



CALL FOR PAPERS

Robert Penn Warren Circle Annual Meeting

April 10-12, 2025

Hosted by the Robert Penn Warren Birthplace Committee

and the City of Guthrie

Guthrie, Kentucky

Warren and the Value of Liberal Arts in a Disenchanted Technocratic Age

In his 1980 book *Jefferson Davis Gets His Citizenship Back*, Warren calls America “a nation that sometimes seems technologically and philosophically devoted to the depersonalization of man” (113). Our common humanity has been the core of liberal arts, but with shifts in educational practices, societal tastes, and technological reliance, it is easy for many to think of the liberal arts as old fashioned, bordering on antiquated. This year’s theme asks us to consider the enduring (or perhaps receding) value of liberal arts in today’s world, using Warren’s writing as the entry point to the conversation.

We are especially interested in proposals addressing the following:

- The 21st century relevance “A Plea in Mitigation,” *Democracy and Poetry, Understanding Poetry*, or *American Literature: The Makers and the Making*
- Warren’s understanding of poetry and that understanding’s influence on others
- Who is Warren to the 21st century?
- What makes a poem?
- Technical vs. liberal education
- Poetry as an art or technology

We invite abstracts for papers, panels, or roundtables addressing any aspect of Robert Penn Warren’s work, not just the meeting’s theme. For panel proposals, please include panel title, name and affiliation of each presenter, and individual abstracts of 50 – 100 words with paper title. For individual paper proposals, please send paper title and abstract of 50-100 words. For roundtables, please send an abstract of 50-100 words and a brief bio of each speaker.

No later than February 7, 2025, please send proposals to
Circle Secretary Kyle Taylor via email at rpowcircle@gmail.com

Graduate students are welcome to propose individual papers (15 minutes in length) or panels of 3-4 speakers. If your abstract is accepted, and you wish to be considered for the Eleanor Clark Award for graduate students, which carries a stipend of \$100, please send your completed paper to rpowcircle@gmail.com by March 6, 2025.

Undergraduate students are invited to propose individual papers on any Warren-related topic (no more than 15 minutes in length) for participation in our first ever upper-class undergraduate panel.

Abstracts should be sent directly to the undergraduate panel chair Leverett Butts via email at leverett.butts@ung.edu no later than January 1, 2025 with RPW Undergrad Panel Proposal as the email subject line.