

2026 Ciceronian Society Conference

Creighton Univ., Omaha, NE

March 12-14, 2026

****Panel and Paper Titles are Tentative****

Omaha is in the Central Time Zone

Updated 12/12/25

Thursday, March 12

7:30am	Check-In Opens No On-Site Registration. Pick up nametags	[Location]
8am	Morning Prayer	Ballroom C
8:45am	Welcome and Opening Remarks	Ballroom C
9 - 10:30am	Opening Plenary Session/Panel	Ballroom C

C.S. Lewis's Ransom Trilogy: A Response to Modernism

CHAIR: Josh Herring (Thales College)

Fales Feminisms: Un-Man Whispers to Tindril in *Perelandra*
Josh Herring (Thales College)

The Red Planet, the Masculine, and Poetry
Sean Hadley (Trinitas Christian School)

Competing Ecological Visions in *That Hideous Strength*
Madeleine S. Austin (Virginia Military Institute)

Christianizing the Pagan and Vitalizing the Dead
Scott Postma (Kepler Education)

10:30 - 11am	Break
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11am - 12:30pm Breakout Session #1

Fundamental Principles of the American Founding

Ballroom C

CHAIR: Carson Holloway (Univ. of Nebraska - Omaha)

The Declaration in the Constitutional Convention and Ratification Debates
Jordan Cash (Michigan State Univ.)

How the Separation of Powers Protects Liberty
Thomas Bell, (Knox College)

The Logic and Structure of America's Compound Federal System
Kevin J. Burns, (Benedictine College)

Publius and His Muses
Shane Leary (Baylor Univ.)

DISCUSSANT: Benjamin Kleinerman (Baylor Univ.)

Ancient and Modern Education for the Next Semiquincentennial

Ballroom A

CHAIR: Aaron Slutkin (St. John's College, Annapolis)

Friendship in George Washington's Farewell Address
Aaron Slutkin (St. John's College, Annapolis)

"I Sinned for Justice": Lincoln, Faulkner, and 'the Cause'
Nancy O'Gara (Order of St. George)

The Renaissance Politics of Shakespeare's *Tempest*
Michael Lucchese (Pipe Creek Consulting)

Philosophy and Civic Education in Plato's Republic
Anna Zikova (New School for Social Research)

Rhetoric and Political change in Contemporary America

Room 4067

CHAIR: Coyle Neal

"That's Not Fair": A Critique of Rawlsian Rhetoric in America Political Discourse
Peter Keepman (ISI)

Tweeting Trust Away: The U.S. Military on Social Media
Chase Spears (Herzog Foundation)

Dittos, NatCons! The rhetorical influence of Rush Limbaugh and talk radio on the rise of National Conservatism
Coyle Neal

2pm - 3:30pm Breakout Session #2

Ballroom C

Samuel Sadler (Hillsdale College)

Ballroom A

Rodolfo Hernandez (Univ. of Missouri / Kinder Institute)

Room 4067

Robert T. Miller (Scalia Law School)

3:30pm - 4pm Break

4pm - 5:30pm	Plenary Session	Ballroom C
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Humanomics (sponsored by the Menard Family Center for Economic Inquiry)

CHAIR: Colin O'Reilly (Creighton Univ. / Menard Center)

Catholic Social Teaching and Comparative Economic Systems: On Free Enterprise and the Common Good

Steven Miller (Franciscan Univ. at Steubenville)

Philosophical Versus Technical Economics

Paul Mueller (AIER)

Dignity Relies on Providence

Diana W. Thomas (Creighton Univ.)

Humanomics: Is it a Complement or Substitute

Michael D. Thomas (Creighton Univ.)

5:30 - 6pm	Break
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6pm - 8pm	Dinner/Storing Prize Presentation	Ballroom C
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Remarks from Ciceronian Society Leadership

Interview with Jane E. Calvert, winner of the 2026 Herbert J. Storing Prize

8pm - 11pm	Reception with cash bar/drink tickets <i>*tentative*</i>	[Location]
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Friday, March 13

7am Morning Prayer Ballroom C

8 - 9:30am Breakout Session #3

Virtue and the American Founders

Ballroom C

CHAIR: Ethan Alexander-Davey (Campbell Univ.)

Founder and Physician: Benjamin Rush and the Health of the New Republic
Dennis Durst (Kentucky Christian Univ.)

John Jay's Prudence and Virtue in the American Revolution
Jonathan Den Hartog (Samford Univ.)

"A vigilant and manly spirit": Founding-era efforts to promote republican virtue
Nick Blanda (Hillsdale College)

CS Lewis in the World

Ballroom A

CHAIR: Rod Miller (Hendrix College)

That Hideous Job
Rod Miller (Hendrix College)

The Pursuit of Happiness: A Lewisian Perspective on the American Dream
Clayton Carver (Southern Baptist Theological Seminary)

Lewis and the Revolution
Sarah Waters (Sterling College)

"That Little Disc": (Re)embracing human culture in *Out of the Silent Planet*
Joseph Ricke

From Death to Life in America

Room 4067

CHAIR: Andrew Mitchell

The Spirit of Negation in the Therapeutic Age
Albert Norton

The Lost Proceedings of "Gnosticism and Modernity"
Allen Mendenhall (Heritage Foundation)

The Emancipation of Man
Andrew Mitchell (Grove City College)

Exposing the Culture of Death: Dorothy Parker and Flannery O'Connor
Neva Hernandez (Kolbe Academy)

9:30 - 10am Break

10 - 11:30am Breakout Session #4

Prudence and Liberty: Lessons from American and International Politics

Ballroom A

CHAIR: Tom Pope (Lee Univ.)

