Each summer, I lead an Exploration Seminar to Zambia, southern Africa that is designed to be an interdisciplinary course that introduces students from a wide variety of academic backgrounds to the socio-economic and political challenges faced by Zambians who work hard to make a living in a contemporary developing nation. The four week long program in Zambia includes living and working in urban, semi-rural and rural field sites and our focus is to assess the success of development priorities, including promoting transparency in democratic elections, investments in quality education, disease prevention and maternal and child health, the promotion of economic diversification, and environmental sustainability. How well are the donor community and the Zambian government working to address the cross-cutting nature of Zambia's challenges? Prior to leaving Seattle, “the philanthropic capital of the world,” we survey the concepts for understanding poverty, economic development and social change, and learn how our local donor community and the Zambia government are working to address the cross-cutting nature of Zambia's challenges.

This was my idea anyway.

This poster session explores the many lessons that were revealed throughout this undertaking, including the role our seminar plays reinforcing and disrupting long term relationships with my Zambian partners, the degree to which our students are unevenly prepared for such tasks, the amount of emotional labor that is required in order to navigate the complicated landscape of development, ethnography, international studies and relations.