Contemporary Africa Seminar Speaker Series
February 26 | 4:00pm – 5:30pm | PY 109

Kaitlin Christenson, MPH
Director, Access Collaborative
PATH
“Partnerships, Politics, and People:
Observations from an International NGO Worker”

Partnerships are an essential mechanism through which NGOs support the achievement of development goals. They are complex, multifaceted, and often difficult to manage, but development initiatives rarely succeed without them. This talk will explore how international NGOs work with various partners—from governments, to civil society, to donors and normative bodies—illustrated through the experience of a global health NGO employee. It will explore various themes including pitfalls and challenges, how partners create shared value, and the catalytic role that international NGOs can play in harnessing strengths from different sectors.

Kaitlin Christenson currently leads the Access Collaborative, an initiative housed at PATH and designed to increase women and girls’ access to modern family planning methods. PATH (www.path.org) is an international nonprofit organization that saves lives and improves health, especially among women and children, across five platforms: vaccines, drugs, diagnostics, devices, and system and service innovations. Ms. Christenson has worked in various roles at PATH in the US and Kenya, including serving as acting Chief of Staff to PATH’s CEO and interim Director of Advocacy and Public Policy, coordinating internal strategy efforts, leading an advocacy coalition on global health research and development, and working with African ministries of health to support decision making for new product introduction. She holds a Master in Public Health degree from the George Washington University and a Bachelor of Science degree in Biology and French from Virginia Tech.