9:00 AM
A Systems Approach To Healthy Places
by Shellae Versey, Wesleyan University Assistant Professor of Psychology & College of the Environment Think Tank Member

The challenge of creating healthy places, now and in the future, requires new ways of thinking about the complex and interconnected world in which we live. Systems thinking provides a framework for understanding the dynamics of integrating people, places and policies in ways that promote health. In highlighting emerging research, this talk offers a new lens for exploring interactions between the environment and health.

Shellae Versey is a developmental psychologist and critical health researcher, her interests focus on questions at the intersection of social determinants of health, the environment and an aging society. Her research examines links between health and social engagement, as well as implications of place and policy for older adults. Shellae is currently working on a geographical mapping project for changing spaces, and exploring the dynamics of community and social engagement in cities. This semester she teaches a seminar course on Healthy Places: Practice, Policy and Population Health.

10:30 AM
The Artist In The City: Civic Engagement And Social Change Through The Creative Process
by Allison Orr, Menakka & Essel Bailey '66 Distinguished Visiting Scholar in the College of the Environment

Using a distinct form of ethnographic choreography, Austin, Texas-based choreographer Allison Orr builds her dances out of the stories and experiences that emerge over her year-long residencies with municipal departments. Over the past fifteen years, Orr has collaborated with city employees across Austin, from sanitation workers to power linemen, firefighters to parks and recreation employees. Orr will discuss her process, show clips of past work, and explore how arts-based civic engagement can uncover that which is essential to the life of an urban community while challenging conventions of art and art-making at the intersections of race and class.

Allison Orr is the Menakka and Essel Bailey ’66 Distinguished Visiting Scholar in the College of the Environment. She is Artistic Director and Founder of Forklift Danceworks, a nonprofit, community-based dance company in Austin, Texas. Her work has been funded by the City of Austin, the Texas Commission on the Arts, the National Endowment for the Arts, the MAP Fund, numerous foundations, and the City of Venice, Italy. Trash Dance, an award-winning documentary about her work with Austin’s sanitation department, has aired on PBS and can be seen on AmazonPrime and iTunes.