As you may know, ATHE has been engaged in a process of organizational reinvention this year, which led to a delay in the communication of the conference call. The 2024 call has just been released and you are now invited to submit full session proposals by January 16th via the webportal. As we engage in ATHE’s call to revision the stories we tell, a special focus for WTP will be celebrating the 40th anniversary of the Jane Chambers Playwriting Award. In the spirit of advocating for a more equitable and inclusive future field, we will also use the opportunity of this conference to decide about a potential name change for WTP.

**ATHE Conference Call**

*ATHE’s 2024 Conference Call* asks us to consider how we can “transform the stories that surround us to reflect the change we want to see.” ATHE invites sessions that explore:

- What diverse, equitable, and anti-racist actions continue to transform the ‘story’ of our field? Whose stories are told and retold? Who gets to tell the story? Why?

- What stories are still not heard enough? What actions can we take to tell the stories that have long been silent? What practices can we employ to amplify and centralize multiple stories?

- How can we advocate for the field of the future?

- What practices help to make our field more equitable?

- What innovations in teaching help to prepare our students for the field we hope to create for the future?

- What ideas can revitalize the theatre industry and scholarship, in terms of performance, audience engagement, and pedagogy?

- How do digital technologies/digital spaces help to make our teaching more equitable? More accessible? What technologies help to create equity in the theatre – both for theatremakers and for audiences?

- How does the nature of theatre’s embodiment help us to engage with multiple stories and also model stories for the future?
• How do we rehearse the stories we hope to see – in the classroom, on stage, and in the world at large?

• How can we envision the stories we hope to see materialize by rehearsing the current scripts and devising new ways to engage that transform the narratives we leave behind?

Women & Theatre Program reflections on the call

The Women & Theatre Program embraces ATHE’s call to revision the stories we tell. We have the opportunity of this year’s conference to reflect on feminist ways of transforming theatre, dance, and performance. In the spirit of this year’s 40th anniversary of the Jane Chambers Playwriting Award, we look forward to learning from past feminist scholars, artists, and leaders as we revise and reimagine the field for a more equitable and inclusive future.

In addition to the broader questions posed by ATHE, the Women & Theatre Program encourages the creation of innovative and non-traditional formats. We welcome session proposals that engage with the particular issues and concerns of our field and also encourage multi-focus group sessions. Topics may include, but are not limited to, the following:

• What are the stories most or least often told in feminist theatre? What might be a feminist approach for recovering or amplifying stories frequently left offstage or out of historical narratives?

• How can we use previous generations of feminist scholarship and performance in the spirit of revision–to look back in order to correct or improve our own practices?

• How do we (re)envision feminism in performance today? Do we still need this term or are we moving into new territory? How does feminism persist in performance scholarship and practice?

• What do feminist approaches to theatre, dance, and performance uniquely have to offer to efforts to reinvent the larger field?

• How might we transform practices of season planning to make room for the kinds of feminist work we want to see?

• How might we practice or study feminist approaches to playwriting, acting or directing today?

• As we discuss a possible name change for WTP, how might we think about the stories and storytellers implied in the names or key terms we use?
Submission Guidelines:

1. **1st Round (Complete Sessions):** ATHE is seeking “complete” session proposals to be submitted directly to ATHE via the submission web portal. A session is complete if it has 3 presenters, a title, a format, and a description. Session coordinators can “opt in” or “opt out” of opening up their session to the “Second Round of Submissions.” For example, if you have an idea for a roundtable and can only gather a few participants before the submission deadline, you can open your roundtable up to the “Second Round of Submissions” and include more participants later. To have your submission reviewed by WTP for sponsorship, select “WTP” in the “Select relevant Focus Group(s)” field of the online proposal form. **Completed proposals are due to ATHE by 11:59pm EST on January 16, 2024.** Please also forward a copy of your completed proposal to WTP conference planners Christine Young (cyoung8@usfca.edu) and Jessica Friedman (jessicafriedman@ucsb.edu).

2. **Need Help?** If you need help finding participants or collaborators for a session, please email WTP co-conference planners Christine Young (cyoung8@usfca.edu) and Jessica Friedman (jessicafriedman@ucsb.edu). Your proposal should include your name, contact information, affiliation, and a brief abstract regarding the content and structure of your session. **These work-in-progress proposals are due to us via email on January 2, 2024.**

3. **2nd Round (Individual additions to Sessions):** In early March 2024, ATHE will release a list of all of the sessions from the first round that opted into the “Second Round of Submissions.” This is not a time to propose a new session. This round opens the submission process to add individual participants to already accepted sessions. If you are an individual member, this will give you an opportunity to find a session that you would like to join. **Second round submissions are due March 25, 2024.**

ATHE has put together a list of proposal FAQs to help guide you, but if you have any questions or if you need help navigating any aspect of the proposal process, please email WTP co-conference planners Christine Young (cyoung8@usfca.edu) and Jessica Friedman (jessicafriedman@ucsb.edu).

**About the Women & Theatre Program:**

The Women & Theatre Program (WTP) is a self-incorporated division of the Association for Theatre in Higher Education (ATHE). Founded in 1974, our mission is to bring theater professionals together with academics and activists. In the years since our inception, WTP has sponsored panels and activities at ATHE’s annual conference. In 1980, WTP began holding its own annual pre-ATHE conference. WTP conferences feature panels, informal discussions, workshops, and performances as a means to foster both research and production of feminist theatre activities. WTP conference topics have included the intersection of theory and performance, multicultural theatre, lesbian theory and theatre, and many related aspects of feminist inquiry. In addition to its conference activity, WTP, in collaboration with ATHE,
sponsors the Jane Chambers Playwriting Award. This award is one of the few nationally recognized competitions for women playwrights and attracts over 200 submissions annually. The award-winning play is given a reading at ATHE, and an annotated list of the top contenders is circulated to the WTP members and over 400 regional theaters. The continuing goal of WTP is to enable feminist inquiry and to provide opportunities for discussion between those who teach, perform, and theorize about feminism, theatre, and performance.