

## The First Five Minutes: Setting the Agenda in a Writing Conference

Thomas Newkirk

Freshmen are usually allowed to hide—at least at large universities. Most of their courses meet in large lecture halls where they are taught by professors who don't, who really can't, learn the names of their students. In class, students listen and take notes, but do not speak. Examinations, by necessity, take the form of multiple-choice or short-answer questions, and the results are posted by Social Security number with an accompanying distribution curve to indicate where the student ranks.

The invariable exception to this pattern is freshman composition where, for better or worse, the student cannot hide. The student is called by name and, on an almost weekly basis, receives a response to his or her writing. Hiding is particularly difficult in the composition course where teacher and student meet for regular conferences in which the student must speak, explain, evaluate; where he or she must make what are often the first awkward steps in the direction of analytic conversation, the staple of the academic world. I will contend in this chapter that these meetings, and in particular the first few minutes of these meetings, constitute some of the most poignant dramas in the university.

I don't mean to overemphasize the confrontational nature of the writing conference by echoing Joe Louis's warning to Billy Conn—"You can run, but you can't hide." Most conferences seem casual, supportive; there is regular laughter and, at the end of the course, appreciation for the personal attention received. But the seemingly effortless, conversational quality of conferences belies their complexity, for both teacher and student are filling paradoxical roles. The teacher must balance two opposing mandates: on the one hand to respond to the student, to evaluate, to suggest possible revisions and writing strategies; and on the other to encourage the student to take the initiative, to self-evaluate, to make decisions, to take control of the paper. There is no neat

way to reconcile these mandates, no formula to prevent missteps—just the endless prospect of gambling, of risking silence at some points and assertiveness at others.

The student meets this dilemma from the other end and fills a role at least as paradoxical. When asked the question, "What did you think of your paper?" or one of its many variants, the student knows that the question is really, "How did you (acting as member of a community that you are not yet a member of) react to this paper?" Furthermore, the person asking the question is a member of that community and very likely has a better answer—at least in the opinion of the student. Yet, despite the awkwardness of the situation, the student recognizes (usually) that the question is a valid one and works to formulate an answer. So if the teacher is a gambler, the student is often the actor, pretending her or his way into a role.

To complicate matters further, both student and teacher need to come to a meeting of minds fairly early in a writing conference; they need to set an agenda, agree to one or two major concerns that will be the focus of the conference. The agenda often deals with a possible revision of the paper, but there are other possibilities: it could deal with the writing process of the student or with a paper that is yet to be written. Unless a commonly-agreed-upon agenda is established, a conference can run on aimlessly and leave both participants with the justifiable feeling that they have wasted time. The efficient setting of an agenda is particularly important in the conferences that will be analyzed in this chapter. Each lasts about fifteen minutes and, in some, part of this time is used for reading the paper. There is little time to meander.

The conferences were held as part of the freshman English course at the University of New Hampshire and occurred in the third week of the course (in most cases they were the second student-teacher conference). In virtually all sections of freshman English, students are not graded until mid-semester and then only on work that both student and instructor feel is the best produced to that point. For that reason, instructors in these early conferences are not under pressure to give or justify grades. Each conference was taped by the instructor, a first-semester teaching assistant, who transcribed the conference and then annotated it, identifying crucial junctures and critical mistakes. The procedure used by Carnicelli (1980) served as a model.

I will present the opening segments, lasting about five minutes, of three conferences that show different ways in which agendas are negotiated or fail to be negotiated. The papers for these conferences are similar; they are first drafts dealing with personal experiences, and, like many early papers in freshman English, they lack focus. An instructor reading these papers away from the student could conceivably write a similar comment for each. But the student is present, and this presence changes the nature of the teaching act.

### "IT MIGHT BE KIND OF DUMB..."

The paper for the following conference was entitled "My Favorite Course," five double-spaced pages which began with the student's love for horses as a child (she had a toy palomino). From this beginning she moves on to describe how she was admitted to a horsemanship course, the things she has learned so far in the course, and positive and negative points about her horse. After reading the paper (and before reading the transcript), I expected the conference to deal with the issue of focus. But it didn't, and the reason why should be evident from the opening segment (in this and the following transcriptions, *T* = teacher and *S* = student):

*T*: All right, now let's talk about your paper. I'm going to spend a few minutes on it now and then we'll talk about it.

*S*: OK. [Teacher reads paper]

*T*: OK. Uh, why don't you tell me a little about your paper. What was it like writing it?

*S*: Oh, I liked it. I really like the class, you know, and I liked writing about it.

*T*: So you enjoyed it?

*S*: Yeah. it's a fun class.

*T*: Was it a fun paper?

*S*: Yeah. Well, you know, I wanted to write about it. Maybe it's really boring because I really just wrote it for me, but I guess I just wanted to. It, you know, doesn't say much. Just about my class.

*T*: Well, I enjoyed reading it. It was fun reading it. I could see, I could tell that you liked the class and I liked the way your enthusiasm really shows.

*S*: Yeah.

*T*: Was there a part that you really enjoyed writing?

*S*: Well, I enjoyed writing the whole paper pretty much.

*T*: Uh huh. Is there a part you liked best, you know, a favorite part?

*S*: Oh, yeah. I really liked the part about Trigger [the toy horse]. Remembering him. I still have him somewhere at home. It might be kind of dumb though, a plastic horse.

*T*: Oh no. I really liked that. I had a dog, a stuffed shaggy dog that I remembered while reading it. He's somewhere now. I guess everyone grows up with these animals and then keeps them forever. [Laughter.] But I liked that

part, I could really relate to it. Was there a part that you thought needed work still? You know, something you were sort of unhappy with?

