

ROBERT F. WAGNER GRADUATE SCHOOL OF PUBLIC SERVICE  
NEW YORK UNIVERSITY

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# MANAGING HUMANITARIAN CHALLENGES: SUPPLY AND LOGISTICS

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**MANAGING THE EFFECTIVE DELIVERY OF SUPPLIES TO SUPPORT RESPONSE**

MARCH 25 – MAY 6, 2015, 4:55 TO 6:35PM

PROFESSOR: DR. LAURA ROCK KOPCZAK  
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ADDITIONAL OFFICE HOURS: SUNDAY MARCH 29, APRIL 12, 19 AND 26, 8:00-10:00PM BY PHONE OR SKYPE

## COURSE DESCRIPTION

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“Boots on the ground” create the action in humanitarian action. Whether it be medicines, tents, blankets, pumps, textbooks, communications equipment or vehicles, materials and supplies must be in place for humanitarian response to take place. Humanitarian logistics is the management and execution of the activities needed to plan for and move relief materials and supplies, along with related funds and information, from suppliers to beneficiaries. Logistics activities include needs assessment, planning, procurement, transport, warehousing, distribution to beneficiaries, and reporting. Effective, timely logistics is critical to response to emergencies arising from armed conflicts, epidemics, famine, and natural disasters.

This course provides an overview of humanitarian logistics by introducing the challenging context in which it takes place, the organizations typically involved, the products and services needed, and the operational approaches taken and challenges encountered in meeting the needs. Issues covered include operational challenges, funding issues, coordination and strengthening local capacity. The course combines lectures, readings and teaching cases covering organizations such as IFRC, UNICEF and MSF.

## COURSE GRADING & REQUIREMENTS

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In this course, we will develop an understanding of humanitarian logistics through lecture, reading, assignments and the case study method.

### **Course Grading Components**

Final grades are determined by the following course components:

- **Class Participation (20%)**  
Class participation consists of four main components: presence, promptness, preparation, and discussion participation. All class sessions will involve discussion, especially those centering on a case discussion. If you have thoroughly prepared, you should have no problems following and contributing to the discussion. Keep in mind that much of a leader's communication is verbal, especially in operations settings. Therefore, developing your abilities to verbally state and support your positions is an important part of this class, in addition to listening and reflecting on the discourse.
- **Assignments (60%)**  
The four assignments will each be weighted 15%. These are an important part of this course as they apply the concepts we learn in class. They will be framed in relation to actual humanitarian interventions. You may work on the assignments individually or with classmates in groups of two. Each collaborating group should submit only one assignment noting both collaborators' names.
- **Final exam (20%)**  
The final exam will cover all lectures, assignments and readings. It will be open book. There will be some time pressure.

### **Prerequisites**

- **CORE-GP.1020** Managing Public Service Organizations (MPSO)  
This is a core course and the gateway to the broader management curriculum.
- **Statistical and Mathematical Knowledge**
  - Basic algebra
  - Normal distribution, mean, standard deviation.
  - Aggregating two or more normal distributions.
- **Excel Knowledge** (Minimum is NONCR-GP.0932 Excel Computer Module I or equivalent)
  - Consider taking NONCR-GP.0933 Excel Computer Module II
  - Review "Basic tasks in Excel 2010" in the Microsoft Office help.

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## COURSE READINGS

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The required and optional readings for the class will come from the following sources:

1. **Required book - none**
2. **Course Packet - none**
3. **NYU Classes**

NYU Classes will be used to post readings and assignments throughout the semester. Students are encouraged to check it frequently. The readings listed in this syllabus are posted on NYU Classes.

The specific readings are listed in the Detailed Course Outline below.

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## COURSE CALENDAR

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Session	Topics	Date	Comments
1	IFRC RESPONSE TO HAITI EARTHQUAKE	MARCH 25	
2	EMERGENCY RESPONSE	APRIL 1	ASSIGNMENT 1 DUE
3	PROCUREMENT	APRIL 8	
4	LOGISTICS FOR 1991 RWANDAN REFUGEE CRISIS	APRIL 15	ASSIGNMENT 2 DUE
5	PLUMPY'NUT SUPPLY CHAIN FOR EAST AFRICA	APRIL 22	ASSIGNMENT 3 DUE
6	MSF SUPPLY CHAIN FOR CHOLERA	APRIL 29	ASSIGNMENT 4 DUE
7	PERFORMANCE MEASURES	MAY 6	
	FINAL EXAM	MAY 13 Tentative	

