



**M.P.S. in Political Management**

**PMGT 6401: Fundamentals of Political Management**

3 Credits

## Instructor Information

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### **Instructor**

Dr. Shaun P. Herness

Doctor of Philosophy, University of Florida  
Master of Arts, The George Washington University, GSPM  
Master of Arts, The Catholic University of America  
Bachelor of Arts, Georgetown University

### **Contact Information**

Phone Number: (321)-230-5470

E-mail Address: [sphgwu@gmail.com](mailto:sphgwu@gmail.com)

Most course related questions can be addressed via an e-mail to the instructor. However, if you would like to speak with the instructor directly please e-mail your request to schedule a mutually convenient time.

## Course Details

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### **Course Description and Overview**

“Politics and love are the only forms of constraint possible between free people. Politics is conflict become discussion, and it sets us a humane task on a human scale.”

----Bernard Crick, In Defense of Politics

Many people stay away from politics. It’s usually frustrating and occasionally brutal. But some who shun politics pay more attention to it than they like to admit.

As well they should. Politics affects everyone.

A few people want to do their best to make politics, and democratic politics in particular, work. That self-selected population includes you and your classmates. So welcome!

This course, and this program, will show you how to learn more about how political campaigns are organized, how campaigns connect (and fail to connect) to citizens and governments, and how you can plan your next best steps in the political world.

More formally, Fundamentals of Political Management introduces GSPM students to the field of political management: essential concepts, skills, methods, roles, and standards of conduct that political managers rely upon to advise decision-makers and carry out their own decisions.

### **Course Learning Objectives**

In this course, students will:

1. Understand basic types of campaigns, roles in them, and how they connect in politics.
2. Learn the principles of political influence in strategic political communication.
3. Develop capacity to recognize strategies in use in a political venue.
4. Quickly analyze campaign status and discern what's working and what's not working.
5. Learn basic communication forms in political management.

### **Program Learning Objectives**

A Political Management degree prepares students to win campaigns for elective office and policy positions, and to do so in a manner that benefits democracy and society as well as their organization and clients.

In completing the degree, students will be able to:

1. Assess a political environment, develop a strategy to achieve specified goals, and execute that strategy;
2. Draw upon a repertoire of effective campaign communication skills;
3. Collect, evaluate, and incorporate empirical evidence to shape and optimize the strategy;
4. Find, engage, and motivate the right leaders, professionals, and citizens;
5. Recognize and work through recurring political dilemmas in a manner that upholds ethical standards and professional conduct.

### **Graduate School Expectations**

Students enrolled in a graduate program should take their academic responsibilities seriously and be prepared to meet the following expectations:

1. Utilize effective time management skills so as to complete and submit their assignments on their required due dates and times.

2. Have attained a mastery of written communication skills including proper sentence structure, grammar, spelling, and word usage.
3. Understand how to properly format in-text citations and references for resources and information integrated into their written assignments.

### Course Evaluation

At the end of the semester, students will be given the opportunity to evaluate the course through GW's online course evaluation system. It is very important that you take the time to complete an evaluation. Students are also encouraged to provide feedback throughout the course of the semester by contacting:

#### Dr. Todd Belt

Director, Political Management Program  
[tbelt@gwu.edu](mailto:tbelt@gwu.edu) | 202-994-4363

#### Suzanne Farrand

Director of Academic Administration, GSPM  
[sfarrand@gwu.edu](mailto:sfarrand@gwu.edu) | 202-994-9309

### Required Text and Learning Materials

Students will need to purchase the following texts for this course:

- Burton, M. J., Miller, W. J., & Shea, D. M. (2015). *Campaign craft: The strategies, tactics, and art of political campaign management: The strategies, tactics, and art of political campaign management*. ABC-CLIO.
- Vance, S. (2012). *The influence game: 50 insider tactics from the Washington DC lobbying world that will get you to yes*. John Wiley & Sons.

Additional readings will be made available on Blackboard in the appropriate week folder. See the Course Schedule below for more information.

### Optional Supplemental Text and Learning Materials

Supplemental texts will be made available on Blackboard.

