The Global Commons—Shifting the Planetary Paradigm (2 Credits)

Introduction
On a planet approaching 7 billion people, there is looming question—what will it take to have a world that works for everyone? Particularly since World War II, the two dominant institutional forms have been the nation-state and the transnational corporation. Unfortunately, neither have proven effective at addressing some of the most pressing issues of our time, including climate change, food and water shortages, poverty, and human security. Is something missing here? In addition to the public sector and the private sector, are there additional ways of framing human affairs? The emerging paradigm of the global commons holds much promise as a third lens for looking at planetary issues.

Course Description
This course will introduce the framework of the commons and apply it to the issue of water. The world’s clean water supply is increasingly at risk. It is estimated that up to 40% of world’s population faces water stress or water scarcity. This affects all the domains of human life—political, social, economic, and cultural.

Students will work in small teams to analyze various water-related issues. Teams are expected to collaborate together rather than compete. The final work product will be an integrated set of recommendations for a global e-learning course on water and the water commons that will be offered through the Commons Knowledge Alliance, an open-source educational consortium. Board members representing the Commons Knowledge Alliance will attend the presentation on Thursday.

Course Outline
Monday, March 7
Overview of the global commons; briefing on the worldwide water issue, examples of water as a commons, state of the art water innovations; team assignments; team instructions on research methodology

Tuesday, March 8
Work in teams; end-of-day check-in as a group

Wednesday, March 9
Work in teams; begin integrating work from various teams at noon

Thursday, March 10
Presentation to board members representing the Commons Knowledge Alliance; course wrap-up and evaluation

NOTES: Students should expect to engage in the course for eight hours per day Monday through Wednesday. Final work product will be assigned a Creative Commons license to facilitate open-source sharing.

Faculty
Leo Burke is Director of the Global Commons Initiative at the Mendoza College of Business. He also directs the Executive Integral Leadership portfolio of programs. From 2001 until 2008 he served as Associate Dean and Director of Executive Education. Prior to Notre Dame he worked at Motorola Inc. for twelve years, serving in various executive roles.

There will be additional experts who will join the class via skype video.