

Stories of Resiliency: Ft. Myers

MMC 6936 Section #5659, Class #30683– 3 credits; Spring 2023

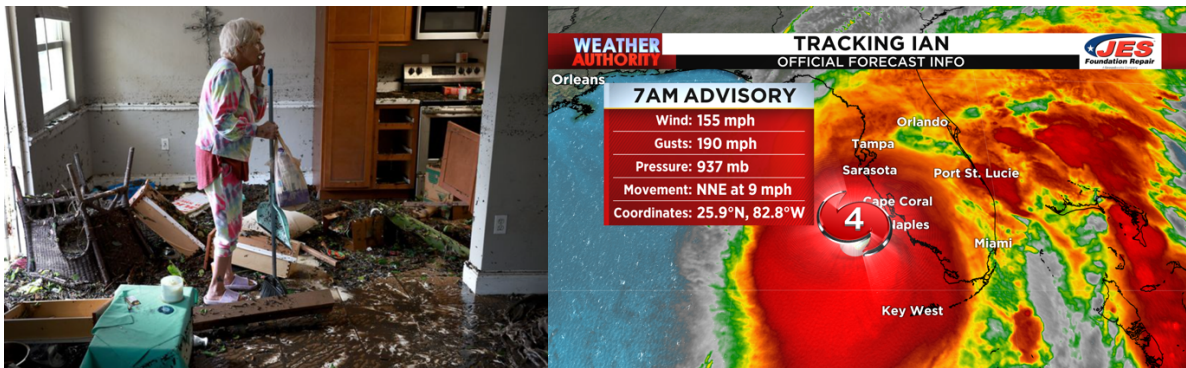
Fridays 1:55 pm – 4:55 pm, periods 7-9

Location – ARCH 415-417

Professor: Kim Fowler

Email: k.fowler@ufl.edu

Office hours: Tuesdays and Thursdays, 11 am – 1 pm

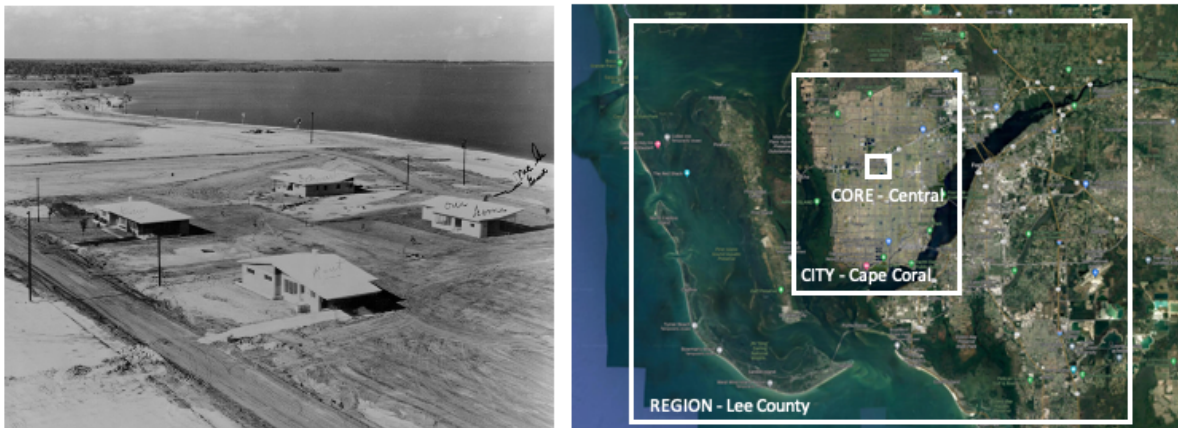


Overview

This course is part of a larger program called **GulfSouth Studio: Retrofitting Cape Coral** run by [FIBER](#) (Florida Institute for Built Environment Resilience) through the College of Design, Construction, and Planning. This is a multi-disciplinary course that brings together students from multiple departments within the College of Design, Construction, and Planning (DCP): Architecture, Urban and Regional Planning, Landscape Architecture, and Housing. The National Academies of Science (NAS) GulfSouth Studio Project explores the critical challenges facing the Gulf of Mexico's coastline and communities in the context of a changing climate including energy transition, changing Gulf Coastline, and community health and resilience. It approaches these challenges through intensive design thinking, community engagement, and computational integration. The studio explores the development of a "digital twin for design" to synthesize diverse research outputs and teaching methods from across a range of disciplines.

