RULES GOVERNING
THE PERFORMANCE STUDIES FOCUS GROUP

INTRODUCTION AND STATUS DECLARATION

The Performance Studies Focus Group ("PSFG") is an interest group formed within the Association of Theatre in Higher Education ("ATHE"). PSFG includes, and seeks to engage, a variety of scholars, practitioners, and students in the further exploration of the ideas and concepts that intersect with the terms “performance” and “Performance Studies.”

As an independent entity within ATHE, PSFG has chosen to conduct its business as an unincorporated association. In so doing, PSFG does not seek to operate for a profit, nor does PSFG envision generating revenues and expenses in excess of $5,000 annually. Any contributions made to PSFG will not be deductible for income tax purposes. Monies will be raised through registration fees to the group’s pre-conference as well as through contributions. The current slate of elected officials are engaged in a long-range planning project seeking to discern possible future growth of the group. Therefore, the status of PSFG may change and this document adapted.

GOALS/ACTIVITIES

Performance Studies, a debated and contested term, has been employed in many different contexts and with many different meanings. Whether coming from theatre, philosophy, ethnography, art history, or any one of a number of varied disciplines and backgrounds, contemporary life has undergone a turn to “performance.” The PSFG seeks to explore this engagement.

ATHE is structured through the use of Focus Groups. Twenty-three interest groups provide each member with an opportunity to meet and communicate with other members who share similar interests in specific discipline areas. The Performance Studies Focus Group, exploring the role and intersections of performance in society and with a particular emphasis on the intersection of this discipline with Theatre Studies, is one of the largest and most dynamic Focus Groups within ATHE. ATHE’s overall purpose is to provide vision and leadership for the profession and promotes excellence in theatre education. ATHE actively supports scholarship through teaching, research, and practice, and ATHE serves as a collective voice for its mission through its publications, conferences, advocacy, projects, and through collaborative efforts with other organizations.

During ATHE’s annual conference, PSFG will sponsor panel and performance presentations. Remaining on the cutting edge of thought and research on the praxis and theory of performance, PSFG panels seek to engage, challenge, enliven, and support the work of diverse scholars and artists from around the world. The Officers, under the direction of the Conference Planner, will receive submissions from any interested scholars and will rank and submit, according to ATHE’s guidelines, the most promising panels for presentation at the conference. PSFG will also work with other Focus Groups to create joint panels and presentations of an interest to broader communities.

PSFG may, as often as desired, hold a pre-conference before the ATHE annual convention. The format of the pre-conference may take any form deemed appropriate, such as featuring roundtable sessions with invited participants who will lead discussions interrogating current areas of debate within the field. The pre-conference may also break
RULES GOVERNING
THE PERFORMANCE STUDIES FOCUS GROUP

down into smaller “working groups,” that will address a variety of on-going individual topics in the field, fostering long-term connections between scholars.

ORGANIZATION

The current elected positions of PSFG are as follows.

Focus Group Representative/President
Conference Planner
Treasurer
Secretary
Web Master
Graduate Student Representative
Members-at-Large

Elections take place at PSFG’s annual membership meeting, which will be held during each year’s ATHE conference. The time and place of the meeting is determined by the ATHE Conference Committee; it will be advertised within the conference booklet. Only those members present at the meeting are eligible to vote. Membership in PSFG can be obtained in two ways. One, when joining ATHE, each person is asked to affiliate with a set number of Focus Groups. By selecting PSFG, a person’s name is sent to the officers and is added to the membership list. Two, by coming to the membership meeting and expressing interest in the group’s work, you may sign up with the Secretary as a member. All members are advised to submit their contact information to the PSFG Secretary, in order to receive group information during the year.

All officers are elected to a two-year term, with the exception of Members-at-Large and the Graduate Student Representative who serve for one year. The Focus Group Representative/President and Conference Planner are elected a year prior to taking over the role, in order to facilitate a seamless transition and a smooth operating Focus Group. Focus Group Representative/President-Elect, Conference Planner-Elect, Secretary, Web Master, and Treasurer elections will be held every other year, as the term for each position expires. Members-at-Large are elected annually, and their number should not exceed five (5). The Graduate Student Representative is also elected annually.

Any member may stand for election, either through nomination by another member or by nominating her/himself. There is no fixed limitation to the number of terms in office. An “Elect” position is not considered an officer until s/he takes over the office.

