

There has never been a time when media are not changing, so educating media professionals should always be in a state of flux.

For journalists, the past decade has been particularly difficult, as legacy media has shrunk, with newspapers closing, news bureaus disappearing and full time positions vanishing. Simultaneously, we have more news choices than ever before, in part because of freelance journalists.

The needs these journalists fill create workers who are particularly adaptive and creative—skills we would be wise to instill in our students.

During my recent faculty development leave, I interviewed and surveyed more than 50 freelance journalists who live and work in several countries, including Turkey, Egypt, Colombia, Israel, Canada, Kenya, France, Germany and the United States. My research revealed both the passion and the frustration of these journalists

While the basic skills of good journalism do not change, it is valuable to recognize and evaluate changing models. Independent and entrepreneurial freelancers have ideas that can help prepare Webster journalism students—and others-- to embrace the global realities of unpredictable and constant challenges.