### Evaluation and Grading

This course will include the following types of assessment:

- **Discussions** – In each week (except for Week 5), you will post to a discussion forum in Blackboard answering a specific prompt by 3:00 AM eastern time each Thursday. You will

need to read your classmates’ posts and respond to at least two (2) posts by 3:00 AM eastern time each Saturday. Discussions will account for 22.5% of your total grade for this course (see breakdown below). **Please see the Discussion Rubric on Blackboard for specific grading expectations.**

- **Assignments** – Most assignments will be due at the end of each week by 3:00 AM eastern time on Monday. It is your responsibility to complete assignments on time, so please pay attention to each assignment’s due date in Blackboard, the Discussion and Assignment Calendar, and the Course Schedule below. Assignments are worth 77.5% of your total grade for this course (see breakdown below). **Please see the Assignment Rubric on Blackboard for specific grading expectations.**

Assessments will contribute toward the student’s grade based on the following chart:

<b>Assignment Category</b>	<b>Points</b>	<b>Weight</b>
<b>Discussions</b>	<b>225 total</b>	<b>22.5% total</b>
- Discussions 1.2; 2.1; 3.1; 4.1; 6.1; 7.1; 8.1; 9.1; and 10.1	25 each	2.5% each
<b>Assignments</b>	<b>775 total</b>	<b>77.5% total</b>
- Assignment 1.1: Constitutional Updates, Part 1: Poll	5	0.5%
- Assignments 1.2; 2.1; 3.1; 4.1; 6.1; 7.1; 9.1; and 10.1	75 each	7.5% each
- Assignment 5.1: Political Poll Analysis	100	10%
- Assignment 8.1: 2020 Campaign Ad Analysis Part 1	10	1%
- Assignment 8.2: Analysis of a Presidential Debate	60	6%
<b>Total</b>	<b>1000</b>	<b>100%</b>

### Late Submission Policy: Discussion Questions

Many learning activities require sharing your opinions with your classmates through discussion question responses and other activities. It is, therefore, very important that you, as well as your classmates, submit your discussion question responses on a timely basis. Timely submission by all will result in each of you being able to comment on each other's responses. **Each discussion question initial post is worth 15 points and each of the two (2) required responses to your fellow students’ responses to the discussion questions is worth 5 points each.** Failure to respond to a discussion question by the required deadline will result in a loss of 15 points for that discussion question. However, even if you should lose those points you may earn the remaining 10 points by responding to other students’ discussion question initial posts and students’ response posts. Failure to post your responses to other students’ discussion question initial posts and responses by the required deadline will result in the loss of 5 points for each of the response posts not posted on time. There is no extension of time allowed or granted for making discussion question initial and response posts.

### Late Submission Policy: Written Exercises

Students should be prepared to engage effective time management skills in order to meet deadlines for completion and submission of their written assignments. From time-to-time mitigating circumstances arise that may prevent a student from submitting their assignment by its due date. **In these instances, students must contact the instructor (or section facilitator if applicable) as soon as possible and discuss their particular situation. This must occur *prior to the assignment due date*.** It is at the discretion of the instructor as to the appropriateness of granting an extension to complete a written assignment. There will be no extensions granted for assignments that are due on the final day of the course. Please plan accordingly. In addition, assignments submitted after the conclusion of the course will not be accepted for evaluation, grading, and inclusion in your final grade.

**If a student should submit a written assignment after the due date and time without first requesting an extension from the instructor, then the following penalties will be assessed:**

1. 10 points will be deducted for each day the assignment is late.
2. After 3 days from the stated due date, the submission tab for that assignment will be locked. You will be unable to submit the assignment and will receive a grade of zero.
3. Written assignments due on the final day of the course that are submitted late will receive a grade of zero.

### Make-up and Extra Credit Assignments

Make-up and extra-credit assignments will not be offered in this course. In order to avoid unnecessary loss of earned points please make every effort to effectively manage your time so as to meet the required discussion posting and assignment submission deadlines.

### Tentative Course Schedule

The instructor reserves the right to alter course content and/or adjust the pace to accommodate class progress. Students are responsible for keeping up with all adjustments to the course calendar. Final dates and details will be found on the Blackboard course site.

