. (Pages: 697-699).
- Knox Clarke, P.: Who's in charge here? A literature review on approaches to leadership in humanitarian operations. ALNAP: London, 2013. Access: <https://www.alnap.org/system/files/content/resource/files/main/leadership-literature-review-alnap2013.pdf> (Pages 4-16).
- Mishra, A. K.: Organizational Response to Crisis: The Centrality of Trust. 1996. In: Kramer, R. M., and Tyler, T. R. (Eds.), Trust in Organizations: Frontiers of Theory and Research, Sage Publications, CA.
- OSSOC guidelines. Access: https://www.unocha.org/sites/dms/Documents/2014%20SOCC%20Guidelines_FINAL.pdf (Pages: 4-32).
- Uhr, C. & Frykmer, T. : Theoretical approaches to disaster response management. Division of risk management and societal safety, Lund University, 2022.
- Uhr, C. & Pettersson, U.: Who commands whom?. Proceedings to the Third Northern European Conference on Emergency and Disaster Studies, 2018.
- Kahneman, D., Simony, O. & Sunstein, C.R.: Noise - A flaw in human judgement. William Collins, London, 2021. Pages: 161-175.

Contact and other information

Course coordinator: Tove Frykmer, tove.frykmer@risk.lth.se

Course administrator: Linnéa Ekman, linnea.ekman@ebd.lth.se

Further information: In group assignments and seminars, active participation is required. Each group member must be able to present and answer for the contents of the joint report. A student who does not meet the demands of active participation, or disregard their obligations, can be replaced to another group or failed by the examiner.