## Detailed Course Outline

<b>Session 1 Video – IFRC Response to Haiti Earthquake</b>	
Date	March 25
Topics	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Course Overview</li> <li>2. Destruction and chaos after an earthquake</li> <li>3. Reality on the ground for logisticians during the response</li> <li>4. Challenges and obstacles</li> </ol>
Preparation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How to Prepare a Case Discussion Handout</li> <li>• Luk van Wassenhove. “Blackett Memorial Lecture: Humanitarian aid logistics: supply chain management in high gear,” <i>Journal of the Operational Research Society</i> (2006) 57, 475-489.</li> <li>• Skim: “International organizations” and “NGOs and private action,” in <i>Shaping the Humanitarian World</i>, by Per Walker and Daniel Maxwell, Routledge Global Institutions, (2009).</li> <li>• Skim: Jonathan Harr, “Lives of the Saints: International hardship duty in Chad,” <i>The New Yorker</i>, January 5, 2009, pp. 1-8.</li> </ul>
	NYU Classes

<b>Session 2 Preparedness and Emergency Response – WFP and IFRC</b>	
Date	April 1
Topics	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Immediate emergency response</li> <li>2. Regional logistics strategy at IFRC</li> </ol>
Preparation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Prepare assignment #1: “Can Heroes Be Efficient? Information Technology at the International Federation of the Red Cross,” by Laura Rock Kopczak, M. Eric Johnson, Tuck School of Business at Dartmouth, 2004 (<b>Case #6-0021</b>).</li> <li>• “Logistics for food assistance: delivering innovations in complex environments,” by Emma Quinn, Chapter 19 in <i>Revolution: From Food Aid to Food Assistance – Activities and Platforms</i>, p. 307-328.</li> </ul>
	NYU Classes

**Assignment #1 is due to NYU Classes April 1 before class**

<b>Session 3 Procurement</b>	
Date	April 8
Topics	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Assessment of beneficiary needs and programmatic challenges</li> <li>2. Forecasting material requirements</li> <li>3. Assessment of logistics requirements and challenges</li> </ol>
Preparation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “Brief: Estimating Needs and Material Requirements”</li> <li>• WFP Field Operations Pocketbook, Chapter 8, “Procurement and Contracting”</li> <li>• Read executive summary (pp. 1-2) of “Preventing Corruption in Humanitarian Assistance, Final Research Report, Transparency International, 2008.</li> </ul>
	NYU Classes

<b>Session 4 Logistics for 1994 Rwandan Refugee Crisis</b>	
Date	April 15
Topics	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Planning for receipt and movement of people and materials in country</li> <li>2. Chaotic context and need to balance immediate tasks with improving the structure of the logistics operation</li> </ol>
Preparation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reread: "Brief: Estimating Needs and Material Requirements"</li> <li>• Read: Andrew McClintock, "Logistics of Humanitarian Emergencies: Notes from the Field," Journal of Contingencies and Crisis Management, Volume 17, Number 4, December 2009</li> <li>• Prepare assignment #2: "The logistics of a Third-World relief operation," by Andrew McClintock</li> <li>• Skim: WFP Field Operations Pocketbook, Chapter 9, "Logistics"</li> </ul>
	NYU Classes

**Assignment #2 is due to NYU Classes April 15 before class**

<b>Session 5 Plumpy'Nut Supply Chain for East Africa</b>	
Date	April 22
Topics	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Analysis and improvement of humanitarian supply chains</li> <li>2. Lead time and inventory analysis</li> <li>3. Production capacity and capacity utilization</li> <li>4. Evaluation of options to improve</li> </ol>
Preparation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Read: "Brief: Inventory, Capacity and Responsiveness," by Laura Rock Kopczak (2015)</li> <li>• Prepare Assignment #3: "UNICEF Plumpy'Nut Supply Chain," by Jay Swaminathan, Teaching case (2009).</li> </ul>
	NYU Classes

**Assignment #3 is due to NYU Classes April 22 before class**

<b>Session 6 MSF Supply Chain for Cholera</b>	
Date	April 29
Topics	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Forecasting material requirements for emergencies</li><li>2. Country vs. global forecasting</li><li>3. Locating preparedness stock</li></ol>
Preparation	NYU Classes <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Prepare assignment #4: Preparedness Stock for Addressing Cholera</li><li>• Read "Preparedness," from <i>Humanitarian Logistics</i>, by R. Tomasini and L. Van Wassenhove, St. Martin's Press (2009).</li></ul>

**Assignment #4 is due to NYU Classes April 29 before class**

<b>Session 7 Performance Measures</b>	
Date	May 6
Topics	Performance Measures
Preparation	NYU Classes <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Read: "Measuring Markets that Supply Cash-Based Humanitarian Operations," by Laura Rock Kopczak and Greg Matthews, draft (2015).</li><li>• Skim: Peter Tatham and Kate Hughes, "Humanitarian logistics metrics: where we are and how we might improve," from <i>Humanitarian Logistics</i>, edited by M. Christopher and P. Tatham, KPL (2011).</li></ul>

**Take Home Final Exam - Due May 13**