The 19th annual Deep South Writers Conference will be held at USL this September 21. Though plans are not yet completed, the featured speaker at the conference will be Ann Rice, author of the bestseller, "Interview with the Vampire." It is probable that her new book, which will, like her earlier novel, be set in New Orleans, will have been recently published at the time of her visit.

The conference has always had as its major purpose the discovery and fostering of Southern talent in writing, and has drawn participants from most of the states in the nation. Its orientation is practical. It seeks not so much to criticize or analyse the works of its participants as to help them get into print by giving them specific advice on how to aim their work at a particular audience, and on where to go to find the information they need to deal with potential publishers.

For this reason, most of the featured speakers and workshop leaders try to work individually with conferees to see that their questions are answered and that they are given special help in finding markets for their work.

This year there will be workshops in poetry, fiction, non-fiction, drama, and children's literature. There will also be discussions by poets, publishers and other writers. Special programs of drama and a banquet are also planned.

As in the last three years, the conference will be held in conjunction with the Festival of Acadiaans.

Over the last three years, the conference has received steadily increasing support from USL, and that trend has continued this year with a commitment from the university for significant financial aid. This means that the conference has been able to avoid increasing its entry fee, which has been set at $30 for the last three years, in the face of rising costs on all sides.

The university is also providing increased support for the conference in the form of a commitment by the Creative Writing Program to organize and run the conference. Members of the program include Dr. Carl Wooton, Dr. Herbert Facdler, Dr. Jane Bonin, Dr. Bernice Webb and Mr. John Fontenot. They are joined by Dr. Russell Mann, head of USL Journalism, and Dr. J. E. Riehl of the English faculty, who serves as director of the conference.

The Deep South organization also conducts a creative writing competition each summer, and winners are announced at the conference. This year, the deadline for submissions has been extended to August 1, 1979. In the past, several winners of the various categories of the competition have gone on to publish in nationally known markets.

Persons interested in attending the conference or in participating in the competition should write Dr. J. E. Riehl, USL Box 40022, Lafayette, La. 70504, for information.