This Exploration Seminar will help you understand some of the human consequences of globalization by studying the important role communication plays in tourism as a global cultural industry. As the world’s single largest trade, tourism is a powerful factor in shaping everyday interpersonal, intercultural and inter-national communication. Nowhere is this more apparent than Switzerland – the birth place of modern tourism and a country which embodies the challenges and successes of multilingualism, multiculturalism and multinationalism. Since the 1850s, Switzerland and especially Interlaken (our base for the seminar) have organized and promoted themselves as the quintessential tourist destinations. It was actually between June 26 and July 15 in 1863 that Thomas Cook organized the first ever organized tour of Switzerland. And, in the face of global warming, European/EU politics, and international economics, this “production of place” is also being constantly revised.

The seminar will be an enjoyable learning-by-doing experience and you’ll be involved in a series of practical projects involving different theoretical issues and key research skills (e.g. visual ethnography, text analysis). In doing so, you’ll be examining the linguistic, visual, material and spatial strategies used to represent and promote Switzerland as a global tourist destination. You’ll also study how visitors and local people interact in tourist sites. It’s in this way that the seminar will address the darker side of tourism as well, by considering how the making of place and the production of culture always overlook many areas of life. So, for example, one assignment will have you undertaking “counter tourism” in Geneva, following non-touristic routes through this global diplomatic city and developing an alternative tour-guide script. Through a series of fieldtrips, hands-on projects, and guest speakers you’ll be asked to evaluate critically the implications of tourism for human communication on both a local scale and a global one.
ABOUT THE INSTRUCTORS
Crispin Thurlow, the program director, was born and raised in England, before living for twelve years in South Africa, eight years in London and six years in Wales. He moved to the USA in 2003 and is currently a professor in the UW’s Department of Communication. In 2007, he received the university’s Distinguished Teaching Award. As the teaching assistant for this seminar, Kristine Mroczek brings both a professional and academic knowledge of the tourism industry. Her graduate research is rooted in critical/cultural communication, discourse studies and visual communication.

CREDIT
In taking this Exploration Seminar, you will earn six credits in COM 322 Global Communication. (Alternatively, you may earn six credits of CHID 471 Europe Study Abroad – counts for I&S credits). You should check with your advisors to determine how these credits can count towards your own departmental requirements.

PRE-PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS
There are no course prerequisites for this seminar. However, once accepted you will be required to attend three pre-program class meetings in the Spring quarter (March 12, May 14, June 11) as well as a social gathering (April 16). These will entail a very basic crash-course in Bärndütsch (the local dialect of Swiss German), a graded reading quiz and a preliminary assignment (also graded). Failure to attend the three class sessions may mean losing your place in the program.

STUDENT COSTS
IPE Fee $200 / Program Fee $3,300
The program fee covers home-stay accommodation (with a local Swiss family, including breakfasts), a month-long Swiss travel pass, required excursion fees, opening and closing night events, several group meals, and one required text. Your additional costs: round-trip fare to Zurich/Geneva, health insurance, personal spending money, any visa-related costs for non-US/non-EU passport holders, and general meals. Scholarships are available for financial aid students and some funds are available to other students through the International Programs office.

APPLICATION
Competition for Exploration Seminars is often strong and you are advised to apply sooner rather than later. Your acceptance will be based on An official written application (see box below) in which you’ll be asked to give some basic information about yourself as well as a short statement about your reasons for applying to this particular seminar. All applicants will be expected to attend a short interview. Please email com322@u.washington.edu immediately if you would like to be interviewed early (i.e., prior to the opening of applications).

OFFICIAL APPLICATION
Starting around the end of December 2008, applications will need to be submitted online at http://depts.washington.edu/explore/apply.
Final deadline Friday 13 February, 2009

For more information about the Exploration Seminars visit http://depts.washington.edu/explore/