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The Seminar on Religion and World Civilization is a program of the Center for Faith and Vocation at Butler University, promoting understanding of interfaith and intercultural relations through the discussion of religious issues in global perspective.

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WAL-MART, EVANGELICAL CHRISTIANITY AND THE GLOBAL REALITY OF WORK

Tuesday, Sept. 12, 2006

Wal-Mart is known as the world’s largest retailer, giving its business and labor practices international reach. The company’s roots in rural Arkansas bring with them the influence of evangelical Christian theology and culture. Two scholars, one of the labor movement, the other of American religion, explore the intersection.

Speaker
Dr. Nelson Lichtenstein is a professor of history at the University of California, Santa Barbara where he specializes in the history of work and the labor movement. Dr. Lichtenstein has written widely about labor and culture in America and is currently researching religion and work. He edited “Wal-Mart: The Face of 21st Century Capitalism,” (New Press, 2006) and contributed to the 2004 PBS Frontline documentary “Wal-Mart: Good for America?”

Respondent

LISTENING FOR GOD AMID CORPORATE SCANDAL

Tuesday, Oct. 24, 2006

Critics of corporate cultures that have produced the scandals of Enron, WorldCom and Arthur Andersen have suggested a “make more money now” mentality is to blame. Do religious ideas about right and wrong, prosperity and the common good offer alternatives? If so, would corporate systems be willing to listen?

Speaker
Dr. Marianne Jennings is a professor of management in the W.P. Carey School of Business at Arizona State University, where she specializes in legal and ethical studies in business. She holds degrees in business and law from Brigham Young University. Her books include “The Seven Signs of Ethical Collapse,” (St. Martin’s Press, 2006) and “A Business Tale: A Story of Ethics, Choices, Success, and a Very Large Rabbit,” (AMACOM, 200). Dr. Jennings also teaches courses in world religions at Arizona State.

Respondent
Dr. Robert Bennett is a professor of business law in the College of Business Administration at Butler University, where he specializes in law and ethics. He is a visiting professor of business ethics at the Helsinki School of Economics in Finland.

TRUST: THE ESSENTIAL YET OFTEN ELUSIVE INGREDIENT IN CORPORATE SUCCESS

Tuesday, Jan. 30, 2007

Trust seems like a simple concept, but understanding the ethics of trust and cultivating it in corporate settings can be difficult. What is trust and how does it express itself in the workplace and in corporate boardrooms? Does the place of trust in religious communities offer any insight for the business world?

Speaker
Katherine Tyler Scott is a consultant on corporate leadership, labor relations and conflict management. She is managing partner of Ki Thought Bridge Inc., an Indianapolis-based firm, and founder and former president of Trustee Leadership Development Inc. Ms. Scott is an active laywoman in the Episcopal Church and a member of that denomination’s Special Commission on the Episcopal Church and the Anglican Communion.

Respondent
The Rev. Kent Millard is senior pastor at St. Luke’s United Methodist Church in Indianapolis, a congregation of diverse lay-driven ministries and programs.

CAPITALISM FOR THE COMMON GOOD

Tuesday, Feb. 27, 2007

Within the reality of global capitalism and the ever-increasing demand for market-driven profits, is there a place for the classic concept of capitalism as a force for social good? This exploration of capitalism will explore theological roots and challenges to the concept posed by stock markets, labor markets and consumer demands.

Speaker
Dr. Jon Gunneman is professor of social ethics at the Candler School of Theology, Emory University. His current research focuses on theology, ethics and the economy; and on contemporary theories of justice. Dr. Gunneman has written and lectured extensively on issues of economic ethics, and on Christian ethics and social theory.

Respondents
Dr. Carol Johnston is an associate professor of theology and culture and director of lifelong theological education at Christian Theological Seminary in Indianapolis. She writes and lectures often about faith and economics and faith and the environment.

Mr. Edgar Davis is an adjunct professor in the College of Business Administration at Butler University and the Butler honors program. He spent nearly 40 years working in finance and marketing for Eli Lilly Inc.

All seminars meet from 7 to 9 p.m. in the Krannert Room, Clowes Memorial Hall, on the campus of Butler University, 46th Street and Sunset Ave., Indianapolis. An informal reception follows each seminar. The seminars are free and open to the public. No reservation necessary.