Slow Destruction – Rapid Disaster

In October 2022, Hurricane Ian made landfall in Southwest Florida near Fort Myers. While devastating Florida's southwest coast, Hurricane Ian impacted thousands across Florida with insured losses reaching \$12.5 billion.¹ The storm laid waste to Fort Myers Beach and Sanibel Island before sending a massive storm surge up the Caloosahatchee River and into the low-lying back yards of thousands of residents in Cape Coral and the city of Ft. Myers. **However, the region's vulnerability was building long before the storm.** Lee County is the second-fastest growing county in Florida, as well as the ninth fastest growing county in the U.S. (2021). For decades the region's unabated pattern of sprawling development has provided low-density housing at tremendous cost to coastal ecosystems, civic institutions, and public infrastructure. Hurricane Ian exposed the fragility of this built environment but the foundations for catastrophe were constructed over generations.



"Cape Coral, Florida." Angelo [Cario](https://www.facebook.com/photo/?fbid=2957298514549102&set=pcb.3979279848823041). (<https://www.facebook.com/photo/?fbid=2957298514549102&set=pcb.3979279848823041>)

Studio Purpose: Transforming Suburban Florida

This design studio first investigates the multi-scalar relationship between land-use patterns, housing, infrastructure, water management policy, and ecological conditions of the greater Ft. Myers metropolitan area in the context of its vulnerability. Second, multi-disciplinary teams will focus on the city of Cape Coral, a poster child for Florida's rampant post World War II suburban development to understand the unique urban morphology, ecosystem, and infrastructure of the city. Third, the studio will propose a series of "suburban retrofits" to envision radical urban transformation to achieve greater resilience, equity, and sustainability. Through a series of architectural designs, landscape infrastructures, planning and policy interventions, as well as multimedia communication tools to reimagine and communicate the civic core of the city each team visually communicates, at a range of scales, different possible futures for the study area, which will culminate in the creating of an interactive "digital twin" on the UnREAL Engine platform.

¹ Florida Office of Insurance Regulation, 12/21/22, <https://flor.com/home/ian>

Role of Communications Students in this project

Storytelling is one of the greatest tools we have as communicators, and your responsibilities in this course are to tell stories of resiliency. The Ft. Myers/Cape Coral community has suffered catastrophic damage due to Hurricane Ian, both in property damage as well as a massive disruption in the lives of those affected. While the focus on Southwest Florida was intense immediately following the storm, many residents are still struggling with rebuilding their homes, businesses, and the very structure of their everyday lives. DCP students will be divided into groups, with each group focusing on a specific area of concentration – that might be housing, environmental and landscape rebuilding and protection, or even something related to how to best bring together the community through areas designed for community gatherings. As a communication specialist, you will be tasked with finding a member or members of the community who have been affected by or are working on solutions for one of the specific areas of concentration. What challenges do they face as a community? Were those challenges present before the storm? If so, how were they exacerbated by the devastation? Who are they relying on to help rebuild – the government, non-profits, or perhaps local members of the community? The story of how people rebuild after disasters is an important part of the larger story of community resilience.

By taking part in this course and the larger program, you will be the outlet for community members to share their stories, the challenges they've faced, and the choices they must make in rebuilding. The other students in this program will be working on solutions for the areas of concentrations from the perspective of their area of expertise. As a communications student, you are responsible for working with the team(s) on how to broadcast the stories and solutions to members of the community. Using your skillset in written and/or visual storytelling, you will need to find a way that properly communicates both the problems and the solutions. Your stories will be shared with residents, community leaders, and government officials as part of the project's final deliverables.

For a look into a [similar course](#) that was offered previously, you can look at the [FIBER Resilient Cities site](#).



This course will be broken up into three parts.

Part 1 – Background and lectures

For the first half of the semester, you will be expected to join the larger group of students in this project for lectures on the history of the area, the most pressing challenges the area faces, background from different specialty areas (environmental landscaping, engineering with a focus on resiliency, ecological experts, housing experts, tourism and industry experts, etc), and information on the different group projects that will be worked on while in Ft. Myers. Lectures will be on Fridays with the larger groups, and you will be expected to work with your group, focused on the communication aspect of the project.

Part 2 – Trip to Ft. Myers/Cape Coral

We will be headed down to Ft. Myers/Cape Coral for 3-4 days over Spring Break. On that trip, the class will meet with community leaders and experts from the area to further explain the challenges they face in the area. You will need to connect with and interview residents who have been affected by the storm, as it relates to the different areas of concentration being worked on.