Week	Topic	Readings	Lessons	Assignments
1	Political Strategy: Lessons from the Founders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maier, P. (2010). <i>Ratification: the people debate the Constitution, 1787-1788</i>. Simon and Schuster. pp. 440–468.</li> <li>• McDonald, F. (1979). <i>E Pluribus Unum: The formation of the American Republic, 1776–1790</i>. Boston,</li> </ul>	<p>Course Introduction</p> <p>Lesson 1.1: Ratification of the Constitution and the Bill of Rights</p> <p>Lesson 1.2: Strategic Political Communication: A Few Lessons from the Founders</p>	<p>Discussion 1.1: Self-Introduction</p> <p>Discussion 1.2: Campaign Strategies</p> <p>Assignment 1.1: Constitutional Updates, Part 1: Poll</p> <p>Assignment 1.2: Constitutional Updates, Part 2: Analysis</p>

Week	Topic	Readings	Lessons	Assignments
		<p>MA: Houghton Mifflin Company, pp. 209–236.</p>		
2	<p>Political Communication: Part 1 Cognitive Heuristics</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Byron, A. &amp; Wilson, C. (2010, April 25). <a href="#">Heuristics: Shortcuts voters use to decide between candidates.</a> Campaigns and Elections Magazine.</li> <li>• Hyman, I. (2016, Sep 27). <a href="#">President Trump? How a cognitive heuristic could lead to Trump’s election.</a> Psychology Today.</li> <li>• Kahneman, D. (2011). Thinking, fast and slow. New York, NY: Farrar, Straus and Giroux. pp. 19–30, 79–88, and 97–104</li> <li>• Skora, L. (2016, Oct 12). <a href="#">Trump’s unlikely ally – Recognition heuristic.</a> The Hunting Dynasty.</li> </ul>	<p>Lesson 2.1: Political Decision Making and the Theory of Cognitive Heuristics</p>	<p>Discussion 2.1: Cognitive Heuristics</p> <p>Assignment 2.1: Heuristic Appeals</p>
3	<p>Political Communication: Part 2, Story Telling &amp; Speech Modules</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Burton, M. J., Miller, W. J., &amp; Shea, D. M. (2015). Campaign Craft. Read Part III: Contact.</li> </ul>	<p>Lesson 3.1: Anatomy of a Speech Module</p> <p>Lesson 3.2: Story Telling</p>	<p>Discussion 3.1: Storytelling in Political Campaign Ads</p> <p>Assignment 3.1: Speech Modules</p>
4	<p>Political Communication: Part 3, Technology &amp; Social Media</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• (2013). Inside the Cave: An In-Depth Look at the Digital, Technology, and Analytics Operations of</li> </ul>	<p>Lesson 4.1: Media 101</p> <p>Lesson 4.2: Use of Heuristics and Infographics</p> <p>Guest Lecture Video –</p>	<p>Discussion 4.1: Considering “Old” and “New” Campaign Technologies</p> <p>Assignment 4.1: Infographic and Use of</p>

Week	Topic	Readings	Lessons	Assignments
		<p>Obama for America. Engage Research.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Issenberg, Sasha. (2012, December). <a href="#">How Obama's Team Used Big Data to Rally Voters</a>. MIT Technology Review.</li> <li>• Kapko, Matt. (2016). Twitter's impact on 2016 presidential election is unmistakable. CIO.</li> <li>• Prodan, Diana. (2016, December 6). <a href="#">4 Ways Social Media May Have Influenced the 2016 Presidential Election [Blog Post]</a>. Advance Ohio Blog.</li> </ul>	<p>Political Spokesperson Melanie Lawhorn</p>	<p>Heuristics in Social Media Memo</p>
5	<p>Political Strategy: Survey Research</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• (2017). <a href="#">Polling Fundamentals - Glossary of Terms</a>. Roper Center.</li> </ul>	<p>Lesson 5.1: How to Use a Political Poll</p>	<p>Assignment 5.1: Political Poll Analysis</p>
6	<p>Election &amp; Advocacy Campaigns: Introduction</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Burton, M. J., Miller, W. J., &amp; Shea, D. M. (2015). Campaign Craft. Read Parts I and II: Campaign Preliminaries and Strategic Thinking.</li> </ul>	<p>Lesson 6.1: Campaign for Elective Office</p> <p>Lesson 6.2: Advocacy Campaigns and Government Affairs Offices</p> <p>Guest Lecture Video – Elected Official Lesley Lopez</p>	<p>Discussion 6.1: Evaluating Campaign Strategies</p> <p>Assignment 6.1: Mock Client Opposition Memo and Memo</p>
7	<p>Election &amp; Advocacy Campaigns: Evidence-Based Decision-Making</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Analysis of Nevada First State Senate Primary. Lincoln Park Strategies</li> <li>• Campbell, C. C., Ezra, M., Herrnson, P. S., &amp; Medvic, S. K. (2005). Guide to political campaigns in America.</li> </ul>	<p>Lesson 7.1: Using Polling Data for Strategy Development</p> <p>Lesson 7.2: Polling: A Timeline</p>	<p>Discussion 7.1: Strategic Message Direct Mail Program</p> <p>Assignment 7.1: Strategic Message Direct Mail Program Memo</p>

