

Introducing New PIE Academy Course: Disaster Management and Communication for Agriculture and Natural Resources

Ricky Telg

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This is Science by the Slice, a podcast from the University of Florida's Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences Center for Public Issues Education. In this podcast, experts discuss the science of issues affecting our daily lives, reveal the motivations behind the decisions people make and ultimately provide insight to solutions for our lives. People make and ultimately provide insight to solutions for our lives.

Phillip Stokes

00:29

Hello everyone and welcome to Science by the Slice. My name is Phillip Stokes, Education Coordinator with the UF/IFAS Center for Public Issues Education, or PIE Center, and today I'm joined by two guests that are a part of the PIE Center, Dr. Angie Lindsey and Aly Morrison, and I'll give them a chance to just say hello in a second. But Dr Angie Lindsey is an associate professor at the University of Florida, focusing a lot of her work on managing disasters and communication around disasters, and she's also the chair elect for the Extension Disaster Education Network. And she's the chair elect for the Extension Disaster Education Network. And Aly Morrison is the operations specialist for the PIE Center. So today we're going to be talking about disasters and a new course that is a part of our PIE Academy. So first off, I just want to give Angie and Aly a chance to introduce themselves.

Angie Lindsey

01:21

Thank you so much for having me. I'm glad to be here. You did a great introduction of me and don't have too much to add. I work very closely with IFAS Extension here at the University of Florida. I am the disaster specialist for University of Florida IFAS and I am one of three point of contacts, which is basically the point of contact with the Extension Disaster Education Network or EDEN, as you pointed out. But I'm one of three, there's one myself and then we have a Sea Grant point of contact and then we also have our sister institution, Florida A&M University. We have the point of contact there as well that we all work really closely together in managing disasters in the state of Florida.

Phillip Stokes

02:04

Thanks so much. Excited to talk a little bit more about that. Aly, great to have you on as well.

Aly Morrison

02:09

Thank you, Phillip, for the introduction. Like you said, I'm the operations specialist for the Pai Center and I'm excited to be here today to talk about my involvement with our disaster management and communication course.

Phillip Stokes

02:23

Great, yes. So, Dr. Lindsay, let me start with you and say that we are currently in the middle of the 2024 Atlantic hurricane season. Of course, here in Florida, that is one of the primary disasters that we deal with every year, but of course, there are other disasters that uniquely impact the agriculture and natural resources fields overall, and that's really where a lot of our work comes in, with the UF/IFAS PIE Center and, specifically, this course that we're going to be talking about. So can you just share a little bit about some of those unique components that affect the ANR community?

Angie Lindsey

02:59

Sure, I'll be happy to. And you're right, we live in Florida, so we're surrounded by water, so, obviously, tropical storms and tropical systems. When we think about disasters, as Floridians, that is the first thing that we think about. And you're right, 2024 is supposed to be one of the unprecedented events that has impacted some of our countries to the south, and it was very telling of, unfortunately, what the season may be like. We've already had Hurricane Debby, which impacted our state just a couple of weeks ago. That impacted communities that were just recently a year, not even a year ago impacted by Hurricane Idalia, and a lot of these communities were some of these rural and ag communities.

03:46

And you're right, like, compound disasters and cascading disasters are very real, and when you think about the words compounding and cascading, compounding disasters mean go back to COVID.

03:57

We had a biological disaster in the middle of a pretty active hurricane season 2020 was actually a very active hurricane season as well, and we were dealing with how do you go to a shelter while trying to avoid COVID at the same time? So compound disasters as well, but then cascading disasters and a lot of those can happen in that recovery point of okay, so we've been impacted by a hurricane or a tropical system, but we now have flooding or we now have rivers rising which is we saw after Hurricane Debby that really impacts especially some of our resource dependent in our ag communities as well, especially those that have products or it's growing season, et cetera. So there are unique needs that some of these obviously these tropical systems impact very heavily, but then also other types of disasters as well, whether it be compound with the hurricane season and with tropical storms or cascading things that happen after these storms can come through as well. That impact

these areas for months. I think is one reason recovery can take so long in some of these areas.

Phillip Stokes

05:04

And, like you mentioned, there are resources and outputs that, once they're impacted by a major event like there's not a whole lot you can do right. There are some losses that take place and, yeah, it makes it especially hard for this ANR field and really a lot of your extension work is focused on preparing for, responding to and recovering from disasters, getting out ahead of some of this a little bit, and that's really what we're trying to do with this new course through the PIE Academy. So can you just share a little bit about what folks can expect in this course some of the resources and some of the research that we've synthesized in one place?

