

SYLLABUS - SEST 6668

NATIONAL SECURITY CRISIS MANAGEMENT

Professor Gregg Jones

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**Class Meets: Mondays & Wednesdays/6:00-9:10PM
ICC 223B**

**Office Hours: Thursday thru Sunday
1-3PM & 5-7PM; By Appointment**

Introduction/Description.

This course will introduce you to the theory and current practice of managing crisis in the National Security arena. After a brief orientation on the primary structures, actors and theories influencing National Security now, the course will examine in detail how a National leadership team operates and strives to respond and manage a significant crisis event. A theoretical construct will then be proposed and tested during the rest of the course. Using case studies of recent representative crises, students will assess how the primary National Security actors responded, whether the theoretical construct is applicable, and what, if any, lessons were learned. Along the way, students will also survey the record of predicting crises, and conclude with an adapted theoretical framework that can be used when observing or potentially participating in managing a crisis.

Course Learning Objectives.

After successfully completing the course you will:

- Understand the general features of a National Security crisis and be able to describe the roles of the primary actors that respond
- Be able to analyze various types of recent crises for their causes and effects
- Be able to assess the key response successes and failures of major National Security actors, and develop a perspective on “lessons learned”
- Have the ability to apply an analytical perspective on the potential effects and possible main actor response options in future, emerging crisis events
- Explore and examine the changing nature and emerging techniques of crisis management
- Reflect with sophistication on the potential demands upon the future crisis manager.

Instructional Methodology.

This class will be a mixture of some lecture and quite active class discussion. Some discussion will be structured within the bounds of “Tabletop Exercises” during several of the class sessions.

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Most of the discussion, however, is expected to be free – flowing. As is standard of a course at this level, students will be expected to reflect carefully on the issues under discussion, form views based on their own rigorous analysis, and then articulate their positions. The objective of this methodology is to habituate students to distilling salient facts and help develop their skills to probe and challenge their own thinking, as well as the assumptions and assertions of others. Crisis management, in its essence, is about seeking to bring order and response to chaos and confusion. This course is intended to give students a perspective and skills to apply to future national security crises they may encounter.

An additional note is necessary regarding the multiple tragic and still unfolding developments around the world which, in my view, demand the attention of crisis scholars. We are obligated to study and learn whatever possible from living through this historic epoch. Indeed, one could contend that we have a moral obligation to do so.

Accordingly, each class will likely contain a brief discussion segment examining developments and observations from unfolding events. These segments will be supported by links to optional reading, when available. The overall objectives of these discussion segments are four-fold:

- To track major developments and trends.
- To observe and delineate potential crisis management lessons - to – be - learned.
- To assess the potential likelihood and type of governmental crisis management policy change initiatives.
- To monitor the development of various institutional crisis management learning efforts.

These segments will use the ongoing crises to build upon some of the core ideas in the Boin et al text, and the central theme of the Clarke / Eddy text: e.g. How can we improve our institutional crisis management response for events that we are highly likely to experience?

Course Expectations.

This course will be a hybrid that draws from the public policy, international relations, and political science disciplines. Though a deep knowledge of history is not required, the course will certainly summarize some key crises from history, and briefly analyze them for salient, relevant points.

It is possible that some students in the class may have personal professional experience in government agencies, or even directly in some of the more recent events we'll examine. Experiences of this nature will be very welcome in the class discussion. Yet, no such direct experience or background is required. For example, in the randomly selected role - play positions

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in the Tabletop Exercises in which everyone will participate, the goal is to foster clarity of thought and expression, without regard to previous backgrounds.

To assist in cultivating a knowledgeable discussion environment, students will be expected to be at least broadly and continually familiar with the major national and international issues and developments of the day, and to have an appreciation for the contending forces at work globally. The readings associated with each class meeting will usually be extracts from relevant book – length works, or high - quality web articles. Book extracts will be placed on “Canvas” for your access. Web articles will either be identified by url, or may be placed on “Canvas” in pdf format if the coding permits. Additionally, reading at least one of the major newspapers of record daily, and the weekly *Economist* magazine is highly recommended. Further, blogs written by experienced and respected professionals at policy institutes (“think tanks”) are useful resources to gain perspective on current issues. (Some suggested blogs will be recommended throughout the course.)

Course Requirements and Means of Assessment.