James Brown Scott's Changing Views on International Society and the Prospects for Peace
David Clinton (Baylor Univ.)

Completing the Constitution: Competing Logics in the First Congress
Jordan Cash (Michigan State Univ.)

Prudence, Playing Fields, and Providence
Richard Jordan (Baylor Univ.)

Learning to Love the Republic (of Letters)

Ballroom C

CHAIR: Sean Hadley (Trinitas Christian School)

Long Live the King: Politics and Power in Dante
Kristen Rudd (The Classical College Coach/ CiRCE Institute)

Beowulf Among the Saints: Hall, Hell, and the Anglo-Saxon Apocalypse
Sean Johnson (The Close Reads Podcast; St. Francis Classical Academy)

On the Bloody Road to Redemption with Cormac McCarthy
Sarah Hadley (Trinitas Christian School; Kepler Education)

"Between that earth and that sky I felt erased, blotted out": Willa Cather's Cosmic Connections
Jay Langdale (Independent Scholar)

Virtue Education in Classical Classrooms: Hein's *Teaching the Virtues*

Room 4067

Jacob Hiserman (Thales Academy Rolesville; Pontifical College Josephinum)
Darrell Falconburg (Russell Kirk Center)
Bryant Owens (Virginia Highlands Community College; Thales College)
Zachary Palmer (Thales Academy Apex)

11:30am - 1:00pm Catered Lunch

Ballroom C

1:15 - 2:45pm

Breakout Session #5

Localism and Place

Ballroom C

CHAIR: William Batchelder IV (Waynesburg Univ.)

What is Localism and Why Do We Need It?

Zack German (Univ. of Tennessee - Knoxville)

Tyler Moore (Univ. of South Dakota)

A Biblical Place Case Study from John 1-2

Wayne Braudrick (Frisco Bible Church)

From Nomads to Natives – Recovering a Sacramental Vision of Place

George Harrell (The George Buchanan Forum)

A Right to Community: *Green v. Miss USA*, the Assembly Clause, and Associational Self-Government

Luke Sheahan (Duquesne Univ.)

Confronting Artificial Intelligence

Ballroom A

CHAIR: Rachel Ferguson (Concordia Univ. – Chicago)

Man and Machine: Catholic Thought on the Implications of Artificial Intelligence

John Moore (Walsh College)

A Maritainian Guide to Our Moment in History: the Open Society, Technology and the new Christendom

Thomas Dias (Acton Institute)

The Narcissist in the Machine

Jeff Bristol

Revisiting American Political Divisions

Room 4067

CHAIR: Benjamin Peterson (Abilene Christian Univ.)

Charles Hodge: Son of the American Revolution, Defender of Perpetual Union

Andrew McGinnis (Center for Religion, Culture, and Democracy)

Not So Strange Bedfellows: Horseshoe Theory in Concept and Action

Jeff Taylor (Dordt Univ.)

A Federalist in a Progressive Era: Henry Cabot Lodge's Constitutional Conservatism

Koty Arnold (Colorado Christian Univ.)

2:45 - 3:15pm

Break

3:15 - 5pm

Keynote Address and Batchelder Award

Ballroom C

Presentation of the 2026 William G. Batchelder III Award (tentative)

Keynote Address by Wilfred M. McClay

[Title, TBD]

5 - 8pm	[Dinner at attendees' discretion off campus]	
[6 - 7:45pm	Advisory Board Meeting/Dinner *tentative. Location TBD. Invitation Only*]	
8 - 11pm	Reception with cash bar/drink tickets *tentative*	[Location]

Saturday, March 14

8am Morning Prayer

9 - 10:30am Breakout Session #6

Democracy and Liberal Learning: Inescapable Realities

Ballroom C

CHAIR: Jason Jewell (Florida Board of Governors)

Democracy and Liberal Learning: A Reflection of Dignity
Chris Butynskyi (Salisbury High School]

Must Liberal Learning Be Political?
Jason Jewell (Florida Board of Governors)

Teaching to Transform: Liberal Arts in America
Kirstin Anderson Birkhaug (Hope College)
Anna Snader (Hope College)

From Representation to Reality: C.S. Lewis, Shop Class, and the Well-Crafted Imagination
Annie Crawford

Faith, Film, and Ordinary Things Divine

Ballroom A

CHAIR: Jordan Cash (Michigan State Univ.)

The One Principle of Hell: Flight, *Matchstick Men*, and *Up in the Air*
Micah Watson (Calvin Univ.)

