



Arts, Humanities and Essential ‘Human Skills’ of the Stevens Graduate
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At a time when STEM (science, technology, engineering and mathematics) educational programs and employment are booming across the country and across the globe, it is useful to recognize the importance of non-STEM disciplines — the arts, humanities and social sciences — in contributing to a democratic and diverse society and in creating ethical, responsible and well-rounded citizens.

Two recent *Wall Street Journal* articles, “If You Want Your Child to Succeed, Don’t Sell Liberal Arts Short” and “The Liberal Arts Provide Real, Useful Skills,” as well as internal studies by Google have highlighted the fact that some of the key attributes sought by employers were not technical skills, but qualities developed through humanities coursework: communication, listening, problem-solving, critical thinking and empathy. Representatives of major corporations at a meeting of the Business Higher Education Forum that I recently attended underscored this sentiment with their classification of critical skills necessary for employee success: (1) human skills; (2) business skills; and (3) digital skills. The addition of “human skills” to technical and business skills necessary in the workforce is yet a further confirmation of the value of the arts, humanities and social sciences. Producing graduates who possess all three skill sets is both a hallmark and a distinction of a Stevens education.

Today, as Stevens is becoming even more widely known for its success in producing graduates who excel in the STEM fields, the university is increasingly developing a reputation for its programs in business, management and finance, and — particularly relevant to the theme of the current issue of [*The Stevens Indicator*](#) — in the arts, humanities and social sciences. Famous alumni like Alexander Calder, Class of 1919, inventor of the art form known as the mobile, and more recently Richard Reeves ’60, the prolific author, journalist and longtime syndicated columnist, are but two of the many powerful examples of the strong tradition of the arts and humanities at Stevens.

Since 2007, when the Stevens College of Arts and Letters (CAL) was established, Stevens faculty have aimed to provide a humanities and liberal arts education through the lens of science and technology. This distinctive emphasis is especially appropriate for an institution such as Stevens, and it is particularly fitting in an era where technology permeates nearly every aspect of life and work.

Through CAL, Stevens prepares all students — engineers, scientists, technologists and entrepreneurs and those majoring in one of CAL’s seven undergraduate degree programs or 13 minor programs — to become literate, articulate, creative and ethically responsible. Through pioneering programs such as music and technology and visual arts and technology, and innovative courses such as the Anthropology of Technology and Bioethics, Stevens students develop the

“human skills” and the necessary perspective to be not only effective contributors to the workforce, but also responsible citizens of our increasingly complex, global society.

I am proud that Stevens is also proactively fostering an environment that promotes the arts and culture for our extended community. *OnStage at Stevens*, which includes a partnership with the New Jersey Symphony Orchestra, provides live performances for the Stevens and Hoboken communities several times per year. Through other programs and partnerships, such as with Nokia Bell Labs, our faculty explore innovative applications of music and technology such as the Human Digital Orchestra. And research, conducted by CAL Dean Kelland Thomas and his faculty, explores the synergies among seemingly disparate fields such as computational creativity, artificial intelligence, creative coding and generative music composition.

It is, indeed, an exciting time to be at Stevens. I hope that you will be as inspired as I am about the future of your university and the work of our students, faculty and alumni. I look forward to sharing more progress in the months ahead.

Per aspera ad astra,



Nariman Farvardin
President, Stevens Institute of Technology



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