

Final Report: CLAS Skill Area Course Reviews Subcommittee

This subcommittee was tasked with aligning courses to the new CLAS Skill Areas: *Communication and Dialogue*; *Information, Digital, and Media Literacy*; and *Leadership and Ethics*. We conducted most of this work asynchronously between February and April of 2025, following the deadline for submissions.

We ultimately set a high bar for accepting courses: Consensus among the committee. We decided that this was the best way to ensure that the first batch of courses to establish these three areas would serve as a strong foundation for CLAS to build upon in the future. If we couldn't achieve a consensus on a given course, we reasoned that the course could always be put forth later through the traditional "revise course" process; this would allow a more robust peer review for the CLAS C&C, and enable the proposing units to more clearly signal the connection between the course and the Skill Area through other aspects of the course (such as the title or description) when needed.

In many cases, we made obvious conclusions about a course's fit by comparing its syllabus and the proposer's justification to the Skill Area's learning outcomes. In other instances, we had to seek clarification with proposers to gain more insight into how a course fit into a given Skill Area. If the additional information we received helped clarify our questions or concerns, we moved the course forward; if some or all of the subcommittee still harbored concerns, or if the proposers did not respond to our request for more information, we made the decision not to align the course at this time.

Ultimately, we aligned 91 courses to the Skill Areas: 37 courses to *Communication and Dialogue*, 26 courses to *Information, Digital, and Media Literacy*, and 28 courses to *Leadership and Ethics*. There was a question of how the Skill Area courses would intersect with the Topics of Inquiry, and so we offer a preliminary table indicating this data below:

	No TOI	TOI 1	TOI 2	TOI 3	TOI 4	TOI 5	TOI 6
Comm. & Dialogue	23	3	6	6	2	6	0
Info, Digital, & Media Lit	12	5	6	2	3	4	2
Leadership & Ethics	15	2	3	4	4	7	0
	50*	10	13	12	9	17	2

It's worth noting a caveat in this data: Many of the courses labeled "No TOI" may still be undergoing Common Curriculum review and may move into one or two topics of Inquiry in the near future. Likewise, other courses that lack a TOI designation may have a W designation (for some or all sections) and thus intersect with the Common Curriculum in a different manner. While broader conclusions from this table would be premature, one thing we can assert is a fairly wide spread for the Skill Area courses *across* the TOIs. This helps to reaffirm CLAS's decision to add these Skill Area designations; they exist beyond the bounds of any one of our new Common Curriculum Topics of Inquiry.

Finally, we have spent some time reflecting on our experience in this process – including where we identified complications that could be made easier with future guidance. We plan to share a document with the full CLAS C&C prior to the end of the academic year where we note some recommendations for future Skill Area course reviews. We hope our recommendations will help ensure that the three areas can sustain in the college curriculum, and that the process of committee-wide review for the Skill Areas can continue smoothly into the future.

Submitted by Steve Stifano, Subcommittee Chair.

On behalf of the full subcommittee: Terry Berthelot, Matt McKenzie, Anne Oeldorf-Hirsch, Lionel Shapiro, and Lyn Tribble.