

Quick Reference Guide: FACULTY & STAFF

Strategic, Tactical, and Operational Framework

For: Faculty, Advisors, Support Staff, Frontline Employees

Your Primary Role: OPERATIONAL EXCELLENCE

You create the “moment of truth” for students.

You are responsible for:

- Delivering high-quality instruction and student services daily
 - Implementing programs and processes effectively
 - Providing direct support to students
 - Offering feedback on what’s working (and what’s not)
 - Representing RCC’s mission in every interaction
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Key Questions You Should Ask

Strategic Level (Understand the Vision)

✓ **WHERE is RCC going?**

- What is RCC’s vision for the future?
- How does my work contribute to that vision?
- Why does RCC prioritize certain initiatives?

Tactical Level (Understand the Plan)

✓ HOW are we getting there?

- What programs is my department implementing?
- What resources and support are available?
- What changes are happening and why?

Operational Level (Your Primary Focus)

✓ WHAT do I do today?

- How do I serve students effectively in my role?
 - What processes should I follow?
 - How do I measure the quality of my work?
 - What can I do better tomorrow?
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Your Operational Responsibilities at RCC

1. Connect Your Daily Work to RCC's Mission

RCC's Mission: Transform student lives through education and create pathways to economic mobility.

Your Role in That Mission:

If you're a FACULTY MEMBER:

- Every class you teach prepares students for transfer or career success
- Your curriculum aligns with A2M requirements and industry standards
- You identify students who could benefit from A2M pathways
- You model academic excellence and professional behavior

If you're an ADVISOR:

- Every advising session moves a student closer to graduation

- You help students understand A2M opportunities and debt-free pathways
- You remove barriers and connect students to resources
- You track student progress and intervene when needed

If you're SUPPORT STAFF:

- Every form you process, every question you answer, every system you maintain enables student success
 - You create a welcoming, efficient, professional environment
 - You solve problems quickly and treat students with respect
 - You support faculty and advisors so they can focus on students
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2. Understand the A2M Model (Everyone Should Know This)

What is A2M? Associate to Master's—a partnership between RCC and Northeastern University that allows students to:

1. Earn an associate degree at RCC (FREE—no tuition)
2. Transfer to Northeastern for a bachelor's degree
3. Continue directly to a master's degree with scholarship support (\$10,000/year)

Result: Students can earn a master's degree with little to no debt.

Why It Matters:

- Master's degree holders earn 65% more than associate degree holders
- This is RCC's competitive advantage—no other community college offers this
- This is how RCC fulfills its economic mobility mission

Your Role:

- **Faculty:** Ensure your curriculum prepares students for transfer success
- **Advisors:** Identify A2M-eligible students early and guide them through the process
- **Staff:** Process A2M paperwork efficiently and answer student questions accurately

Key Message to Students:

“At RCC, you can earn a master’s degree debt-free. Let me show you how.”

3. Deliver Operational Excellence Daily

What does “operational excellence” mean?

For Faculty: ✓ Show up prepared for every class

✓ Use evidence-based teaching methods

✓ Provide timely, constructive feedback on assignments

✓ Hold office hours and be accessible to students

✓ Update curriculum to reflect current industry standards

✓ Refer struggling students to support services

✓ Treat every student with respect and high expectations

For Advisors: ✓ Respond to student inquiries within 24 hours

✓ Keep accurate advising notes in the system

✓ Proactively reach out to at-risk students

✓ Stay current on program requirements and policies

✓ Help students build realistic academic plans

✓ Connect students to financial aid, tutoring, and other resources

✓ Celebrate student successes

For Support Staff: ✓ Answer phones and emails professionally and promptly

✓ Process paperwork accurately and efficiently

✓ Maintain clean, organized, welcoming spaces

✓ Solve problems creatively within your authority

✓ Escalate issues appropriately when needed

✓ Keep systems and equipment functioning

✓ Support colleagues so they can serve students

Common Operational Pitfalls to Avoid

✗ Operational Myopia: Doing tasks without understanding why they matter

Solution: Ask your supervisor: “How does my work support RCC’s strategic goals?”

✗ Siloed Work: Not communicating with colleagues about student needs

Solution: Share information (within FERPA guidelines) to ensure students don't fall through cracks.

✗ Resistance to Change: "We've always done it this way"

Solution: Understand that tactical and strategic changes are meant to improve student outcomes.

✗ Inconsistent Quality: Some students get great service, others don't

Solution: Follow standard processes; document best practices; ask for training if needed.

✗ Burnout: Trying to do everything without asking for help

Solution: Set boundaries; use available resources; communicate workload concerns to your supervisor.

Your Communication Responsibilities

Communicate UP (to Your Supervisor)

What: Operational challenges, student feedback, process improvement ideas

How Often: Weekly check-ins, monthly one-on-ones

Format: Email updates, team meetings, individual conversations

Example: "Students are confused about A2M application deadlines. Can we create a simplified timeline handout?"

