Disaster Law

Disaster Law offers a timely approach to examining the intersection of law and policy, the tension between public and private risk allocation, the role of government and issues of federalism, and provides a survey of law affecting households and communities in the recovery process. The class will examine emerging domestic and international law while also exploring the multiple roles that attorneys might play along the timeline of an emergency: as counselors, negotiators, evidence-gatherers, advocates, legislators, litigators, critics, and policymakers. More specifically, the course will include the definition of a disaster and their causes; individual, business, and government issues that predictably arise in disaster; the role of government, non profits, and the private sector during a disaster and recovery, especially when dealing with vulnerable populations; state, national, and international laws that govern recovery from disaster; and mechanisms for assessing accountability. The focus will be bilateral: on practical skills that lawyers can use to advise clients before and after a disaster and in affecting public policy.

Students who are interested in participating in relevant fieldwork and who have identified an appropriate placement by the first week of the semester may be eligible for an additional one credit, upon the approval of the professor.

Requirements: Research Paper and Class Participation

Credits: 2
Type: SEM

Partial list of professors who teach or have taught this course:

Hazel Weiser

Spring 2013