Fifth-Year Studio Description
Healthy Environments and Social Well-Being

Spring 2018

Professor Deborah E. Ryan
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Architects are public health workers. We have a partnership—public health professionals and architects and planners.
Our minds have to talk because we have an influence on America’s public health that we’re only now beginning to grasp.

Rear Admiral Boris Lushniak Acting US Surgeon General

PREMISE: “Rear Admiral Lushniak’s statement is a rallying call to all architects and their colleagues. The countless decisions architects make in public and private practice have health impacts that deserve closer reflection and analysis. This is particularly true of architects who uniquely practice at the urban and individual building scale.

Recognizing the enormous responsibility that architects have to create positive change, the AIA has adopted a conceptual framework in which the physical environment creates access to health opportunities and facilitates positive health behaviors. Further, the model recognizes that public health presupposes social equity—that we must reconcile the socioeconomic and political environments that influence and regulate the built environment with the need for equitable distribution of health.” (American Institute of Architects, Design and Health Topics: Six Approaches to achieving health through built environment design and policy)

CONTENT: The studio will build on topics introduced in the Urban Form class with a specific focus on the activation of urban spaces for the purpose of improving public health, civic engagement and social well-being. Students will research ideas for both long-term and short-term, temporary solutions. They will also undertake a tactical urbanism project.

EVALUATION & GRADING:
Mid Review 40%, Final Review 60% for one on-going project over the course of the semester.

METHOD: Students will complete class readings and research. These studies will be ongoing throughout the course of the semester as students engage in a reiterate design process, exploring alternative solutions at scales ranging from landscape architectural to urban design.

CLASS READINGS (will be excerpted from the following):

• Mike Lydon and Anthony Garcia. Tactical Urbanism: Short Term Action for Long Term Change.
• American Institute of Architects, Design and Health Topics: Six Approaches to achieving health through built environment design and policy
• American Planning Association, Healthy Planning: An evaluation of comprehensive and sustainability plans addressing public health
• Urban Land Institute, Building Healthy Places ToolKit: Strategies for Enhancing Health in the Built Environment