There are a total of 6 written assignments in the course: a personal reflection, 4 position papers, and a longer paper examining a historical crisis response. The papers will constitute a total of 85% of the final grade. The final 15% of the grade will be based upon class participation. This will be evaluated holistically, with points awarded based on overall frequency and quality of contributions to class discussions. (The required role - play interactions in the TTXs are not a part of the class participation evaluation.) An excellent participant will be fully prepared to articulate their views of the subject under discussion and defend their assessments in debate.

Writing Assignments.

Personal Reflection – How You Assess Risk and Warning Information

Write a 2 - 4 page personal reflection essay regarding your own attitudes and reactions to warnings messages, of whatever subject or type, and examine how you assess risks. Explore your mental and emotional processes in some depth.

The questions you might consider writing about include: Do you generally ignore warning information, or do you typically investigate further? What are your sources of warnings information and how did your level of trust (or distrust) emerge in those sources? Do you typically, or have you ever, changed plans or your approaches to life, based on risk assessments? Have you ever attempted to persuade a loved one or colleague to adopt a change to risk posture? If so, what

information did you present and were you successful? If not, why have you never attempted this? Do you have anyone in your life who is particularly risk averse, or who regularly ignores warnings? What is your current attitude toward Global Catastrophic Risks? Has that attitude changed due to the, for example, COVID 19 pandemic, the Russian invasion of Ukraine and / or the volatility of the current Administration's policy impacts experiences? And, if so, how?

The overarching purpose of this assignment is to permit you to speak to yourself about your views on these issues. Obviously, there is no "right" answer; there are only "individual" answers. The paper will be worth 15% of the final grade. (Due May 28th.)

Position Papers

Class #s 4, 6, 8, and 10 will each contain a roughly one hour "Tabletop Exercise" (TTX) in which each student will role play as a senior government official. (Roles will change by random drawing each week. Scenarios will mirror the subject being examined that week.) In preparation for the week's Exercise, each student will prepare a one page, single-spaced "position paper", which will identify the participant's (in role) primary concerns and recommendations in the scenario. At the conclusion of the session, these position papers will be turned in electronically for grade. The three position papers will each be worth 10% of the student's final grade. (Due June 2nd, 9th, 16th and 23rd respectively.)

Analysis of an Historic Crisis Response

A longer paper is required, and will be due via Canvas submission upload, or alternatively in my email inbox, by the evening of class meeting #11. (Due June 25th.)

This paper, expected to be 8-12 double – spaced pages in length, will examine a national security crisis from the list below, assessing its features, and the attempts to manage it, using the theoretical construct developed in the course. Analysis should focus on the actions, beliefs, and response policies of the US (or other Nation's) Government's senior national security team in place at the time. Students will be expected to adopt a point of view and defend their analysis of their selected subject emergency. If a student desires to analyze an event that does not appear on the list below, please articulate the alternative event of interest and obtain permission to proceed from the instructor not later than Class #4. This paper will be worth 30% of the final grade.

Long paper crisis event - Potential topics (Select one):

Suez Crisis–1956

Oil Embargo–1973

Fall of Saigon –1975

Iran Hostage Crisis–1979

Somalia -1993

Rwanda–1994

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| Falklands War – 1982 | <i>Achille Lauro</i> - 1985 | Panama – 1989 |
| Iraqi Invasion of Kuwait–1990 | | Southwest Asia Tsunami-2004 |
| Somali Piracy - 2008-13 | | Syrian Civil War–2011-19 |
| Super Storm Sandy - 2012 | | US Hurricanes – 2017 |
| Russia Vs. Ukraine – 2014-22 or 2022-present | | ISIS Rise & Defeat? – 2013-19 |
| Ebola Pandemic - 2014-16 | | US Withdrawal from Kabul – 2021 |
| Texas Power Outage – 2021 | | Houthi Ship Attacks - 2024 |

Instructor Contact Preferences & Most Effective Methods

As an independent crisis management consultant, I make my own schedule – and I am active all 7 days a week, and literally around the clock. *What this means to students is that I am completely available to connect, regardless of day or time, with any of the methods below.*

The most effective means to reach me are an initial text to my phone number below, or an email, identifying yourself and your best availability time to talk. This method, if I am on another call, simply permits me to quickly slate a call time for you – which would normally begin some time within just a few hours. ***However, if you need to speak urgently, or it is an emergency, please say so in your text or email.*** In that eventuality, I will immediately conclude whatever I’m doing, and connect with you as quickly as possible.

