

**Theatre and Social Change (TASC)
Focus Group By-Laws
(last updated 7/21/22)**

Article 1
Name

The name of the group shall be the Theatre and Social Change Focus Group (TASC FG), a program of the Association for Theatre in Higher Education (ATHE).

Article 2
Purpose/Values/Aims

Statement of Purpose: To promote social change in theatre and performance; to bridge the gap between the academy and the field.

Value Statement: A commitment to anti-racist practices, supporting extending access to expand scholarship in the field.

The Aims of the Theatre and Social Change Focus Group are:

- A) To promote social change in theatre and performance
- B) To advocate for scholarship around measuring changing communities
- C) To provide safe space for conversations around current events
- D) To promote a lively intellectual exchange among its members by supporting panels, presentations, seminars, discussions, and year-round activities
- E) To create and advance new methods, approaches, etc.
- F) To advocate for the value and aesthetics within the production of theatre
- G) To embody our core value through “The Games We Play” annual conference session
- H) To engage in community dialogue via conference sessions
- I) To provide support through shared google drive resources, supportive writing groups, etc.

Article 3
Membership

Membership is open to all members of ATHE (scholars, practitioners, and students) who are interested in theatre and social change. All ATHE members interested in the TASC Focus Group may subscribe to our TASC Focus Group listserv, join the TASC Focus Group Google group, attend our annual business meetings, and participate in the TASC pre-conference.

We also welcome participation by non-members in non-conference events (such as engagement with our social media accounts, public writing groups, etc.).

Article 4

Voting

Any ATHE member is eligible to vote on matters (elections, by-laws, etc.) brought before the TASC membership. In case of a tie, the Focus Group Representative, who abstains from all other voting, may cast the deciding vote. Votes are conducted near or during the annual business meeting held before or during the annual ATHE conference. Voting can take place during the meeting or via an online voting system. Voting on TASC matters may be held off-cycle. Notifications and instructions will be sent via the TASC Focus Group page of the ATHE website or any off-cycle votes. These off-cycle votes will only occur when an office must be filled or an issue resolved prior to the next scheduled TASC membership meeting.

Article 5

Governing Body

Section 5.1

Executive Committee

The Focus Group shall be directed by an Executive Committee consisting of a Focus Group Representative (who also acts as the Business Meeting Chair), a Conference Planner (who also acts as the Business Meeting Vice-Chair), an Associate Conference Planner (who assists the Conference Planner), a Secretary/Treasurer, Graduate Student Representatives (who also serve as the Debut Panel Coordinators), City Liaison Representative (who serves as a connection to the host city), The Games We Play Coordinators (who coordinate the annual “The Games We Play” interactive panel), Pre-Conference Planners (who plan the pre-conference every other year), and Members at Large (who may serve on various TASC committees). All members of the Executive Committee assist with ranking session proposals. All positions are elected at the annual membership meeting as position vacancies require. All terms of office officially begin and end during the annual membership meeting, though officers are expected to attend all relevant meetings for the upcoming year’s duties as scheduled by ATHE.

Section 5.2

Eligibility

All ATHE members are eligible for election.

Section 5.3

Focus Group Representative (1 person)

The Focus Group Representative will represent the Focus Group in all meetings as requested by the Governing Council (GC), attend Focus Group Representatives meetings, report all Governing Council business to the Focus Group, and issue reports as requested of Focus Group business to the Governing Council and to membership via a posting to the TASC Focus Group section of the ATHE website and social media accounts. The Focus Group Representative will evaluate and rank all proposed TASC sessions for the annual conference. The Focus Group Representative also serves as Chair of the annual membership meeting. The term of office shall be two years with mentorship from previous TASC leadership.

Section 5.4

Conference Planner (1 person)

The Conference Planner writes the call-for-papers for TASC sessions. The Conference Planner facilitates the submission of session proposals and assists in the development of proposals as needed. The Conference Planner leads the process of evaluating and ranking all submissions received by the Focus Group, making sure to follow the procedures and to meet the deadlines set by the Conference Organizers/Conference Committee. The Conference Planner often distributes a full list of Focus Group sponsored panels to the Focus Group Membership prior to or at the start of the annual conference. The Conference Planner should attend as many sponsored sessions as possible, to ensure that the purpose of TASC is being met by accepted panels, and to inform attendees and participants of the membership meeting. The Conference Planner must attend the Conference Planning meetings held during the annual ATHE conference in preparation for the years of service. The term of office shall be two years. The Conference Planner will mentor the Associate Conference Planner during the transition year.

The Conference Planner also serves as Vice Chair of the annual membership meeting, assisting in conducting the annual membership meeting, leading the meeting in the absence of the Chair.

Section 5.5

Associate Conference Planner (1 person)

The Associate Conference Planner serves with the Conference Planner. During this time, the Conference Planner will serve as a mentor for the

Associate Conference Planner. The Associate Conference Planner will assist with the conference planning. The Associate Conference Planner will evaluate and rank all proposed TASC sessions for the annual conference. The term of office shall be one year. At the conclusion of the one-year term of office, the Associate Conference Planner will succeed the Conference Planner.

Section 5.6

Secretary/Treasurer (1 person)

Takes the meeting minutes and publishes the meeting minutes to the Focus Group page on the ATHE website. Additionally, when available, the Secretary will record and publish mid-year meeting minutes. The Treasurer will assist the pre-conference planners in writing the pre-conference grant. The Secretary/Treasurer will evaluate and rank all proposed TASC sessions for the annual conference. The term of office shall be two years.

