1. **Involve Faculty from the Beginning.** Hold discussions with your faculty EARLY on and develop a strategy for involving them in development of the changes or revisions. Ensure “buy-in” from the beginning, instead of after the fact.

2. **Have some guiding principles.** First, what is going to be your focus area(s) (advertising, public relations, journalism, sports media, etc.)? Can you offer it all or do you want to be well known for one or two specialty areas? Second, what is going to be the primary “product” of your program? Is it professional training, liberal arts and social science education or a balance between the two?

3. **Revise/Update Rather than Overhaul.** Rather than a completely NEW curriculum, consider revising your course requirements, avoiding the institutional red tape often required when introducing a new major.

4. **Do your homework.** Speak with the chair of the university curriculum committee to get a good sense of what is required for curriculum change proposals. What are the committee’s primary concerns when reviewing proposals? What are typical mistakes to avoid? Getting curriculum approved is time-consuming. Speed up the process by checking with the chair in the beginning.

5. **Consider accreditation.** Check the specific standards required by accreditation agencies, and make sure your curriculum is consistent with expectations.

6. **Pilot test courses in emerging areas.** Avoid industry fads and trends by asking why it is important to change the curriculum now. There are often short-term “hot” topics that you think should be in the curriculum. Pilot test courses in these emerging areas to update course offerings without a major curriculum overhaul.

7. **Don’t forget the basics.** Be mindful of the fundamentals expected of journalism and mass communication graduates – writing, critical analysis, experience and familiarity with professional practice and relevant issues. Few new courses or industry-driven changes will overshadow the fundamentals that we know our graduates need for success.

8. **Prove you need it.** What career opportunities does a new course or program fill in two years (when those students taking it will graduate)? How does this change impact a graduate’s employability? Be ready to provide support from your “constituency” (industry, grad programs, etc.) that show how your changes will make a difference.

9. **Seek wise counsel.** Take the time to talk to others about potential changes. In addition to your faculty, speak with student services advisors about what they are hearing, meet with current students and recent graduates and seek insight from trusted industry advisors.

10. **It’s all about the students.** It is important to remember our job is to prepare students to be successful professionals. As faculty, we need to be open to curricular change and set an example of life-long learning if we expect it from our students.