A final, explicit note to be very clear: In our culture, there is a reluctance to connect sometimes out of concern “not to bother” someone. That is simply not the case with me. No contact from a student, on any subject, is “bothering me”. So get in touch – about the course or any other topic, or particularly if the many concerns of our current crisis-laden world simply need unburdening. I’m happy to listen, and offer whatever community kinship I can.

Contact information:

Phone (+1) 703 944-7640 (Iphone with FaceTime)
 Business / personal email: greggjones@strategicapplications.net

Books for Purchase

Boin et al. *The Politics of Crisis Management: Public Leadership Under Pressure*. (2nd Edition - 2017).
The Unthinkable by Amanda Ripley (2009).
Warnings by Richard Clarke & R.P. Eddy (2017).

All other required readings for the class sessions are either articles or extracts from other books. They will all be provided in pdf format on the course Canvas page.

POLICIES

- **Grading Policy** is as follows:

| Grade | Quality Points | Grade | Description |
|--------------|-----------------------|--------------|--------------------|
| A | 4.0 | I | Incomplete |
| A- | 3.67 | W | Withdrawal |
| B+ | 3.33 | NR | No Grade Reported |
| B | 3.0 | | |
| B- | 2.67 | | |
| C | 2.0 | | |
| F | 0.0 | | |

Grades are assigned according to the following grading scale:

| | |
|----|----------|
| A | 100-94 |
| A- | 93-90 |
| B+ | 89-87 |
| B | 86-84 |
| B- | 83-80 |
| C | 79-70 |
| F | Under 70 |

- All late assignments will be penalized two-thirds of a letter grade (i.e., from an A to a B+) for each day or fraction of a day late.
- No student can pass a course without completing all of the assignments.
- Students are responsible for retaining a copy of their papers until they have received a grade.
- No student can pass the course with more than two absences.

Grading Criteria:

- A: Brilliant and original work; nearly publishable. Commendably clear and thoroughly analytical; comprehensively supported by, and systematically substantiated with, considerable empirical evidence.
- A-: Excellent work; powerful analysis with distinctive, well-structured argument; critical and full awareness of the literature alongside masterful use of empirical evidence to support and substantiate the arguments presented.
- B+: Very good; fine analysis with a coherent argument, most of the most important points are developed in a structured discussion; well-substantiated with clear and firm command of supporting empirical evidence.
- B: Good; sound analytical skill shown from identification and understanding of the core intellectual problem accompanied by a clear discussion of the subject substantiated with

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some (albeit, perhaps insufficient) empirical evidence. However, there are lapses in argumentation, research, or other important characteristics.

- B-: Satisfactory; Basic analytical skills apparent from identification of the intellectual problem and an insufficiently developed discussion of it. Poorly structured with inadequate empirical evidence provided.
- C: Below average. Little analysis and an insufficiently developed argument. Some, albeit cursory, knowledge of the main intellectual problem; some key empirical points may have been identified and touched on, but are anemically developed. No detailed familiarity with the literature evident. Weak analysis and an incoherent argument, bare evidence of ability to identify intellectual problem, little use of empirical evidence and minimal knowledge of literature.
- F: Totally unsatisfactory, absence of argument, analysis; little if any reference to, much less knowledge of, the literature.

SSP encourages students to take advantage of Georgetown's Writing Center, which is located on the second floor of Lauinger Library (<https://library.georgetown.edu/writing-center>) or SSP's writing fellows. Students are allowed to seek assistance from the Writing Center or the SSP writing fellows.

Absences: SSP policy states that students may not miss class except in extraordinary circumstances, such as illness or family emergency. Students are advised in the SSP Student Handbook to request approval from the instructor as soon as possible in advance of the absence. In the event that a student is absent from any classes in a given course, instructors may:

- Reduce the final letter grade to reflect the absence(s);
- Require additional course assignments before assigning the final grade;
- Request that a student be withdrawn from the course.

Students missing three or more classes are asked to withdraw from the course. Students who expect to miss more than two classes are required to notify the [Director of Graduate Studies](#) immediately. In drastic circumstances, the program, in consultation with the course professor, may withdraw students from a course if they inexplicably miss the first class meeting or who are absent for two or more classes.