Week	Topic	Readings	Lessons	Assignments
		<p>Washington, D.C.: CQ Press.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Dulio, D.A. Chapter 14: Strategic and tactical decisions in campaigns.</li> <li>- Medvic, S.K. Chapter 10: Campaign organization and political consultants.</li> <li>• United States Postal Service and the AAPC White Paper, "Political Mail and Millennials."</li> </ul>		
8	Deception & Image in Politics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Benedetto, R. (2004, Sep 17). Who's more likable, Bush or Kerry?. USATODAY.</li> <li>• Jones, J. (2020, Oct 9). <a href="#">Americans View Biden as Likable, Honest; Trump, as Strong</a>. Gallup.</li> <li>• Sharlamanov, K., &amp; Javanoski, A. (2014). The Role of Image in the Political Campaigns. International Journal of Scientific &amp; Engineering Research, 5(6), 599-603).</li> </ul>	<p>Lesson 8.1: Art of Political War</p> <p>Lesson 8.2: What is an Ad Segment?</p>	<p>Assignment 8.1: 2020 Campaign Ad Analysis, Part 1</p> <p>Discussion 8.1: 2020 Campaign Ad Analysis, Part 2</p> <p>Assignment 8.2: Analysis of a Presidential Debate</p>
9	Political Meetings & Engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Vance, S. (2012). The Influence Game. Chapters 1-6.</li> </ul>	Lesson 9.1: The Art of Persuasion & Political Meetings	Discussion 9.1: Political Meeting Analysis

Week	Topic	Readings	Lessons	Assignments
			Lesson 9.2: Lobbying Decision-Makers on Policy Matters  Guest Lecture Video – Lobbyist Miguel Mendoza	Assignment 9.1: Mock Client Media Advisory and Memo Assignment
10	What Political Professionals Do	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Vance, S. (2012). The Influence Game. Chapters 7-10.</li> </ul>	Lesson 10.1: Politics as a Vocation  Lesson 10.2: Perils and Rewards of Political Involvement  Guest Lecture Videos – Theory vs. Reality: A Roundtable Discussion  10 Political Management Career Rules to Remember	Discussion 10.1: Reflection: Campaign Strategies Revisited  Assignment 10.1: Mock Client Strategy Memo Assignment

## Expectations and Responsibilities

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### Blackboard Site

A Blackboard course site has been set up for this course. Each student is expected to check the site regularly throughout the semester to review weekly course content, view announcements, and submit assignments. Students can access the course site through [GWU Blackboard](#). Support for Blackboard is available at 202-994-4948 or the [IT Blackboard web page](#). Please note that your access to this course on Blackboard will continue for one month after the course ends. If you wish to keep any work or materials, you must download or save them before the course closes.

### Technology Requirements

It is your responsibility to ensure that you have the required technology to fully participate in this course. The minimum technology requirements for learning online at GW are outlined on the [Technical Requirements and Support](#) web page.

If you have any problems with the technology in this course, you can seek technological support from GW in a variety of ways, outlined on the [IT Support](#) website.

