**Course Assignment**

**Disaster Preparedness: Developing Data-Driven Interventions for Vulnerable Populations**

**Assignment Goal:** The goal of the assignment is to learn to identify at-risk populations facing a pending natural disaster or severe weather event, choose data indicators to find people facing vulnerability, use tools to visualize the risk, and develop recommendations based on that information. Teams will submit PowerPoint presentations including maps and a two-page summary report with findings and recommendations.

**Assignment Background:** Government and aid organizations are increasingly relying on current technologies such as text messaging and internet notifications to alert citizens of extreme weather events. But for vulnerable populations, such as people living in poverty, the aging population, or people with limited English-speaking ability, these notifications may not reach certain people who need advance warning. For service workers, getting vulnerable people out of harm’s way can be a complex issue that requires data to get an accurate understanding of residents and local conditions. This assignment will allow you to think critically and analytically about ways to solve this important problem.

**Tasks**

1. Become familiar with PolicyMap. PolicyMap can be accessed through the library’s website. If you haven’t already, you may want to complete this introductory assignment: <https://www.policymap.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/05/Introduction-to-PolicyMap.docx>. You can also watch a brief demo here: <https://www.policymap.com/support/demo/>.
2. Pick any location in the country, identify a natural disaster or severe weather event that poses a risk to the area, and identify a vulnerable population that the disaster poses a risk to.
3. Use PolicyMap to show neighborhoods with large concentrations of the specific vulnerable population.
4. Decide how to best reach the residents of those disaster-prone areas. Consider how the nature of their vulnerability might make certain methods more effective than others.
5. Develop recommendations for outreach to ensure everyone is informed and able to mobilize.
6. Write a group summary report (2 pages).
7. Create a PowerPoint presentation with relevant maps and your recommendations.

**Resources**

<https://www.policymap.com/2019/03/preparing-for-disasters-with-socially-vulnerable-populations/>

<https://www.policymap.com/support/demo/>