Section 5.7

Graduate Student Representatives/Debut Panel Coordinators (2-3 people)

Graduate Student Representatives serve the graduate students of the Focus Group by assisting in existing Focus Group initiatives. The Graduate Student Representative will evaluate and rank all proposed TASC sessions for the annual conference. The Graduate Student Representative(s) will serve as coordinators for the Debut Panel. The term of office shall be one year. Graduate Student Representatives are eligible for re-election.

The Graduate Student Representatives will assist in the updating and maintenance of the [TASC Resource Drive](#).

Section 5.8

City Liaison Representative (1 person)

The City Liaison will serve as the local city representative of the conference city. This position must be occupied by a local artist/practitioner. They will serve on the Executive Committee, guiding, and informing the focus group decisions. If this position is not filled at the time of elections, it can be filled at any point before January 1. If the position is not filled, it will remain vacant until the following year. City Liaison Representative will serve on the pre-conference committee during the years of a pre-conference. The term of the office shall be one year.

Section 5.9

The Games We Play Coordinator(s) (1-4 people)

The Games We Play Coordinator(s) plan and lead the annual Games We Play Session. This session is a practice-based/workshop-like session. The Coordinators must serve as session planners, but may also serve as panelists. The Games We Play Coordinator(s) will evaluate and rank all proposed TASC sessions for the annual conference.

Section 5.10

Pre-Conference Planners (2-3 people)

The Pre-Conference will take place every other year. This committee includes a minimum of three members, with one person serving as the representative from ATHE's host city. This may be the City Liaison Representative. Planners will evaluate and rank all proposed TASC sessions for the annual conference. The term of office shall be one year.

Section 5.11

Members-At-Large (any number of people)

Members-At-Large serve the Focus Group by assisting in existing Focus Group initiatives. The Members-at-large will evaluate and rank all proposed TASC sessions for the annual conference. They may also attend mid-year meetings when available and serve as mentors for debut panelists when available. The term of office shall be one year. Members-At-Large are eligible for re-election, but must re-run each year.

Section 5.12

Vacancies

In the event of a vacancy, the Executive Committee will propose to the membership an acceptable course of action. This will be put before the membership for a vote, either as a voice vote at the membership meeting or an electronic off-cycle vote. The membership will be notified. Notification will be sent announcing the vote, and the vote must remain open for at least two weeks time. At least one reminder to vote will be disseminated during the election period.

Section 5.13

Committees

Necessary committees may be established by the Executive Committee, and a Committee Chair will be selected by the Executive Committee.

- Social Change Advisory Committee

- This committee will assist in considering/answering questions which may include:
 - What sort of conversations do we have with each ATHE city?
 - Who (in this city) should we be engaging with?
 - How can we more effectively engage with the universities/colleges in the local area and their students?
 - Facilitating reflection sessions post-conference to reflect on the conference, and improvements moving forward
- Other committees may include:
 - Pre-conference committee
 - Debut panel committee/mentors for debut panelists

Article 6 Elections

Elections will be held around the annual membership meeting.

- Nominations
 - A call for nominations will take place 5-7 days prior to the annual business meeting.
 - The call will include a google form (or other online systems) requesting the following information for each nomination: name, pronouns, affiliations, bio, research interests, a statement about the desire to hold X position, a statement on previous involvement with TASC (if any).
 - A final call for nominations will take place at the annual business meeting.
 - New nominees will fill out the google form.
 - Nominations will close during the business meeting
 - Voting
 - Online voting will open within 12-36 hours after the business meeting and will close at the end of the conference.
 - At least one reminder to vote will be disseminated during the election period.
- Notification will be sent announcing the vote after the conference.

Article 7 Annual Meeting

At least one membership meeting of the TASC Focus Group will be held annually in conjunction with the annual meeting of ATHE.

Article 8 Procedures

The members of the program present and voting at the annual membership meeting will constitute a quorum, and a majority of those present will be required for the passage of any measure presented at the annual meeting.

Article 9 Conference Programming

9.1 Primary responsibility for soliciting and negotiating conference programming shall reside with the Conference Planner.

9.2 The Conference Planner is authorized to release Calls-for-Papers as needed.

9.3 All reasonable efforts shall be made to ensure that such programming draws from the soundest and most original research/performance and that it reflects the diversity of TASC and ATHE.

9.4 Participation in conference activities sponsored by TASC shall be open to all members of ATHE, whether or not they are members of TASC.

9.5 Ranking of Focus-Group-specific conference sessions and multidisciplinary sessions shall be the responsibility of the officers of TASC Focus Group collectively, with the Conference Planner coordinating the decision.

9.6 The Debut Panel Session is made up of participants who are participating in ATHE for the first-time.

Article 10 Amendments

These by-laws shall be reviewed every three years by the TASC Executive Committee, under the leadership of the Focus Group Representative and may be amended by a simple majority of the members attending the annual business meeting or by a simple majority of an online voting system.

If circumstances warrant earlier action, the TASC Executive Committee reserves the right to review these by-laws prior to this mandatory three-year review period, provided that this review is made public to all TASC members and that the process remains transparent. Any emergency actions necessitated by the requirements of ATHE or other exigencies for the good of the Focus Group may be taken by the Executive Committee and then voted upon by the membership at the next meeting or via electronic voting initiative on the TASC listserv at ATHE that ensures a democratic process for all members of this Focus Group.

A copy of the newest by-laws, along with extant older by-laws, shall be archived on the TASC Focus Group website at ATHE. Whenever by-laws are revised, a copy of these revised by-laws shall be permanently added to the by-laws archive on the TASC ATHE website.

TASC is a Focus Group of ATHE. Therefore, TASC's by-laws must be in compliance with ATHE's policies and procedures for Focus Groups, as detailed in ATHE's Operations Manual and by-laws. Should there be a discrepancy, ATHE's policies shall be considered binding.