Angie Lindsey

05:45

Sure, I'd be happy to. Yeah. So a lot of this course again is talking about some of the unique needs of some of our ag and natural resource dependent and rural communities before, during and after disasters. And so thinking about the disaster management in that level of preparedness, mitigation, response and recovery, thinking about those different levels and how those different levels impact, as well as how can you best prepare, how can you best mitigate as an agricultural community or as a resource-dependent community. And collaboration is so important in disaster management. We've seen that with recovery and with response as well. But making sure that in blue skies, when we're not dealing with a storm coming nearby, that you have those partners and that collaboration established ahead of time and making sure that you have some of those things in place so the maybe response can be quicker and the recovery can be a less time as well.

06:51

In addition, I think one of the most important parts about this particular course is that we really talk about the lessons learned. These tropical systems are going to happen, disasters happen, we know. So, going into that, what are some of the lessons learned that you want to get? How can you take what you have learned from that experience Because every experience is a teacher. How can you take that experience and then turn it around for the next one, for the preparedness, thinking about an issues management model like where can you take that information from what you just experienced and looking at doing kind of the evaluation and what happened and what went well, what did not go well, what were some of our needs, and then therefore building up for the next one, for that preparedness, and I think that is really important in taking those lessons and learning, especially for some of our communities that really have specific needs. What did we learn and how do we use this information to better prepare for the next type of disaster?

Phillip Stokes

07:49

Yeah, thank you, Angie and Aly. I want to ask you, since you not only co-authored the course, but you were the lead instructional designer on it, Can you give us an overview of some of the course modules, the interactive features and just what people can expect from a user experience?

Aly Morrison

08:04

Absolutely so. The course has four modules plus a welcome and a review module, and the first module introduces a lot of the partners in disaster management and communication and their different roles. And then the course goes on in module two to explain those different phases and levels of disaster management and has a lot of focus on the preparedness aspect. And then, as you continue, module three is a lot about disaster response and then module four being about recovery strategies. So all the modules include a lot of different examples and take-home resources, including communication plans and management templates, and the course itself has different interactive elements like links and images to scroll through. So there's a lot of additional resources to explore, and we also included some short videos from our authors to check out and then, after each module, will be a short quiz to reinforce your learning. So I think overall, participants can expect a very engaging learning experience and they'll be able to take home a lot of different tools to get themselves and also their team through disasters.

Phillip Stokes

09:28

Yeah, I think those last two points are really important because, as someone who's familiar with the course as well, this is not like a boring lecture-based course. This is interactive. You can take it within what? Less than two hours, right? Yes, it moves pretty quick and it keeps your attention, and so I think we're excited to be able to once again share these resources. Aly, can you tell us where people can find the course and how registration works?

Aly Morrison

09:55

Yes, so our PIE Academy courses are offered through the UF/IFAS Extension Online Learning Catalog, but the easiest way to find them is to visit our PIE Academy page on our website at [piecenter.com slash pie dash academy](http://piecenter.com/slash/pie-dash-academy), and this page has information about PIE Academy in general and our courses offered, and then, if you scroll to the bottom, you can click the enroll button and this brings you to the extension online learning catalog, and registration is currently open. The course is asynchronous, so learners can complete the modules at their own pace.

Phillip Stokes

10:37

So, yeah, it's open. People can do it at any time. Are there any other last comments from either of you about the course or anything you'd like to share?

Angie Lindsey

10:46

I think the important thing about this course is and you've touched on it a little bit it's two hours, we're not lecturing you, and every community is different, every disaster is different, but I think this gives you some foundations as well as some ideas. Possibly that can spark other ideas that could possibly be applied or at least get you thinking about some of the specific needs and communities and the resource-dependent communities that folks may work in. I think a lot of it is, like you said, not the dry lecturing, but it gives you a little bit of background of you know what are some of the unique needs and what are some of the things that can be done to fill those needs. Basically and they may not all apply, but it may spark some ideas on the things that can be done in the communities that listeners work with.

Phillip Stokes

11:40

Great, great. Thank you both Dr Angie Lindsey and Aly Morrison, for sharing about this course on Science by the Slice. We will link everything in the show notes and, of course, you can always go to the PIE Center's website. Thanks so much again.

Ricky Telg

11:56

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