

Emergency Management Intelligence
Quick Overview Summary of Potential Courseware

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This independent study project is to develop Emergency and Disaster Management Courses (both undergraduate and graduate) for the use of Intelligence as a major ongoing component of emergency and disaster management preparedness, response, recovery, and mitigation. The National Incident Management System (NIMS) from the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) supports the concept of both Intelligence and Investigations within the Incident Command System (ICS) – and at multiple possible locations in the organizational chart (Federal Emergency Management Agency, 2017). This independent study project is designed to explore those concepts to be utilized by emergency management officials on a regular basis for incident management, not just those incidents where criminal (or terrorism) investigations are needed; and to provide the educational opportunities for students to be more prepared to serve in any incident command role, on an all-hazards basis. The foundational idea for this project has already been published (Prasad, 2021).

Success for this project would not be the actual approval of said courses into the curriculum at the American Public University System, but rather the completeness of the process for designing these courses, with Course Objectives, Reading Material, lesson plans, etc. Mentoring this project will involve providing information, templates, details, etc. on how courses are proposed and developed at the American Public University System.

Background on the subject

NIMS combines intelligence and investigations (I/I). Advocating for a split of these activities within the ICS may benefit emergency management, this project focuses on the benefits of aligning intelligence activities across all of the branches and throughout the disaster phase cycle. I/I traditionally has been the sole prerogative of law enforcement agencies, but there

is always a need for information sharing, situational awareness and actionable intelligence dissemination across all command and general staff positions. Benefits of these proposed courses will include the knowledge and background to allow students to advocate for greater access to Intelligence across the entire disaster phase cycle (not just during a Response) when they are embedded in an emergency management career role.

Undergraduate Course Development

The proposed undergraduate course will include the background and history of the NIMS, encouraging students to independently complete FEMA courses, including the independent study courses on ICS and NIMS (latest versions of IS-100 and IS-700) and the IS-2000 National Preparedness Goal and System: Overview course online. There will be discussions on the differences between situational awareness and intelligence. And there will be a distinction made between conducting I/I domestically (involving U.S. Citizens or not) and internationally. Finally, the vast use of technology – as a tool for emergency managers, and as a potential threat (cyber-terrorism impacting Intelligence) will be covered.

Graduate Course Development

The proposed graduate course will expand upon the undergraduate course to include further discussions along the lines of actionable intelligence (exploring different cases for various first response agencies), cover some of the Finance/Admin aspects of Intelligence gathering and dissemination, further explore geospatial intelligence systems, delve into complex coordinated attacks, elicit opinions on the use of Intelligence as it relates to U.S. citizens who may be domestic violent extremists, cover disinformation campaigns, and study cases where there was a failure of Intelligence/Information sharing amongst response agencies.

Conclusion

The benefits of an Emergency Management-specific Intelligence set of courses (both undergraduate and graduate) would include both the further betterment of the students towards their Emergency Management education and highlight the forward-thinking capabilities of the university itself. The graduate course itself will be a work-in-progress for a number of years, as the current set of academic background and reference material on this specific topic is fairly sparse, based on the literature review made for the initial article.

This independent study project will also review other emergency management programs at colleges and universities, to see if there are any comparable courses currently available. Assistance by the mentor in connecting with peers at the American Public University System to investigate whether any of them are currently exploring this topic as well, would be most appreciated.

References

- Federal Emergency Management Agency (2017, October). National incident management system third edition. https://www.fema.gov/sites/default/files/2020-07/fema_nims_doctrine-2017.pdf
- Prasad, M. (2021, April). Formalizing the role of intelligence and investigation. *DomPrep Journal*, 17(4). <https://www.domesticpreparedness.com/preparedness/formalizing-the-role-of-intelligence-investigation/>