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
Professor Nathan Fletcher
Email: nfletcher@ucsd.edu
Office: SSB 321

Teaching Assistants:
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CLASS INFORMATION:
Lecture:     Monday 6pm - 8:50 pm
Location:    HSS 1330
Final:       Wednesday, March 18th 7:00pm -9:59pm
Location:    Online

TA office hours:
Bertrand Wilden
Wednesday, Noon to 2:00PM
SSB 347

Professor Fletcher Office Hours:
Professor Fletcher: Mondays 4:00 to 5:45pm
SSB 321
To attend office hours, please reserve a time on the office hours doodle schedule: CLICK HERE

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 and posting of slides 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 or slides posted.
READING:
Required:

COURSE ASSIGNMENTS:
› 10% Assignment #1 DUE by: Sunday, January 26th at 5:00 PM
› 20% Assignment #2 DUE by: Sunday, February 9th at 5:00 PM
› 20% Assignment #3 DUE by: Sunday, March 8th at 5:00 PM
› 50% Final Wednesday, March 18th, 7:00pm – 10:00pm

Assignment #1:
Biographical paper about a “hero” and a “villain” from the movie Selma
Details will be posted by start of week 2.

Assignment #2:
Write the pros and cons of one major election reform idea
Details to be provided start of week 4.

Assignment #3:
Write an analysis of five Supreme Court decision that impacted voting rights in America
Details to be provided start of week 7.

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 Wednesday, March 20th from 7:00pm to 10:00pm. The final will be posted on the course triton ed 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 11:00pm.

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 reliable 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. This is not a group assignment—each student must do their own work and must cite any materials that is not your own original thoughts.

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.
**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 (digital signature is ok)
--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.

*Professor Fletcher is currently a local elected official in San Diego. Current students are NOT permitted to volunteer or work in his official office or his political campaigns in any capacity.*

**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 and voting rights in general.

**OFFICE HOURS:**

Office hours may vary week by week but will generally be Monday from 2 to 4pm. Students can sign up for office hours via the following link: [https://doodle.com/meetme/qc/DqidmYw1Zc](https://doodle.com/meetme/qc/DqidmYw1Zc)

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. Monday, January 6th
Course Introduction/Class Overview
Reading:

2. Monday, January 13th
(Details on Assignment #1 provided)
1776-1890 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*
Chapter 1: Gary May, “Planting the First Seed” in *Bending Towards Justice: The Voting Rights Act and the Transformation of American Democracy.*

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

3. **Monday, January 20th**

NO CLASS—MLK Holiday

*(Assignment #1 due by Sunday, January 26th at 5:00PM)*

4. **Monday, January 27th**

*(Assignment #2 details provided)*

1894-1964 A Movement stopped and then re-born/Setting the State for the Voting Rights Act

Reading:
Chapter 3: Michael Klarman, “The Supreme Court and Black Disenfranchisement” in *The Voting Rights Act.*
Chapter 8: Pei-te Lien, “The Voting Rights Act and Its Implications for Three Nonblack Minorities” in *The Voting Rights Act.*
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
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”

4. **Monday, February 3rd**

1965—1965 and 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

(Assignment #2 Due, Sunday, February 9th at 5pm)

5. **Monday, February 10th**


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
6. **Monday, February 17th**

NO CLASS--President's Day Holiday

7. **Monday, February 24th**

*(Assignment #3 details provided)*

(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
- *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

8. **Monday, March 2nd**

*Shelby v Holder* and Case Studies of Texas and California (Case studies in a post Shelby world)

*SHELBY COUNTY, ALABAMA v. HOLDER, ATTORNEY GENERAL, ET AL.*
http://www.supremecourt.gov/opinions/12pdf/12-96_6k47.pdf

*(Assignment #3 DUE Sunday, March 8th at 5:00PM)*

9. **Monday, March 9th**

RECAP: Panel discussion surrounding voting rights


Reading:

Final Exam: **Wednesday, March 18th** at 7:00PM