Communicate ACROSS (to Colleagues)

What: Student needs, coordination on shared students, best practices

How Often: As needed, regular team meetings

Format: Email, informal conversations, department meetings

Example: "I have a student who needs tutoring support in addition to advising. Can you help connect them?"

Communicate OUT (to Students)

What: Clear expectations, supportive feedback, resource information

How Often: Every interaction

Format: In-person, email, phone, learning management system

Example: “You’re doing great in this course. Have you considered the A2M pathway? You’d be a strong candidate for graduate school.”

How to Recognize Your Impact

You’re Making a Difference When:

Faculty:

- Students tell you they understand the material better because of your teaching
- Former students return to thank you for preparing them for transfer or career success
- Your course completion rates are high and students are learning

Advisors:

- Students follow your advice and make progress toward graduation
- Students you’ve advised transfer successfully or get good jobs
- Students refer their friends to you for advising

Staff:

- Students and colleagues thank you for solving their problems
 - Processes run smoothly because of your attention to detail
 - Your work environment is welcoming and efficient
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Metrics That Reflect Your Work

Operational KPIs (You Contribute to These)

Faculty:

- Course completion rates (target: 75%+)
- Student satisfaction scores (target: 4.0+/5.0)
- Transfer readiness (students meeting prerequisites)

Advisors:

- Advising appointment attendance (target: 90%+)
- Student retention semester-to-semester (target: 80%+)
- Graduation rate for your caseload

Staff:

- Processing time for paperwork (target: within 5 business days)
- Accuracy rate (target: 95%+)
- Student satisfaction with services

Remember: These metrics aren't about judging you—they're about improving student outcomes.

Your Role in the Communication Plan

Phase 1: Leadership Alignment (Weeks 1-4)

Your Role: None yet—leadership is aligning on strategy

Phase 2: Middle Management Training (Weeks 5-8)

Your Role: Your supervisor is learning how to support you better

Phase 3: All-Staff Engagement (Weeks 9-12) — YOUR FOCUS

Your Actions:

- Attend town hall or department meeting on the framework
 - Ask questions about how your work connects to strategic goals
 - Provide feedback on operational challenges
 - Commit to operational excellence
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Immediate Action Checklist

- Ask your supervisor:** “How does my work support RCC’s strategic goals?”
 - Learn about A2M:** Review program materials so you can explain it to students
 - Identify one process improvement:** What could make your work more efficient or student-centered?
 - Connect with a colleague:** Share a best practice or ask for advice
 - Celebrate a student success:** Recognize a student who’s making progress
 - Reflect on quality:** What’s one thing you could do better tomorrow?
 - Provide feedback:** Submit one suggestion via the online feedback form
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Quick Reference: The 5Ps Framework

Every RCC employee should understand the 5Ps:

5P	What It Means	Your Role
Purpose	RCC's mission is economic mobility	Help students achieve career and transfer goals
People	RCC serves diverse, underserved students	Provide culturally responsive, equitable support
Place	RCC's campus should be welcoming and modern	Keep your space clean, organized, and accessible
Programs	RCC offers high-quality academic programs	Deliver excellent instruction and advising
Partnerships	RCC collaborates with universities and employers	Connect students to A2M and career opportunities

Frequently Asked Questions

Q: Why do I need to understand strategic and tactical levels if I'm focused on operational work?

A: Because understanding the "why" behind your work makes it more meaningful and helps you make better decisions. When you know that your daily work contributes to RCC's mission of economic mobility, you're more engaged and effective.

Q: What if I disagree with a strategic or tactical decision?

A: Share your feedback through appropriate channels (your supervisor, department meetings, feedback form). Operational employees often have the best insights about what works and what doesn't. But once a decision is made, commit to implementing it professionally.

Q: How do I balance operational excellence with my workload?

A: Focus on the highest-impact activities first. If you're overwhelmed, talk to your supervisor about priorities. Operational excellence doesn't mean perfection—it means consistently doing your best work within realistic constraints.

Q: What if students ask me questions I can't answer?

A: It's okay to say "I don't know, but I'll find out" or "Let me connect you with someone

who can help.” What matters is that you follow through and ensure the student gets the information they need.

Q: How can I contribute to strategic goals when I’m not in a leadership role?

A: Your daily work IS the strategy in action. Every student you teach, advise, or support is a step toward RCC’s vision. Operational excellence is how strategy becomes reality.

Resources

A2M Program Information: Available from Academic Affairs or Advising

Interactive Webpage: RCC Strategic Alignment Portal

Full Presentation: Available with speaker notes

Questions or Feedback: Submit via online feedback form

Support: Talk to your supervisor or contact HR for additional resources

Remember

You are not “just” faculty, “just” an advisor, or “just” staff. You are the face of RCC.

- **Understand strategy:** Know WHERE RCC is going (economic mobility, A2M, debt-free pathways)
- **Support tactics:** Help your department implement programs effectively
- **Own operations:** Deliver excellent service every single day
- **Provide feedback:** You see what works and what doesn’t—share that insight

The most important question you can ask:

“How can I serve this student better today?”

The most important thing to remember:

Every interaction with a student is a “moment of truth” that can change their life.

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