GW is committed to providing an inclusive and welcoming environment that is accessible for everyone, including people with disabilities.

The following links provide more information about the accessibility of technologies that may be used in this course:

- [Blackboard accessibility](#)
- [Microsoft Office accessibility](#)

- [Adobe accessibility](#)
- [Vimeo accessibility](#)
- [YouTube accessibility](#)
- [VoiceThread accessibility](#)
- [Zoom accessibility](#)
- [Webex accessibility](#)

If you have any issues regarding the accessibility of the technology used in this course, please contact your instructor. You may also explore the [Disability Support Services](#) website.

## Technology Expectations

Regarding technology skills, you should be able to:

- Create documents and presentation slides
- Use a webcam and microphone
- Use a digital camera or scanner
- Upload files, including recordings and images
- Be open to learning and registering for new technologies
- Be flexible when technological glitches happen (which is a given)
- Seek technological help when necessary by contacting the Division of Information Technology

If you have any problems with the technology expectations in this course, please contact your instructor.

## Getting Started

Everything you need to get started in the course is contained within the Blackboard course site. You can use the menu links on the left side panel to view different components. The content for each learning unit is divided into folders—one for each week. More unit folders will unlock as weeks in the course progress.

## Participation Policy

All students are expected to learn and contribute by being a positive participant in discussions, activities, presentations, and assignments. If you have an unavoidable conflict or become ill, in a way that will affect your participation in a given week, please notify your instructor immediately.

## Communication & Feedback

Important announcements will be posted periodically via Blackboard's announcement feature throughout the course. The instructor will strive to reply to student questions within 24 hours and provide feedback for assignments within a week after the due date.

## Grading Scale

Following is the grade scale for all CPS classes:

Grade	Range	Grade Standard
A	94-100	Your work is outstanding and ready for submission in a professional environment. Your material, effort, research, and writing demonstrate superior work.
A-	90-93	Represents solid work with minor errors. Overall, excellent work.
B+	87-89	Very good. Represents well-written material, research, and presentation, but needs some minor work.
B	83-86	Good work, but needs reworking and more effort.
B-	80-82	You've completed the assignment, but you are not meeting all of the requirements.
C+	77-79	Needs improvement in content and in effort. Shows some motivation and concern.
C	73-76	Needs reworking, improved effort, and additional research. Shows minimal motivation and concern.
C-	70-72 (lowest grade to pass)	Poor performance. Major errors, too many misspellings, problems with accuracy, etc.
F	Below 70	Unacceptable performance, or inability to submit the assignment.

## Netiquette

Please observe the following rules of netiquette for communicating online:

- Remain professional, respectful, and courteous at all times.
- Remember that a real human being wrote each post and will read what you write in response. It is easy to misinterpret discussion posts. Let's give the benefit of the doubt.
- If you have a strong opinion on a topic, it is acceptable to express it as long as it is not phrased as an attack. Please be gracious with differing opinions.
- When upset, wait a day or two prior to posting. Messages posted (or emailed) in anger are often regretted later.
- Proofread and use the spell check tool when you type a post. It makes the post easier to read and helps your readers understand what you are saying.

Your instructor reserves the right to delete any post that is deemed inappropriate for the discussion forum, blog, or wiki without prior notification to the student. This includes any post containing language that is offensive, rude, profane, racist, or hateful. Posts that are seriously off-topic or serve no purpose other than to vent frustration will also be removed.

## Credit Hour Policy

For this **10-week, 3-credit course** there will be an average of **9-10 hours** of combined direct instruction and independent learning per week. More information about GWU's credit hour policy can be found at [the Office of the Provost's Policies](#) web page (Under: Assignment of Credit Hour Policy).

## University Policies & Services

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### Academic Integrity

Academic Integrity is an integral part of the educational process, and GW takes these matters very seriously. Violations of academic integrity occur when students fail to cite research sources properly, engage in unauthorized collaboration, falsify data, and in other ways outlined in the Code of Academic Integrity. Students accused of academic integrity violations should contact the Office of Student Rights and Responsibilities (SRR) to learn more about their rights and options in the process. Outcomes can range from failure of assignment to expulsion from the university, including a transcript notation. For more information, please refer to the [Office of Academic Integrity website](#), email ([rights@gwu.edu](mailto:rights@gwu.edu)), or call (202-994-6757).

