SUMMARY
The Voting Rights Act (VRA) is one of the most significant and controversial acts in American history. We will examine the history of voting rights in America, the specific environment that led to its introduction, the legislative process, executive implementation, and the political ramifications and subsequent state government and court decisions.

CONTACT INFORMATION
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CLASS INFORMATION:
Lecture: Thursdays 5pm - 7:50 pm
Location: CENTR 105
Final: Thursday, March 23 7:00pm –9:59pm
Location: TBD
Office Hours: Professor Fletcher: Thursday 2:00 to 4:00
To attend office hours, please reserve a time on the office hours doodle schedule: http://doodle.com/poll/4mmheppxinbcwe3
Please reserve only one 15-minute timeslot. If you reserve a time and will be unable to use it please remove your reservation so that another student can access that time.

The slides for each class will be posted on course TED site and each lecture will be podcast*. The course TED site will also include course announcements, volunteer/internship opportunities, study guides, and any other class materials.

*Podcasting will be done provided the system works properly and many guest speakers opt not to podcast their discussion. There should be no expectation or guarantee lectures or presentations will be podcast.

READING:
Required:
COURSE ASSIGNMENTS:
› 10% Assignment #1 DUE: Wednesday, January 25th 5:00 PM
› 15% Assignment #2 DUE: Wednesday, February 15th 5:00 PM
› 20% Assignment #3 DUE: Wednesday, March 15th 5:00 PM
› 50% Final DUE: Thursday, March 23rd 7:00pm –10:00pm
› 5% Class Participation

Assignment #1:
Biographical paper about a “hero” and a “villain” from the movie Selma
Details will be presented during second class—Thursday, January 19th

Assignment #2:
Write the pros and cons of one major election reform idea
Details to be provided Thursday, February 9th

Assignment #3:
Write an analysis of five Supreme Court decision that impacted voting rights in America
Details to be provided Thursday, March 2nd

All assignments will be graded on both substance and style. Each student must do his or her own work, adhering to university regulations prohibiting plagiarism and cheating.

Final Exam
The final will take place online Thursday, March 23rd from 7:00pm to 10:00pm. The final will be posted on the course ted site at 7:00PM and will be due via Turn It In no later than 10:00pm. 5% points will be deducted for every 15 minutes the final is not submitted. No final exams will be accepted after 10:30pm. The final is open book, open device and open notes. Students can complete the final from any location they desire, but will need to arrange a computer and Internet connection. Students should prepare as the final exam will covering all lectures, assigned readings, assignments and content of guest speakers. For students who have a documented finals conflict with another course we will offer an alternative final exam time. The final will be comprehensive of the materials presented and assigned readings for the entire course.

Students will be required to use Turnitin to submit all written assignments. Turnitin is an Internet-based plagiarism prevention service, which will be used to ensure academic integrity. The portal can be accessed directly through the course website. Hard copies of assignments will not be accepted. Professor Fletcher and the Teaching Assistants will provide additional information on the proper way to upload these assignments in subsequent class meetings.

Class Participation
Professor Fletcher will occasionally have a class (usually when guest speakers are present) where attendance will be checked and credit given for attendance and participation. These classes will be announced in advance.

Extra Credit
During the course, opportunities to intern or volunteer with a government office or political campaign will be made available to students. Any student who does eight hours of documented work for an elected official, government office, political candidate or organization that advocates for public policy/political change will have one point added to the final course score. (If your midterm, writing project, class participation, and final give you 89, your final score for the course will be 90).
While opportunities will be provided in class, students are not bound to only those presented through the course. Students should feel free to contact officials or organizations and request volunteer opportunities. However, the hours worked must be documented by date and time, along with a signed letter by a representative from that organization. Additionally, a written explanation of the work done and what was learned must be submitted. This summary and signed hours form MUST be submitted before the final exam begins to be eligible for extra credit.

