The topic of this seminar is The Morality of Markets. Capitalism emerged victorious from the Cold War, but today complaints about globalization abound. What morality accompanies a commercial society, and is it worthy of our approval? To begin to answer those questions, we need to know the intellectual roots of commercial society. After spending some time on earlier moral and economic thought (excerpts from Aristotle, the Hebrew Bible, and the Christian New Testament), we will read aloud William Shakespeare’s *The Merchant of Venice*, which explores the interworking of religion, morals, and commerce. That play raises questions about what is gained and what is lost when the pursuit of wealth dominates society. Then we will study a founder of modern liberalism, John Locke, and the most famous advocate of commercial society, Adam Smith, to examine the morality that we mainly observe today.

**Readings:**

The following books have been ordered for purchase and are also at the library on two-hour reserve:


In the second week you should bring a Bible to class. Recommended translations are the New American Standard Bible (updated edition), English Standard Version, and King James Version.

**Schedule of Readings:**

- Jan 19: Introduction
- Jan 26: Bible (Christian Old Testament): Exodus 19-22; Leviticus 23, 25; Deuteronomy 23:19-20; Proverbs 22; Ezekiel 18
- Feb 2: Hebrew Bible: Exodus 19-22; Leviticus 23, 25; Deuteronomy 23:19-20; Proverbs 22; Ezekiel 18
- Feb 9: Aristotle, excerpts from *Nicomachean Ethics* and *Politics* (on WebCampus)
- Feb 16: Shakespeare, act 1, scenes 2-3
- Feb 23: Shakespeare, act 2, scenes 1-5
- Mar 1: Shakespeare, act 2, scenes 6-9
- Mar 8: Shakespeare, act 3, scenes 1-2; paper #1 due
- Mar 15: Shakespeare, act 3, scenes 3-5
- Mar 22: No class (spring break)
- Mar 29: Shakespeare, act 4
- Apr 5: Shakespeare, act 5; paper #2 due
Apr 12    Locke, chaps. 1-7
Apr 19    Smith, pp. 9-26 (not to be confused with editors’ introduction), 67-91
Apr 26    Smith, pp. 109-19, 134-38, 156-61, 187-93, 200-211
May 3     Smith, pp. 50-66, 149-56, 179-87, 227-34

Final examination: May 10, 3:10-5:10

Format:
This course is a seminar. Each session will consist of discussion of the assigned reading. I will lecture as little as necessary. Thus it is imperative that you come to class having done the reading for that week and that you bring your book to class. We will read aloud and discuss The Merchant of Venice. The parts in the play will be taken by different students each week.
Use of a computer or other electronic device during class is prohibited, except with prior permission; unauthorized use will be considered the equivalent of an absence for that class. Unauthorized recording of the class is also prohibited. Our focus should be on the readings and on our fellow human beings trying to learn from the readings; computers tend to be a distraction. Electronic books are permitted, but you should let me know that you are using one.

Assignments:
Written assignments include:
● An hour examination on the Bible and Aristotle. It will consist mainly or entirely of essay questions and will count 15% of your final grade.
● Two papers of 1,000 to 1,500 words each on topics assigned from The Merchant of Venice. They will be due at the beginning of class on the specified dates. The paper with the higher grade will count 25% of your final grade; the other paper will count 15%.
● A final examination, perhaps comprehensive but with an emphasis on Shakespeare, Locke, and Smith. It will consist mainly or entirely of essay questions and will count 30% of your final grade.
Your participation in class discussions will count 15% of your final grade. (You will not be graded on your acting ability when you are reading aloud The Merchant of Venice!) Your grade may be reduced if you have more than one unexcused absence; lateness normally counts as an absence.
You must complete all written assignments to be eligible to pass the course.
Extensions for submitting papers will be granted only in an emergency (e.g., personal illness, preferably with a note from a doctor, or serious illness in one’s family). The grade on a paper will be reduced by one increment for each business day it is late without an approved extension. No alternate arrangements for examinations will likely be made except in an emergency.

Other Information:
The university requires all members of its community to follow copyright and fair-use requirements. You are individually and solely responsible for violation of copyright and fair-use laws. The university will neither protect nor defend you nor assume any responsibility for violation of fair-use laws. Violation of copyright laws could subject you to federal and state civil penalties and criminal liability as well as disciplinary action under university policies. To familiarize yourself with copyright and fair-use policies, the university encourages you to see http://www.unlv.edu/provost/copyright.
Any academic misconduct will make a student liable to failure of the course. One example of academic misconduct is plagiarism: using the words or ideas of another, from any source (including the Internet), without proper citation. The academic misconduct policy for students may be reviewed at http://www.unlv.edu/studentconduct.
By UNLV policy for the sake of students’ privacy, faculty should send e-mail to students only via students’ Rebelmail accounts. Please use that account to send me e-mail. If you use another account, I will use my discretion in deciding whether to respond.

Free assistance with writing is available at the Writing Center (CDC 3-301; telephone 702-895-3908). Although walk-in consultations are sometimes available, students with appointments will receive priority.

If you have a documented disability that may require assistance, you should contact the Disability Resource Center (SSC A143; telephone 702-895-0866) for coordination of services. If you are registered with the center, bring your academic accommodation plan to me so that we may work together to implement the accommodations to meet both your needs and the requirements of the course. Any information you provide is private. To maintain the confidentiality of your request, please do not approach me in front of others to discuss your needs.

If you miss a written assignment because of observance of a religious holiday, you will be given an opportunity during the semester to make up missed work. The makeup will apply only to the absence on the religious holiday. It is your responsibility to notify me no later than the end of the first two weeks of classes, January 29, of your intention to participate in religious holidays that do not fall on state holidays or periods of class recess. For more information, see http://catalog.unlv.edu/content.php?catoid=6&navoid=531.

This class meets the requirements for the Great Works Academic Certificate.