



Clerc Cooper »

HISTORY

CLERC COOPER KNEW SHE WANTED TO study history, so she emailed a professor in the department about his research. They corresponded a few times, and that set the hook. “Having that experience was certainly one of the reasons why I chose the College,” Clerc says.

Initially, she thought she’d study the region’s colonial history, but once she enrolled, her studies took a very different direction.

“I ended up studying Charleston almost in the contemporary era. I studied desegregation, and that started with a class I took called “The History of the Civil

Rights Movement.” She ended up writing a paper on Catholic school desegregation, which ultimately evolved into her bachelor’s essay two years later.

That class led to an internship the next semester in which Clerc was charged with collecting oral histories from individuals who had been plaintiffs in a landmark court case about segregation in Charleston - Brown vs. School District 20. But first, she had to locate all 11 of those people.

“I did everything from Facebook stalking to LinkedIn lurking to scouring the white pages. I plowed through obituaries and church records, and did pretty much everything I could think of to track them down.” Ultimately, she gathered 10 oral histories and that led to a panel discussion that she helped organize in which those individuals were featured.

She also did an independent study in which she collaborated on a book chapter with a professor. “I actually wrote it and he edited and polished it. It’s essentially a It’s a timeline of desegregation in Charleston. For me, it was phenomenal. As an undergraduate, to have my name on a published piece, it’s amazing. That’s really a graduate-level opportunity.” 📖



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HISTORY OFFERS A UNIQUE PERSPECTIVE ON THE HUMAN CONDITION, PAST AND PRESENT. WHEN YOU STUDY WITH INSPIRING PROFESSORS FROM EXTRAORDINARY BACKGROUNDS YOU END UP WITH AN APPRECIATION OF THE GLOBAL PAST – INCLUDING ITS CULTURES, POLITICS AND SOCIETIES – THAT WILL PREPARE YOU TO ENGAGE THE PRESENT, AND ULTIMATELY TO SHAPE THE FUTURE. AND CHARLESTON IS A UNIQUE SETTING FOR THE STUDY OF HISTORY.

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