

The Department of History announces a part-time (10 hours/week) graduate assistantship for a graduate student interested in working with the Citadel's Universities Studying Slavery project. The project would provide research experience using public records, archival materials, and published documents as we seek to understand the Citadel's relationship to one of the most complicated areas of our nation's past. It will include research in Charleston area archives as well as possible trips to the Department of Archives and History or the South Caroliniana Library in Columbia.

Project Background: In 2017, The Citadel joined a consortium, the "Universities Studying Slavery," of forty institutions of higher education, including Georgetown, Columbia, Brown, Clemson, and the University of South Carolina (<http://slavery.virginia.edu/universities-studying-slavery/>). The project is dedicated to grappling with the histories of slavery at institutions of higher education, in an effort to bring communities together and better understand the legacies of slavery in the United States today.

Historical Background: Some forty percent of slaves brought into the United States passed through the port of Charleston, turning it into what historians have called the "Ellis Island of the North American slave trade." The Citadel itself was established as a state arsenal in the immediate aftermath of Denmark Vesey's aborted slave insurrection of 1822. Twenty years later, the arsenal was converted into a military academy whose white students earned a college education while simultaneously safeguarding weapons intended to defend against external threats and "domestic insurrections." It continued to operate as such from 1843, when the first classes were held, until 1865, when it was occupied by Federal troops at the end of the Civil War. As part of its involvement in the Universities Studying Slavery Project, the college now seeks to understand its relationship to slavery during those twenty-two years. This includes questions of the role of enslaved African-Americans in constructing the buildings and performing the labor that made institutional life possible; laws surrounding institutional development; the role of the institution as an agent of control in the Charleston Neck area; its relationship to slavery elsewhere in the city; and other questions that arise as the project develops.

If interested, please contact Dr. Felice Knight, fknight@citadel.edu.