The Consortium for Resilient Gulf Communities (CRGC) prepares students to become leaders and experts in community resilience.

CRGC provides graduate and undergraduate students from the Gulf States with hands-on opportunities to work with trans-disciplinary research methods and best practices for addressing community disasters.

Who Are Our Students?

As of January 2017, we have 27 students hailing from the Louisiana State University, Mississippi State University, Pardee RAND Graduate School, Tulane University, and the University of South Alabama.

- 5 PhD students
- 14 Masters
- 8 Undergraduates

How Are Students Benefiting from CRGC’s Trans-disciplinary Commitment?

CRGC experts come from from diverse fields. Working directly with experts outside their own fields of study enhances students’ insights about disaster, recovery, and resilience, while improving their problem solving skills and passion for their work.

- 16 (60 percent) of these students are working with supervisors from an academic background different than their own.
- 3 of the 5 Ph.D. students are working with supervisors from different institutions, widening their knowledge base and their professional network.

What Have CRGC Students Been Doing?

Assessing the Economic Impact of Disasters: Jacqueline Fiore, a Ph.D. student in Tulane University’s Economic Analysis and Policy program, is working with RAND economists Drs. Shanti Nataraj and Craig Bond to study the Deepwater Horizon oil spill’s socioeconomic impacts on Gulf fisheries. Her work is highlighted here: http://gulfresearchinitiative.org/grad-student-fiore-investigates-oil-spill-impacts-gulf-economy-fisheries-resiliency/.

Collecting and Reviewing Scientific Literature: Undergraduate students in Tulane University’s Computer Science Department have been working with Dr. Brent Venable to review literature and to develop artificial intelligence methods to support a web portal for CRGC that matches stakeholders with relevant resilience resources. Graduate students at Tulane University’s Disaster Resilience Leadership Academy have worked with Drs. Ky Luu, Laura Haas, and Reggie Ferreira, to create an annotated bibliography on resilience literature and review hazard management planning documents.
Assessing and addressing the public health, social, and economic impacts of the 2010 Deepwater Horizon oil spill in the Gulf of Mexico region

This work was made possible by a grant from The Gulf of Mexico Research Initiative.
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Laying the foundation for the STRONG survey: The STRONG survey seeks to assess Gulf residents’ current health and wellbeing. Vanessa Parks, a Ph.D. student in LSU’s Department of Sociology completed a summer of training as a research associate at the RAND Corporation’s office in Washington, DC, under the direction of Dr. Rajeev Ramchand, RAND, Psychiatric Epidemiology. Vanessa was instrumental in laying the foundation for the design, administration, and analysis of STRONG.

Analyzing Data: Amanda Edelman, a Ph.D. student at the Pardee RAND Graduate School of Public Policy, is working with Drs. Melissa Finucane, Andy Parker, and Holly Scheib, to support data analysis for risk communication and evaluation studies.

Managing Data: Leah Drakeford, a Ph.D. student in LSU’s Department of Sociology, is the CRGC Data Manager. She is responsible for understanding GRIIDC data storage procedures and policies and is helping to ensure that all CRGC data is compliant.

Training Community Health Workers: Graduate students at the University of South Alabama’s Coastal Resource and Resiliency Center have worked with Drs. Keith Nicholls and Steven Picou to support the training and implementation of Community Health Workers in three coastal communities in Southeast Louisiana and Alabama.

CRGC Student Webinars Share the Value of Trans-disciplinary Studies

CRCG has offered a webinar series for graduate students since Fall 2016. The goal of this series is to highlight themes of trans-disciplinary interest and increase professionalization. The series is open to any GoMRI-funded student and can be found on the CRGC website. Upcoming webinar topics: “Communicating Your Research;” “Research Integration;” and “Applied Centers in Research Settings.” Dates to be announced.