Again, for the extra point to be counted, students must submit a written memo that includes:
--Name of official or organization
--Total hours worked (minimum of 8, but no maximum)
--Nature of work performed
--Signature and title by verifying person at office of official or organization
--Students take on volunteer/internship. This can be attached separately or below the signature of person verifying if student would rather them not see overall comments. But this section should include what was learned, observed, overall feelings and anything that relates back to the class.

NO SUBMISSIONS WILL BE ACCEPTED ONCE THE FINAL EXAM BEGINS.

CLASS MEETINGS:
Each class meeting will consist of a lecture and then a discussion section where a particular question related to the lecture will be addressed in a group discussion.

Occasionally, we will have guest speakers. You may be tested on the content covered in their lectures and question and answers. While their content may or may not be on the test, you should learn from their presentation and work in specific examples cited by guests in your short answer, essays and class assignments to demonstrate an understanding of the practical realities of topics presented. Also use guest speakers as your chance to ask relevant questions about the Voting Rights Act.

OFFICE HOURS:
Office hours will vary week by week but will generally be Thursdays from 2 to 4pm. During each class, Professor Fletcher’s office hours for the following week will be announced. A doodle schedule will be posted on the course TED site each week. Please reserve a 15 minute block on this doodle during the weekly office hours. The TAs will also conduct weekly office hours and make those times and location available. It is suggested you email TAs if you plan to attend their office hours so they can best be prepared to answer your questions.

GRADE CHANGES AND EXTENSIONS:
All requests for grade changes must be made in writing, to Professor Fletcher, within a week of receiving the graded assignment. Requests must be typed and double-spaced and provide an explanation for the request and justification. Please note that a Professor review of a grade assigned by a TA may result in either a higher or lower grade (or grade could stay the same). There are no re-grades for the final.

Extensions on assignments and make-up exams will only be granted in cases of documented illness or family medical emergencies. Please contact Professor Fletcher as soon as possible if you need to request one. Appropriate contact for Professor is email—not a tweet, facebook message, or note slipped under his office door.

Note: We will NOT grant any extensions because stolen or damaged computers. This does happen, so you should be in the habit of using the free DropBox program to automatically back up all of your work on the cloud whenever you save it so that you never lose it.
LATE ASSIGNMENTS:
--3% if not submitted by the time class begins but submitted by end of that day
--5% for the next calendar day
--5% for each business day after that
--Students will max out at a 20% reduction
--No papers will be accepted once the final exam begins!
*I have never seen a paper improve at a rate greater than the one at which you lose points

ACCOMODATIONS:
Students requesting accommodations for this course due to a disability must provide a current Authorization for Accommodation (AFA) letter issued by the Office for Students with Disabilities (OSD) which is located in University Center 202 behind Center Hall. Students are required to present their AFA letters to Faculty (please make arrangements to contact me privately) and to the OSD Liaison in the department in advance so that accommodations may be arranged.
Contact the OSD for further information:
858.534.4382 (phone)
osd@ucsd.edu
http://disabilities.ucsd.edu/

Course Schedule

1. Thursday January 12th
Course Introduction/Class Overview
Reading:
New York Times Magazine, “A Dream Undone,” Inside the 50-year campaign to roll back the Voting Rights Act

2. Thursday, January 19th: Selma Screening, Discussion and Assignment #1
Special screening: Selma
Details for Assignment #1 provided
(Assignment #1 Due on Wednesday, January 25th at 5:00PM)

3. Thursday, January 26th: 1865-1894 Post Civil War Progress in Voting Rights
Reading:
Chapter 1: Wi Wang, “Building African American Voting Rights in the Nineteenth Century” in The Voting Rights Act
Documents available online or in The Voting Rights Act text:
Reconstruction Act, 1867-1868
Fourteenth Amendment to the US Constitution July 9, 1868
Fifteenth Amendment to the US Constitution, February 3, 1870
Enforcement Act, May 31, 1870
Slaughterhouse Cases 1873  (https://supreme.justia.com/cases/federal/us/83/36/case.html)
Brief of the United States in United States v. Cruikshank, 1875
United States v. Cruikshank, Decided March 27, 1876
Ex Parte Yarbrough, Decided March 3, 1884

   Special Guest California Secretary of State Alex Padilla
   *This class is mandatory attendance.