The Focus Group Representative/President is the group’s liaison with ATHE, serving as spokesperson for the interests of PSFG within the larger organization. This officer must make every effort to attend all ATHE Focus Group Representative meetings. Additionally, the FGR may have the opportunity to sit at the annual ATHE January meetings (it is a rotating opportunity limited to a certain number of different FGRs every year). This officer is charged, along with the other officers, with organizing the pre-conference, or appointing one or two people to chair the pre-conference team, if the group decides to hold one. This officer is also appointed as a Liaison Officer on the
RULES GOVERNING
THE PERFORMANCE STUDIES FOCUS GROUP

Board of Directors for Performance Studies International, or s/he shall designate someone from PSFG to stand in her/his stead. The FGR will also hold the permanent files for PSFG, including but not limited to the group’s governing rules and historical documents, and s/he is charged with running the group’s annual membership meeting. This officer also vets proposals for the ATHE conference under the guidance of the Conference Planner. The Focus Group Representative/President-Elect will assist the current officer holder in her/his duties, learning the requirements of the position, thus allowing for a seamless transition the following year.

The Conference Planner helps to facilitate and create the slate of PSFG panels presented at the annual ATHE conference. The Conference Planner receives panel and individual paper submissions from any PSFG or ATHE member. After collecting the conference proposals, the Conference Planner sends them to the PSFG officers, who rank and comment on them. Often, the Conference Planner curates panels from single-paper submissions and by invitation. The Conference Planner organizes the final ranking of the submissions before sending the ranked list to ATHE Conference Committee. It is the ATHE Conference Committee who ultimately chooses the number of PSFG panels that will appear in the conference. The Conference Planner notifies all who submitted a proposal of their status. This officer must make every effort to attend all ATHE Conference Planner meetings. This officer is also charged with assisting with the organization of the pre-conference, if held. The Conference Planner-Elect will assist the current officer holder in her/his duties, learning the requirements of the position, thus allowing for a seamless transition the following year.

The Secretary takes minutes at the annual meeting, keeps records of all meetings, and distributes them electronically to the other officers. Additionally, this officer maintains the Organization and Rules for PSFG, updating the document after the annual meeting. The Secretary will also maintain an active database of PSFG members, getting updates yearly from ATHE (Nancy Ericson); s/he maintains the email listserv and coordinates correspondence within the group at the request of the other officers. The Secretary will be responsible for coordinating the retrieval of information for the purposes of marketing PSFG and the PSFG Preconference. This officer vets proposals for the annual conference under the guidance of the Conference Planner.

The Designer/Web Master primary responsibilities are the maintenance/design of the website and the design of all programs and flyers used by PSFG. This officer collaborates with the Treasurer and pre-conference coordinators to design the registration process. The Designer/Web Administrator is also responsible for updating the website on a regular basis. This officer vets proposals for the annual conference under the guidance of the Conference Planner.

The Treasurer is in charge of all PSFG finances, operating and maintaining the bank account. The purpose of the account to pay for any PSFG expenses, particularly those expenses incurred during pre-conference activities. At the annual meeting, the Treasurer will produce a report of all of the group’s economic activity. The Treasurer must be able to produce all financial records to the Focus Group Representative/President upon request within a reasonable period of time. All purchases and contributions over $100 will be followed by an email to the Focus Group Representative/President documenting the transaction. The Treasurer will file any and all tax documents as
RULES GOVERNING
THE PERFORMANCE STUDIES FOCUS GROUP

required by law. The Treasurer may also be elected a member of ATHE’s Executive Finance Committee and must make every effort to attend all meetings. The Treasurer also vets proposals for the annual conference under the guidance of the Conference Planner. The Treasurer is required to train her/his replacement. At the time of transition, the Treasurer will close out the bank account and transfer all funds into the bank account opened in the new Treasurer’s name.

The Graduate Student Representative will be session coordinator for the PSFG Emerging Scholars Panel. The officers may choose a Chair for the panel to work in conjunction with the Graduate Student Representative. Under the guidance of the Chair, s/he will write and distribute a call-for-papers, choose the strongest available applicants, assist them with any unfamiliarity in attending the ATHE conference, and chair the panel during the conference. This officer also vets proposals for the ATHE conference under the guidance of the Conference Planner. The Graduate Student Representative must be a current graduate student in good standing at her/his home institution.

Members-at-Large serve in an advisory and advocacy capacity within PSFG. There will be a maximum of five per year. They must make every effort to attend the group’s annual membership meeting, and they also vet proposals for the annual conference under the guidance of the Conference Planner. MALs should also assist the pre-conference planners with their duties, and must attend the pre-conference as well as ATHE.
RULES GOVERNING
THE PERFORMANCE STUDIES FOCUS GROUP

This document has been voted on and ratified at the 2011 PSFG Annual Meeting. A copy will be given to all officers and will be available to any interested PSFG or ATHE member. This document will be maintained by the Focus Group Representative/President.

_________________________________  ______________________
Focus Group Representative            Date

_________________________________  ______________________
Conference Planner                    Date

_________________________________  ______________________
Secretary                            Date

_________________________________  ______________________
Treasurer                            Date

14 August 2011