Tradition, the Demonic, and Despair in *No Country for Old Men*
Carson Holloway (Univ. of Nebraska - Omaha)

A Law beyond Law: Life Together in *Deadwood*
Jordan Ballor (Center for Religion, Culture, and Democracy)

Robert Eggers's *The Northman* and J.R.R. Tolkien's "Fantasies of Fallen Man"
J. Columcille Dever (Providence College)

The American Founding in an International Context

Room 4067

CHAIR: Jeff Bristol

The American Revolutionaries and Their Unlikely Ally: The Founders and Poland
Christopher Fritsch (Tarrant County College-Trinity River Campus)

America and France: Two Different Publics, Two Different Revolutions
Stephen Thomas (Baylor Univ.)

Contre le Grand État: DeKoninck's Views of Federalism in America
Pedro Kair Medeiros da Silva (Academia Catarinense de Artes Liberais)

10:30 - 11am Break

11 - 12:30pm

Breakout Session #7

Christian Thought and the American Founding

Ballroom C

CHAIR: James Patterson (The Ciceronian Society)

The Ecclesiological Background of American Constitutionalism: Robert Browne, John Wise, and Congregationalist Political Theory

Ben Peterson (Abilene Christian Univ.)

Christianity and Heresy in the Jeffersonian Mind

Paul DeHart (Texas State Univ.)

God Glorified in the Work of Redemption: Jonathan Edwards, Yale, and the Moral Conditions of Liberty

Raleigh Adams (Yale Univ.)

The Economy of Providence: Witherspoon's Religion of Liberty and Free Markets in Colonial America

Rev. Dr. Luke Farwell (First United Presbyterian Church De Pere, WI)

The Declaration and Derailment

Ballroom A

CHAIR: John Grove (Liberty Fund)

The Declaration and Rationalism

John G. Grove (Liberty Fund)

Union or Nation: Sovereignty, The Declaration of Independence, and Self-Government

Aaron N. Coleman (Univ. of the Cumberlands)

The Declaration, Union, and Confederation

Adam Tate (Clayton State Univ.)

[Title TBD]

Jesse R. Merriam (Patrick Henry College)

The Origins of Federalism: Executive Authority, Separation of Powers and the Role of the Courts

Room 4067

CHAIR: Vincent D'Angelo (Hillsdale College)

Eric Nelson's Royalist Revolution and the Federalist Papers

Vincent D'Angelo (Hillsdale College)

Condorcet's Progressivism, Publius' Sobriety, and a Divided Legislature

Carlyle Foja (Hillsdale College)

We Offer No Resistance: Judicial Independence in the U.S. Constitution

Theodore Madrid (Hillsdale College)

Ask Forgiveness, Not Permission: Indemnification and Emergency Powers in Early America

Jameson Payne (Hillsdale College)

12:30pm - 1:45pm Catered Lunch

Ballroom C

1:45pm - 3:15pm Breakout Session #8

The Wealth of Nations at 250

Ballroom C

CHAIR: Erik Matson (The Catholic Univ. of America)

Theory, Reality, and Public Policy in *The Wealth of Nations*
Erik Matson (The Catholic Univ. of America)

The Continuing Relevance of *Wealth of Nations* to Public Policy 250 Years Later
Paul Mueller (AIER)

A Biblical Myth at the Origins of Smith's *Wealth of Nations*
Jordan Ballor (Center for Religion, Culture, and Democracy)

Adam Smith and Pope(s) Leo on the Origin and Significance of Private Property
John Robinson (James Madison Univ.)

The Declaration of Independence and its Legacy

Ballroom A

CHAIR: Claire Baker (Boyce College)

The Declaration & The Gettysburg Address
Michael Maibach (Save our States / James Wilson Institute)

The Relationship between the Declaration of Independence and State Constitutions
Nathaniel Fouch (Capital Univ. Law School)

The Declaration of Independence as Binding Law: A Discussion
Stephen Sills (Hillsdale College)

H.P. Lovecraft Against Modernity?

Room 4067

CHAIR: Jacob Wolf (University of Austin)

Terrifying Vistas of Reality: H. P. Lovecraft and Epistemic Humility
James C. McGlothlin (Bethlehem College and Seminary)

From Primitive to Archaic Man: An Eliadean Reading of H.P. Lovecraft
Joel Iliff (Regent Univ.)
David Banica (Regent Univ.)

Beyond Nihilism? Darker vistas into the primacy of possibility
William G. Batchelder IV (Waynesburg Univ.)

3:15 – 3:30pm Break (note the shorter time)

3:30pm - 5:30pm Closing Plenary Session and Lawler Award

Ballroom C

Religious Liberty in the US Today

CHAIR: Paul Mueller (AIER)

[Title TBD]

John D. Wilsey (The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary)

The Original Meaning of Religion and the Role of Religious Organizations

Frank Devito (NAPA Legal)

Religious Liberty in the States: 2026

Mark David Hall (Center for Religion Culture and Democracy)

Paul Mueller (AIER)

Closing Remarks by the Executive Director

Presentation of the Peter Lawler Award by President James Patterson

5:30 - 8pm Dinner at attendees' discretion off campus

8 - 11pm Reception with cash bar/drink tickets

Ciceronian Board of Directors Meeting on Sunday morning (?)