Part 3 – Developing your story

In the second half of the semester, you will be working on finishing your story for the final deliverable. You will be working independently with the group you're assigned to create the final proposal which will include the larger story you are working on with a solutions component. The audiences for your stories are the Ft. Myers/Cape Coral community at large as well as a smaller audience of the local community leaders and policy makers who can implement the changes recommended.

Course Objectives:

1. Demonstrate an understanding of concepts and information in areas of expertise outside of communications as they relate to the challenges faced by Cape Coral area
2. Participate in multidisciplinary teams to work on complex challenges surrounding disaster recovery, changing coastal environments, and social and economic disparities
3. Examine information and reports from fellow students and produce clear, concise communication that is easily digestible for multiple audiences
4. Identify Cape Coral community members whose experiences demonstrate challenges faced by the larger community
5. Interview and construct storylines by applying communications strategies and tools to create an in depth and dynamic storytelling piece for insertion into a larger project presentation

Course Expectations

Assignments

Assignments will be posted to Canvas and are meant to measure your understanding of the topics presented as well as your ability to craft a story and work within a group setting on a larger project.

1. Discussions – first half of the semester (20% of final grade)

- a. Each week you will need to answer a short prompt based on the lectures from the previous week.
- b. This is meant to confirm your understanding of the topic and discuss with your classmates any outstanding questions or thoughts you might have on the topic.
- c. The expectation is not that you have mastered the specific topic, but simply gained an understanding of how that topic plays into the larger challenges the community of Ft. Myers is facing.

2. Class participation (10% of final grade)

- a. This includes being present for lectures as well as working within either the larger Communications group or a specific topic group that you've been assigned to.
- b. Post Spring break, there will not be any more lectures, but you will need to on the final group project(s).
- c. If needed, we will secure a location in Weimer after the trip for working on final projects.

3. Story idea (20% of final grade)

- a. While in Ft. Myers/Cape Coral, you will be responsible for reaching out to community members to find characters for your story. You will have access to multiple resources while there, as well as resources through the course instructors, to assist you in finding potential characters, but you will be responsible for creating a relationship with those characters.
- b. You will need to secure interviews with your sources – either while there on the trip, or shortly after we return.
- c. After we return, you will be responsible for creating a story pitch and presenting to the instructor.
- d. Each student will meet with the instructor to discuss the type of final deliverable you will be creating based on your skill set.

4. Rough Draft of Story (20% of final grade)

- a. Check in with instructor to gauge progress on story.
- b. Ensure feedback is discussed or integrated into final story.

5. Final story deliverable and presentation (30% of final grade)

- a. Your work will be a part of the final course project, based on approved deliverable.
- b. The story will be based on agreed upon requirements discussed during story pitch.

Grading

<i>Course Grade Breakdown</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
Discussions	20%
Class Participation	10%
Story idea	20%
Rough Draft	20%
Final story deliverable	30%

Course Grading Scheme

		A	100% to 94%	A-	< 94% to 90%
B+	< 90% to 87%	B	< 87% to 84%	B-	< 84% to 80%
C+	< 80% to 77%	C	< 77% to 74%	C-	< 74% to 70%
D+	< 70% to 67%	D	< 67% to 64%	D-	< 64% to 61%
E	< 61% to 0%				

Course Policies

Attendance

Attendance is mandatory. Please plan to attend all lectures as we only meet once a week and attendance is necessary to understand the background information. If you are not able to attend a lecture, please notify me before class via Canvas, Slack or Email. Since we will be working with students from other disciplines, participation in class discussions and working with your group is essential for your success in this course.

Please review this link to review the University policy on acceptable reasons for absence <https://catalog.ufl.edu/UGRD/academic-regulations/attendance-policies/#absencestext>

Class Format

Weekly meetings for the first half of the semester will be held in person in the College of Design, Construction and Planning – Room ARC 415-417. For the second half of the semester, it may be necessary to meet via Zoom to facilitate discussion with your groups or for certain presentations. Students will be notified in advance of these exceptions. Keep in mind that Zoom meetings require the same professional level of participation as in class meetings. Students are expected to have cameras on, sitting up and be engaged in class. Students who don't abide to these guidelines may be counted as absent. Students are expected to conduct themselves in a professional manner whether providing feedback to classmates or engaging with our guests.

Academic Integrity

Academic honesty and integrity are fundamental values of the University community. Students should be sure that they understand the UF Student Honor Code at <https://sccr.dso.ufl.edu/policies/student-honor-codestudentconduct-code/>

UF Plagiarism Policy

Plagiarism Definition - A student shall not represent as the student's own work all or any portion of the work of another.