5. Thursday, February 9th 1894-1964 A Movement stopped and then re-born: Setting the State for the Voting Rights Act

(Assignment #2 details provided)
Reading:

Documents available online or in The Voting Rights Act text:
Speech of Hon. George H. White of North Carolina in the U.S. House of Representatives, January 29, 1901
Alabama Constitution, Ratified November 28, 1901
Supreme Court Decisions Upholding Disenfranchisement: Williams v. Mississippi, Giles v. Harris, and James v. Bowman, 1898-1903
Inaugural Address of President William Howard Taft, March 4, 1909
Guinn v. United States, Decided June 21, 1915
Response to 19th Amendment: “Negro Women in South Hasten to Register Names,” St. Louis Dispatch, October 10, 1920
Letters to the NAACP about Voter Registration, 1936-1939
Smith v. Allwright, Decided April 3, 1944
To Secure These Rights: The Report of the President’s Committee on Civil Rights, October 29, 1947
The Negro Voter in the South, September 1957
Civil Rights Act of 1957 and 1960
Testimony of Rev. John Scott before the United States Commission on Civil Rights, September 27, 1960
Robert Moses Memoir on the Black Voter Registration Campaign in Mississippi: “Mississippi: 1961-1962”

(Assignment #2 DUE Wednesday, February 15th at 5:00PM)

6. **Thursday, February 16th: 1965—The Voting Rights Act**

Reading:
Chapter 5: Stephen Tuck, “Making the Voting Rights Act” in *The Voting Rights Act*

Documents available online or in *The Voting Rights Act* text:
President Lyndon B. Johnson’s Special Message to Congress: “The American Promise,” March 15, 1965
Speech by Rev. Martin Luther King Jr: “Our God is Marching On,” March 25, 1965
Joint Statement of the Senate Judiciary Committee Supporting Adoption of the Voting Rights Act, April 21, 1965
Voting Rights Act, August 6, 1965


Documents available online or in *The Voting Rights Act* text:
Implementation of the Voting Rights Act: Selections from the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights and the Lawyers Constitutional Defense Committee
South Carolina v. Katzenbach, Decided March 7, 1966
Memo from Dolly Hamby to Sen. Strom Thurmond, R-SC about Appeals to Race in South Carolina Elections, November 6, 1970
Voting Rights Act Extension, June 22, 1970
Congressional Testimony of Assistant Attorney General for Civil Rights J. Stanley Pottinger on the 1975 Extension of the Voting Rights Act, March 5, 1975
Voting Rights Act Extension, August 6, 1975
Beer v. United States, Decided March 30, 1976
Voting Rights Act Extension, June 29, 1982

(Assignment #3 details provided)

8. **Thursday, March 2nd: (1982-2013) Extensions of Voting Rights Act and Recent Actions**

Reading:

Documents available online or in *The Voting Rights Act* text:
Voting Rights Language Assistance Act and Its Enforcement, 1992-2004
Shaw v. Reno, Decided June 28, 1993
Reno v. Bossier Parish School Board, Decided January 24, 2000
Georgia v. Ashcroft, Decided June 26, 2003
United States v. Charleston County, South Carolina, Decided April 29, 2004
Table on Geographic Extension of the Voting Rights Act, 2004
Complaint against Georgia Photo ID Amendment, September 19, 2005

9. Thursday, March 9th: Shelby v. Holder and aftermath
SHELBY COUNTY, ALABAMA v. HOLDER, ATTORNEY GENERAL, ET AL.
http://www.supremecourt.gov/opinions/12pdf/12-96_6k47.pdf

Reading:

(Assignment #3 DUE Wednesday, March 15th 5:00PM)

Final Exam: Thursday, March 23rd