

Full Course Title: The International Rescue Committee (IRC): The Effectiveness of Emergency Response to Extreme Events: An NGO Perspective

Course Title for Registration System: International Rescue Committee: Emergency Response to Extreme Events

Course Number: SIPAU9000.029

Faculty Advisor: H. Roy Williams

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Meeting Date/Times: Mondays 9:00A – 10:50A

Location: IAB 901

Office Hours: To be determined

Credits: 3

Course Overview:

The Client:

The International Rescue Committee (IRC) responds to the world's worst humanitarian crises and helps people to survive and rebuild their lives. Founded in 1933 at the request of Albert Einstein, the IRC offers lifesaving care and life-changing assistance to refugee forced to flee from war or disaster.

The Tasks:

This study will look at the state of current emergency response capacities and global response mechanisms. Some recent disasters, such as the earthquake in Haiti, the floods in Pakistan, and the drought in the Horn of Africa, will provide perspectives for analyses. In addition, the implications of the conflicts we see in Afghanistan and Iraq will serve as further background for analysis of their long-term implications.

Deliverables to client:

The Capstone team will endeavor to provide a useful overview of present response mechanisms and present actionable recommendations, aimed at improving the global response of the international NGO sector and its key partners (UN, donors, and governments), while recognizing that organizational change is not something accomplished overnight.

Special skills/knowledge needed by team members:

The application of strong research skills coupled with a focus on close and ongoing analysis of events and the behavior of organizations and their staff is an imperative. Direct working experience in the NGO sector is desirable, but not required. As this study will examine past as well as present-day crisis,

the team will be expected to maintain a strong awareness of contemporary situations.

An initial meeting with student team in late November or early December is to be scheduled as well as an introductory meeting with the client.

It is anticipated that visits and discussions to the operational units of response organizations will be a critical part of this exercise. This may require travel to Washington, DC.

Student selection: [All eligible students may apply for up to five workshops through a special online application process from October 15th until October 31st. Assignment of students will be coordinated by the Office of Academic Affairs, and relevant faculty will be consulted about team membership for their workshop(s).]

Grading (students receive an individual grade):

The awarding of grades will be handled in a manner similar to what is expected during performance during involvement with an actual response operation. In short, maintaining a continuing awareness of ongoing events and the thoughtful examination of decision-making priorities, is a requirement

Grades for the workshop will be based on the following criteria:

Quality of individual written work (10%)

Quality of participation in class, Peer review (20%)

Feedback from the client (20%)

Overall professionalism, including timeliness, ability to work with team, etc. (20%)

Quality of team's final report and briefing (30%)

Readings:

There will be advance readings in addition to the material assigned during the term. All reading material will be available electronically.

***Academic Integrity Statement*:**

The School of International & Public Affairs does not tolerate cheating and/or plagiarism in any form. Those students who violate the Code of Academic & Professional Conduct will be subject to the Dean's Disciplinary Procedures. Cut and paste the following link into your browser to view the Code of Academic & Professional Conduct online.

http://sipa.columbia.edu/resources_services/student_affairs/academic_policies/deans_discipline_policy.html

Please familiarize yourself with the proper methods of citation and attribution. The School provides some useful resources online; we strongly encourage you to familiarize yourself with these various styles before conducting your research:

http://sipa.columbia.edu/resources_services/student_affairs/academic_policies/code_of_conduct.html

Violations of the Code of Academic & Professional Conduct should be reported to the Associate Dean for Student Affairs.