Plagiarism includes but is not limited to:

- Quoting oral or written materials including but not limited to those found on the internet, whether published or unpublished, without proper attribution.
- Submitting a document or assignment which in whole or in part is identical or substantially identical to a document or assignment not authorized by the student.
- Unauthorized use of materials or resources.
- Prohibited collaboration or consultation.
- Submission of paper or academic work purchased or obtained for an outside source.

For UF's Plagiarism Policy visit

<http://regulations.ufl.edu/wp-content/uploads/2018/06/4.040-1.pdf>

If you have any questions or concerns if it qualifies for plagiarism, just ask!

University Policy on Accommodating Students with Disabilities

Students with disabilities who experience learning barriers and would like to request academic accommodations should connect with the Disability Resource Center (DRC) by visiting their Get Started page. The DRC will provide documentation to the student who must then provide this documentation to the instructor when requesting accommodation. You must submit this documentation prior to submitting assignments or taking the quizzes or exams. Accommodations are not retroactive; therefore, students should contact the office as soon as possible during the term for which they are seeking accommodations.

In-Class Recording

Students are allowed to record video or audio of class lectures. However, the purposes for which these recordings may be used are strictly controlled. The only allowable purposes are (1) for personal educational use, (2) in connection with a complaint to the university, or (3) as evidence in, or in preparation for, a criminal or civil proceeding. All other purposes are prohibited. Specifically, students may not publish recorded lectures without the written consent of the instructor. A "class lecture" is an educational presentation intended to inform or teach enrolled students about a particular subject, including any instructor-led discussions that form part of the presentation, and delivered by any instructor hired or appointed by the University, or by a guest instructor, as part of a University of Florida course. A class lecture does not include lab sessions, student presentations, clinical presentations such as patient history, academic exercises involving

solely student participation, assessments (quizzes, tests, exams), field trips, private conversations between students in the class or between a student and the faculty or lecturer during a class session. Publication without permission of the instructor is prohibited. To “publish” means to share, transmit, circulate, distribute, or provide access to a recording, regardless of format or medium, to another person (or persons), including but not limited to another student within the same class section. Additionally, a recording, or transcript of a recording, is considered published if it is posted on or uploaded to, in whole or in part, any media platform, including but not limited to social media, book, magazine, newspaper, leaflet, or third-party note/tutoring services. A student who publishes a recording without written consent may be subject to a civil cause of action instituted by a person injured by the publication and/or discipline under UF Regulation 4.040 Student

Student Resources

Academic Resources

E-learning technical support: Contact the UF Computing Help Desk at 352-392-4357 or via e-mail at helpdesk@ufl.edu.

Career Connections Center: Reitz Union Suite 1300, 352-392- 1601. Career assistance and counseling services.

Library Support: Various ways to receive assistance with respect to using the libraries or finding resources. Students will be required to use various databases found in the library and used by industry professionals, such as, AdSpender, Census Bureau, Demographics Now, Hoovers, IBISWorld, MarketResearchi.com, Mintel, Simmons, Simply Analytics, Statista, etc.

Teaching Center: Broward Hall, 352-392-2010 or to make an appointment 352- 392-6420. General study skills and tutoring.

Writing Studio: 2215 Turlington Hall, 352-846-1138. Help brainstorming, formatting, and writing papers.

Student Complaints On-Campus: Visit the Student Honor Code and Student Conduct Code webpage for more information.

On-Line Students Complaints: View the Distance Learning Student Complaint Process.

Health and Wellness Resources

U Matter, We Care: If you or a friend is in distress, please contact umatter@ufl.edu or 352-392-1575 so that a team member can reach out to the student.

Proposed Schedule

Week 1	January 13 th	Guest Lectures & Class Overview
Week 2	January 20 th	Guest Lectures – Region
Week 3	January 27 th	Guest Lectures – Environment
Week 4	February 3 rd	Guest Lectures – Policy
Week 5	February 10 th	Guest Lectures – City
Week 6	February 17 th	Guest Lectures – Technology
Week 7	February 24 th	Guest Lectures – Buildings
Week 8	March 3 rd	Guest Lectures – Health
Week 9	March 10 th	Trip Prep
Week 10	March 13 th -17 th	Trip (exact dates TBD)

The rest of the semester schedule will be determined by decided meeting times with the group and working independently on your final project. We can coordinate times to meet as a Communications group as needed. Please note this schedule is subject to change. All changes will be noted on the course Canvas page.