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MLK Day Teach-In: "Voting Rights and Social Justice"

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MLK Day Teach-In: “Voting Rights and Social Justice”

Jan. 8, 2015

Voting rights and social justice will be the theme of discussion at the annual Martin Luther King, Jr. Day Teach-In Jan. 19 at Illinois Wesleyan University's Hansen Student Center. The Action Research Center (ARC) is sponsoring the event, which is free and open to the public.

The program will include three separate panels following the theme of “Voting Rights and Social Justice” and feature table discussion and dialogue with group participants.

The 1 p.m. panel will commemorate the 50th anniversary of the Voting Rights Act of 1965, and features a keynote address by Vernon Burton, creativity professor of humanities at Clemson University and professor emeritus of history at the University of Illinois. Burton's address is “The Voting Rights Act of 1965 in Historical Context.”

Ed Yohnka, director of communications and public policy at the American Civil Liberties Union of Illinois, will deliver a lecture on “Defending Voting Rights after *Shelby County*” at the 2 p.m. panel. In the landmark *Shelby County v. Holder* (2013), the Supreme Court held that Congress required better evidence of racial discrimination to allow seven Southern states to submit redistricting plans to the federal Justice Department for preclearance. Yohnka will address the impact of this case on the present-day argument over voting rights law.

The College Republicans and the College Democrats will debate the question “Should Illinois Adopt a Voter ID Law?” The 3 p.m. debate is sponsored by the political science honorary society Pi Sigma Alpha (PSA), and will be moderated by Chair of Political Science Greg Shaw.



Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. spoke at Illinois Wesleyan University's Fred Young Fieldhouse on Feb. 10, 1966.

By Danielle Kamp '15