### **Copyright Statement**

Unless explicitly allowed by the instructor, course materials, class discussions, and examinations are created for and expected to be used by class participants only. The recording and rebroadcasting of such material, by any means, is forbidden.

The Copyright Act (17 U.S.C. § 10) governs the rights attributed to owners of copyrighted work. Under certain circumstances, educational institutions may provide copies of copyrighted works to students. The copies may not be copied nor used for any other purpose besides private study, scholarship, or research. Users should not provide electronic copies of any materials provided on this course's Blackboard site to unauthorized users. If a user fails to comply with Fair Use restrictions, he/she may be held liable for copyright infringement. No further transmission or electronic distribution is permitted.

### **Use of Electronic Course Materials and Class Recordings**

Students are encouraged to use electronic course materials, including recorded class sessions, for private personal use in connection with their academic program of study. Electronic course materials and recorded class sessions should not be shared or used for non-course related purposes unless express permission has been granted by the instructor. Students who impermissibly share any electronic course materials are subject to discipline under the Student Code of Conduct. Please contact the instructor if you have questions regarding what constitutes permissible or impermissible use of electronic course materials and/or recorded class sessions. Please contact [Disability Support Services](#) if you need additional accommodations for accessing electronic course materials.

### **University Policy on Observance of Religious Holidays**

Students must notify faculty as early as possible, but no later than three weeks prior to the absence, of their intention to be absent from class on their day(s) of religious observance. If the holiday falls in the first three weeks of class, the student must inform the faculty within the first week of the semester that they are enrolled in the course.

To the greatest extent possible, faculty must continue to extend to these students the courtesy of absence without penalty on such occasions, including permission to make up examinations. Faculty who intend to observe a religious holiday must arrange at the beginning of the semester to reschedule missed classes or to make other provisions for their course-related activities. For the full text of the policy and calendar of religious holidays, please see [the Office of the Provost's Policies](#) web page (Religious Holidays document).

### **Disability Support Services (DSS)**

Any student who may need an accommodation based on the potential impact of a disability should contact Disability Support Services. They can be contacted by phone at 202-994-8250 or in person at Rome Hall, 801 22nd Street, NW, Suite 102, to establish eligibility and to coordinate reasonable accommodations. For additional information visit the [Disability Support Services](#) website.

### **Counseling and Psychological Services**

GW's Colonial Health Center offers counseling and psychological services, supporting mental health and personal development by collaborating directly with students to overcome challenges and difficulties that may interfere with academic, emotional, and personal success. For additional information call 202-994-5300 or visit the [Counseling and Psychological Services](#) website.

### **The Writing Center**

The Writing Center is located in Gelman Library at 2130 H St NW in Suite 221 and they can be reached at 202-994-3765 or via email at [gwriter@gwu.edu](mailto:gwriter@gwu.edu). You can [schedule writing center appointments](#), both in-person or by phone, in advance. Daytime and evening hours are available. Check for this semester's hours at the [writing center contact page](#). The Writing Center does offer Summer hours.

### **GWU Libraries**

Off campus students have full access to all of the research resources, services, and assistance that the Library offers. The GW community has access to 500+ online subscription databases and to millions of items, electronic and print, in the library catalog. Off-campus students even have additional privileges because the Library will FedEx print materials to your home. For more information visit the [GW Libraries](#) homepage.

Call the Ask Us desk at 202-994-6048 or [contact someone at the library](#) to answer any questions. For questions beyond “Do you have this book/article?” and “How do I login?” use the website mentioned to make a research consultation appointment with a librarian. Librarians are there to guide students through any aspect of the research process, from selecting and narrowing a topic, crafting a research strategy to citation management.

### **Safety and Security**

- In an emergency: call GWPD at 202-994-6111 or call 911
- For situation-specific actions: review the [Emergency Response Handbook](#)
- In an active violence situation: [Get Out, Hide Out or Take Out](#)
- Stay informed: review [notification tools for staying informed during emergency and safety related situations](#)