The College of Liberal Arts at Jackson State University invites proposals from scholars on all topics related to “[Re]Defining Liberal Arts Education in the 21st Century.”

The purpose of this first conference, scheduled for October 6-8, 2016, is to explore the reasons Liberal Arts disciplines are undervalued by students, parents, and others and to examine how we might [re]define or reframe our roles in an increasingly multi-disciplinary and inter-disciplinary academic world in which job preparedness appears to be the goal of higher education rather than critical and analytical thinking and writing. At the conference, we will also discuss the role of and need for a conference on the liberal arts and how we might move forward.

The Program Committee will accept proposals for individual papers (20 minutes) as well as panels with two or three papers (75 minutes), and roundtables with commentators and a moderator (75 minutes). Possible themes might include but are not limited to:

- The Liberal Arts in crisis: the search for meaning versus the desire for marketable skills
- The purpose of a Liberal Arts education in the 21st Century
- The role of a Liberal Arts education at high research institutions
- The role of a Liberal Arts education at HBCUs
- Redefining or reframing the focus of the Liberal Arts
- Technology/social media in Liberal Arts education
- Liberal Arts disciplines and their relationship to STEM
- A Liberal Arts education as preparation for graduate school
- Liberal Arts: Bringing “artisanal thinking” (i.e., innovation) to a mass market economy
- The value of the humanities to STEM students and researchers
- Pedagogical approaches in the Liberal Arts: Teaching the test-focused student
- 21st Century academic freedom and the Liberal Arts
- The role of a Liberal Arts education in social issues

Proposals for individual papers should include a paper title, 500-word abstract, and a 150-word bio or two-page CV. Proposals for sessions (three or four members and a moderator) and roundtables (two or three members and a moderator) should include a title, 250-word abstract for the panel or roundtable that identifies the roles of each presenter (chair, commentators, presenters), in addition to a 500-word abstract and title for each paper, and a 150-word bio or two-page CV for each participant. Registration is $150 ($25 for students) and includes one meal, the opening reception, refreshments, and conference materials.

Proposals must be e-mailed to the Program Committee in the College of Liberal Arts at mwa@jsums.edu. The deadline for proposals is April 15, 2016. Accepted proposals will be notified by May 1, 2016.