Arrival in the course later than 30 minutes into the class session will be recorded as an absence. Persistent tardiness to class may result in the professor deducting points from your course contribution grade or counting the cumulative lateness as an absence.

Academic Integrity:

- Please be certain that you understand Georgetown’s policy on academic honesty. It is available in the Graduate Bulletin is at: <https://grad.georgetown.edu/policies/>
- The undergraduate Honor Council pamphlet may be useful in understanding what plagiarism is, as it contains several examples. It is available at: <https://honorcouncil.georgetown.edu/>
- For additional examples, please read “What is Plagiarism?” which you can find at: <https://honorcouncil.georgetown.edu/faculty-tas/>
- Students agree that by taking this course all required papers may be subject to submission for a Textual Similarity Review to Turnitin.com or another similar service for the detection of plagiarism. All submitted papers will be added as source documents in the Turnitin.com reference database solely for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of such papers in the future. For additional information on Turnitin, see: <https://honorcouncil.georgetown.edu/faculty/turnitin/>
- If you have any questions, please consult the instructor.

Artificial Intelligence (AI) Tools: Students are welcome to use artificial intelligence (AI) tools for research purposes, but please note that all work submitted for grades or other formal evaluation must be a student’s own original work. Students must properly cite their sources. The use of AI tools to write your papers or other graded assignments is not permitted. If students have any questions concerning this policy, please contact your instructor or academic advisor.

Academic Resource Center: If you believe you have a disability, then you should contact the Academic Resource Center (arc@georgetown.edu) for further information. The Center is located in the Leavey Center, Suite 335. The Academic Resource Center is the Campus Office Responsible for reviewing documentation provided by students with disabilities and for determining reasonable accommodations in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and University policies.

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Instructional Continuity: In the event of inclement weather, or other emergency, this semester that results in the University’s cancellation, class will be held virtually through the zoom function.

Title IX/Sexual Misconduct:

Georgetown University and its faculty are committed to supporting survivors and those impacted by sexual misconduct, which includes sexual assault, sexual harassment, relationship violence, and stalking. Georgetown requires faculty members, unless otherwise designated as confidential, to report all disclosures of sexual misconduct to the University Title IX Coordinator or a Deputy Title IX Coordinator. If you disclose an incident of sexual misconduct to a professor in or outside of the classroom (with the exception of disclosures in papers), that faculty member must report the incident to the Title IX Coordinator, or Deputy Title IX Coordinator. The coordinator will, in turn, reach out to the student to provide support, resources, and the option to meet. [Please note that the student is not required to meet with the Title IX coordinator.].

If you would prefer to speak to someone confidentially, Georgetown has a number of fully confidential professional resources that can provide support and assistance. These resources include:

Health Education Services for Sexual Assault Response and Prevention: confidential email sarp@georgetown.edu

Counseling and Psychiatric Services (CAPS): (202) 687-6985 or after hours, call (833) 960-3006 to reach Fonemed, a telehealth service; individuals may ask for the on-call CAPS clinician

More information about reporting options and resources can be found on the [Sexual Misconduct Website](#).

COURSE SCHEDULE.

Class #1 / May 19th - World Geopolitical Environment & A Behavioral Lens: How Humans – and their institutions – React to Emergencies (Pt. 1)

Objective: After course introduction, survey the major trends, Nation States, international organizations, and conflicts that make up today’s geopolitical environment. Have Nation States refined and improved their crisis response methods in the last century? Then begin to survey data of common and predictable human reactions to unexpected danger and emergencies.

Readings: Extract from The Lessons of History (Durant, 1968); The Unthinkable - Introduction and Parts 1 and 2; Warnings - Chapters 1, 9, and 11.

Supplemental readings (optional): “Personal & Psychological Dimensions of Confronting AI Catastrophic Risks”.

Class #2 / May 21st – A Behavioral Lens: How Humans – and their institutions – React to Emergencies (Pt. 2) & A Theoretical Construct of International Crisis Management Today

Objective: Complete the survey of common, predictable human reactions to unexpected danger and emergencies; discuss sample organizational responses to crisis. Then outline a theoretical framework to assist in the study of various types of crises. Set the stage for a process to evaluate how “universal” the construct might be.

