



CALL FOR PAPERS

Robert Penn Warren Circle Annual Meeting

April 9-11, 2026

*Hosted by Austin Peay State University, the Robert Penn Warren Birthplace Committee, and the City of Guthrie
Clarksville, Tennessee, and Guthrie, Kentucky*

Warren and Democracy

Over his long career, Robert Penn Warren had much to say on democracy and the writer's role in public discourse. Our theme for this year's meeting hopes to honor that legacy by offering our panelists opportunities to discuss such varied topics as media and clarity of public information, literary culture's role in democracy, writers' responsibilities in a democracy or in public advocacy, and Warren's connection to and influence on these topics.

We are especially interested in proposals addressing the following:

- Works such as *Democracy and Poetry*, *Who Speaks for the Negro?*, *All the King's Men*, and *Brother to Dragons*
- Democracy and populism
- Warren's perception of democracy
- Warren's concerns about the future of democracy
- Warren and the Great Depression, the rise of fascism, and the Cold War
- Warren's use of Thomas Jefferson and early democratic ideas
- Warren in conversation with others about democracy, such as Ralph Ellison and Allen Tate

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 the 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 January 30, 2025, please send proposals to
Keri Overall via email at kerioverallphd@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 rpwcircle@gmail.com by March 9, 2026.

Undergraduate students are invited to propose individual papers on any Warren-related topic for participation in our upper-class undergraduate panel and consideration for the Rosanna and Gabriel Warren Award for undergraduate students, which carries a stipend of \$100. Abstracts should be sent directly to the undergraduate panel chair Leverett Butts via email at leverett.butts@ung.edu no later than January 30, 2026 with RPW Undergrad Panel Proposal as the email subject line.