Expanding journalism education

The author says one of the biggest challenges facing the media world is a lack of "renaissance people," those with expertise in more than one subject area. Consider this: Bureau of Labor Statistics projects that between 2010 and 2020, the number of traditional reporters and correspondents will decrease by 7.5 percent. But the key word is traditional. Other predictions: technical writers are up 18.3 percent; public relations specialists, up 22 percent and software developers, up 27.6 percent.

Does this suggest that the traditional skill-set of a journalist is now incomplete? Does it mean that the timeless passions -- for truth, accuracy and the watchdog role of media -- should be coupled with technical know-how?

Levels of discussion:

Flashlight: Go to the database yourself. Review the occupations. What is the growth rate expected for editors, radio and television announcers, graphic designers and other media jobs?

Searchlight: Can you think of media jobs that aren't on the list? If you produced fact-based reports for a non-profit website rather than a media organization, what category would you fit into? Are new types of journalistic jobs being created that don't have categories? Would those employees be listed in wrong categories? Which ones?

Spotlight: Take a look at this student's blog post. Then look at the course offerings at your school. Is it possible for a student to split interests between different fields? Are students encouraged to be renaissance people who take, for example, journalism and computer science? Should they be?