Readings: Extracts from July, 1914 (McMeekin, 2013); and The Guns of August (Tuchman, 1962); “Our Current List of the Most Important World Problems”; “The Era of Global Risk” – Introduction & Chapter 1; “The Hot Seat”; The Politics of Crisis Management - Chapters 1 - 3.

Supplemental readings (optional): “Managing Intergovernmental Responses”.

Class #3 / May 28th - Warnings, Prediction & OMGs: Why Such Frequent “Surprises”?

Objective: Reviewing some recent “surprises” (India’s acquisition of nuclear weapons, the “Arab Spring”, and the 2008 financial crisis) could they have been reasonably foreseen? What do those experiences suggest about the nature of humans and their institutions? What reactions and corrections were adopted to fix problems? Then, to conclude, we’ll play “. Prediction Roulette: Place Your Bets”. Students will hazard predictions of an international crisis that will emerge / occur in the next year and defend the basis for their assertion.

Readings: Stern – “Preparing – The 6th Task of Crisis Leadership”; “Top Ten Global Risks for 2025”; Extracts from The Big Short (Lewis, 2011); The Black Swan (Taleb, 2010); Robock – “How An India-Pakistan Nuclear Conflict Could Start”; and Warnings; Chapters 2 and 8.

Supplemental readings (optional): “US Intelligence and India’s Nuclear Tests: Lessons Learned” – Congressional Research Service Report; “Why Did The World Miss the Arab Spring?” (Exemplifier website); Annual Threat Assessment – 2024.

Class #4 / June 2nd - Case Study / TTX: An International Geopolitical Crisis – NATO, Europe & Russia

Observing Russia’s conquest behavior since the Russian – Georgian War, how has the US National Security apparatus functioned in the midst of other issues underway? Are there parallels and indicators that are instructive in the Russian-Ukraine conflict from 2014 through the full invasion and war? How might these crisis challenges be influenced and met in today’s virtual communications environment? What imperatives shape the future TransAtlantic Partnership?

Readings: RAND – “Responding to a Limited Russian Attack on NATO”; CSIS – “Forward Defense in Europe” – Executive Summary & Conclusion / Scan Parts I & II; CSBA – “The Future of the Russian Military” – Executive Summary & Chapter 5; EU Strategic Compass; Warnings – Chapter 13.

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Supplemental readings (optional): Extracts from A Little War That Shook the World. (Asmus, 2010), Flashpoints, (Friedman, 2015).

Class #5 / June 4th - But I didn't mean to..." Potential Global Catastrophic Risk Crisis from Technology Accident or Pandemic

Objective: Survey the domain of global public health and recent experiences of epidemic crises. Analyze the international and US national public health structure. Examine the threats, likelihood, implications of technology and biotechnology accidents, and the multinational crisis response that would be required.

Readings: Extract from The Hot Zone (Preston, 1994), "Ebola In The US"; Wahdwa- "The Genetic Engineering Genie Is Out of the Bottle"; Sridhar -"The Real Lessons of COVID"; Kucharski – We Aren't Prepared for the Next Pandemic"; "The Danger of Invisible BioLabs", and Warnings - Chapters 10 and 16.

Supplemental readings (optional): Extract from The Coming Plague (Garrett, 1994); " The Vulnerable World Hypothesis"; RAND – "Operational Risks of AI in Large Scale Bio Attacks".

Class #6 / June 9th - Case Study / TTX: The Domestic / Regional Natural Disaster

Objective: Hurricane Katrina inflicted many deaths and vast destruction on a highly developed region of America. The response was widely criticized as deeply dysfunctional. Examine the facts, review the major issues and criticisms, assess the performance of the crisis response organization actors and whether lessons have been learned.

Readings: "Primer on Response to Major Emergencies"; "The Really Big One"; Congressional Report "Hurricane Katrina: A Failure of Initiative" – Executive Summary; Extracts from Disaster: Hurricane Katrina and the Failure of Homeland Security, (Cooper & Block; 2007) and Leave No One Behind: Hurricane Katrina and the Rescue of Tulane Hospital (Carey, 2006); and The Politics of Crisis Management – Chapter 4.

Class #7 / June 11th - "Let's Create a Crisis": A Survey of Crisis as an Opportunistic Tool

Objective: Survey instances of States and leaders employing crisis as a tool to change the geopolitical dynamic, retain, consolidate or amass power, and attempt to alter the trajectory of world affairs. Analyze the pre-conditions, frequency, characteristics and outcomes of these strategies. Examine the frequency, salient characteristics, and potential ongoing examples.

Readings: Extracts from "Battle for the Falklands"; "The Thirteen American Arguments"; "US Intervention Against Mexican Cartels"; and "Designating Cartels as FTOs".

Supplemental readings (optional): ODNI – "Annual Threat Assessment -2024"; and NIC – "Global Trends 2040".

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Class #8 / June 16th - Case Study / TTX: Saving Citizens

Objective: Western democracies have an uneven, but colorful, history of attempting to rescue or evacuate their citizens from distant global locations that suddenly become threatening. Military, diplomatic, and covert intelligence operations have all been employed in numerous crises, with decidedly mixed results. Often, political risk determinations attempting to assess multiple unknowns govern decision processes. This session examines the many policies used in a wide variety of examples – from the Boxer Rebellion, the Entebbe hostage rescue, to 2023 events in Sudan, these events seem to actually *require* crisis management.

Readings: “Planning in Hostage Rescue Missions” - Coker; “How France Led the Evacuation of Foreigners from Khartoum” - The Economist, 2023; “The Collapse of US Haiti Policy”; Scan - ”Shaba II” – Odom, USAWC; “On Mamba Station: US Marines in West Africa”; & “NEO of AmCits from Lebanon in 2006” – GAO.

Class #9 / June 18th – The Migration & Refugee Crisis

Objective: Examine the data of the ongoing refugee crisis into Europe from the invasion of Ukraine, the Middle East and Africa, and the continuing forced migration of the Rohingya. Review the UN, EU, various national, and NGO responses. Assess this complex crisis from multiple standpoints: its effect on multilateral agreements, capacity to become a years-long event, effect on nations’ politics, and models for sustained crisis response task forces. Assess potential arcs of future mass migrations. Examine migration across the US southern border including policies and risks associated with it.

Readings: Extracts from The Politics of Protection (Ferris, 2011) and The Consequences of Chaos (Ferris, 2016); MSF – “The Obstacle Course to Europe”; Brookings Event – “How to Prepare for Climate Migration in the US”; Biermann – “Protecting Climate Refugees”; “Integrating Refugees – Lessons from Germany”; and “US Military Deployment for Immigration Enforcement – A Primer”.

Supplemental readings (optional): Extract from, Human Cargo (Moorehead, 2005); “Security and Climate Mobility.”

Class #10 / June 23rd – Case Study / TTX: Shoals & Straits in the South China Sea

Objective: Examining the contending claims to resources and accesses in the South China Sea, assess the potential emerging components of a major multinational crisis. Analyze the interactions and competitions undergirding concepts of hegemony and access to the Commons. What elements of the theoretical framework are present? How might other international actors take advantage of the uncertainty?

Readings: “How China Could Blockade Taiwan” (CSIS Webpage); Extracts from Asian Cauldron, (Kaplan; 2014); “A Game of Shark and Minnow” (NYT, 2015); Economist – “The Most Dangerous Place on Earth”; Green & Talmadge – “Then What? Assessing the Military Implications of Chinese Control of Taiwan”.

Supplemental readings (optional): “There Will Be No ‘Short Sharp War’ With China”; “What’s Going On With Shipping?” YouTube channel – container shipping videos.

Class #11 / June 25th - The Future Crisis & You As Crisis Manager.

Objective: Review the theoretical framework, and assess its strengths and weaknesses. What among the sampling of case studies (or others discussed) is not explained by the theory? Where might deeper research be suggested? Is a framework instructive at all, and if so, why and for whom? What demands will the arc of future crises make upon States, organizations, and society?

Readings: “How Do You Know When Society is About to Fall Apart?”; Atlantic – “The US Needs a COVID Commission”; Wired – “What If America Had a Detective Agency for Disasters?”; Ritterson – “BioRisk Management National Agency”; “Case For Emergency Response Teams”; Warnings – Chapter 14; The Politics of Crisis Management; - Chapter 7; and The Unthinkable Part 3 and “Conclusions”.

Supplemental readings (optional): NTI – Bio & AI.