*S*: Well, I wondered if it would be boring. You know, too long. It doesn't really say much.

*T*: Did you, uh, did you want it to say something? What did you want to tell me?

*S*: Oh, well. I just wanted to tell you about my riding class.

*T*: Uh huh.

*S*: That's all.

*T*: Uh huh. Um. You know you told me about yourself, too.

*S*: What?

*T*: Well, that part about Trigger?

*S*: Oh yeah. [Laughs.]

*T*: And you know, about being tested. Your dedication. Not only getting up at the crack of dawn and all, but the work. Like it sounds like you're really working your body, so it's a lot of hard work as well as fun.

This conference stumbles at the beginning over the reference to "it." In the first five exchanges, the teacher uses "it" three times, in each case referring to the paper or the writing of the paper. The student uses "it" three times, each time referring to the horsemanship class and ultimately leading her to misunderstand the teacher's question:

*T*: So you enjoyed it?

*S*: Yeah. It's a fun class.

*T*: Was it a fun paper?

One senses the student's lack of familiarity with the intent of the conference and her lack of awareness that the teacher's primary concern at this point in the conference is with the process of writing. The student doesn't, in fact, quite know what it means to "talk about your paper." This discomfort with the analytic intent of the conference becomes even more evident when the teacher pushes (ever so gently) for a critical evaluation of the paper.

In response to the teacher's request for an analytic judgment, the student consistently gives a global evaluation—of the paper, of the class, and most devastatingly, of herself. When asked to tell about the writing of the paper (an implicit request for analysis), the writer replies with, "Oh, I liked it."

When asked, this time more explicitly, if there was a "part that you really enjoyed writing," the student replies that she liked "writing the whole paper pretty much." And again later in the segment, when asked about the main point of the paper, she replies globally that she "just wanted to tell you about my riding class." The only tentative move toward an analytic view is the student's admission that she liked the part about the toy horse. For this student, the text seems to exist as a whole that cannot be differentiated into features or parts. And because she brings this frame to her paper, the teacher comes up empty in most of the exchanges.

But not totally empty. For in these replies, the student is making clear her lack of confidence in her own writing ability and her doubts about the validity of her experience as a topic for writing. In these first few minutes the student characterizes her writing as: "boring" (twice), "it doesn't say much," "it might be kind of dumb," and "too long." It is this message that the teacher picks up on and makes the focus of the conference agenda. In her analysis of the conference, the teacher wrote:

*She told me in a previous conference...[that] she is the first one of her extended family to go to college. Her self-confidence is very shaky, and she considers her acceptance into UNH to be a fluke. She doesn't think she is "college material." She has a pattern of trashing herself, telling me how "dumb" she is compared to all the "real" students around her.... I have an agenda of support for her and, if possible, some sort of positive response against her habit of self-denigration.*

So the teacher gambles. She focuses on supporting the student, allaying the student's fears that she is an inadequate writer and that her experiences are "boring." The gamble is that by ignoring, for a time, various technical problems in the writing and by emphasizing the positive, the writer will, in the near future, gain enough confidence to deal with these technical matters. Another gamble is that this support will not be taken by the student as a definitive evaluation—"I enjoyed reading it" may be translated by the student into "This is an A paper." The teacher gambles...and waits.

### "...LIKE A MACK TRUCK"

The second conference deals with an untitled paper about the function of pets. It begins in a fairly technical way with the sentence, "I wonder what part domestic animals play in the ecosystem." For most of the paper, however, the writer shifts to a more casual language to describe her own relationship with her dog as they went out in the woods after a snow:

*She would suddenly stop, lie on the ground and chew at the ice. Sometimes it was severe enough to cause her paws to bleed leaving red splotches on the snow. I knew it was more painful for her if I attempted to yank out the ice.*

At the end of the paper, the writer returns to the more distant vocabulary of the beginning, when she concludes that "Pets are machines for us to lavish affection on or proclaim superiority over."

The paper alone suggests two major issues. The radical shift of tone after the beginning is jolting, and the conclusion comparing pets to machines seems at odds with the affectionate description of the writer's relationship with her own pet. Ironically, both teacher and student in the following excerpt agree on the central problem in the paper, yet the conference misfires badly.

T: Now, what did you think your purpose was in writing the paper?

S: Well, I was just kind of dealing with the fact that people have animals. And are nice to them. And we're not really nice to other organisms besides ourselves. You know, I wonder why people are so uncommonly nice to domesticated animals.

T: Yeah? So—umm—did you come to any conclusion about that?

S: No. [Laughs.]

T: But at the end you say: "I have had a pet as a companion. Pets are machines for us to lavish affection on or to proclaim superiority over." That sounds like you've come to a conclusion.

S: Well, it's more of an observation.

T: Oh. You see, I think it's a false conclusion. I mean I think you still don't know.

S: I don't.

T: And I think it's better that you don't know. I mean you're saying there ought to be some reason for this, but I love my dog.

S: Yeah.

T: And so for me the last paragraph was—I think I said that before—that you have a tendency to be asking questions and think you have to find some answer.

S: Umhummm.

T: And I don't think—I mean whatever answer you find, it's probably going to be a question and it's probably going to be inherent in the whole piece.

S: So I don't really have to...

T: You're saying, "God this is strange, we're funny creatures." And that's the answer. You don't have to what?

S: I don't have to make it so—like I ought to stick on this conclusion—which is unnecessary.

T: And also, when you do that you tend to lapse into this scientific language that really—you sound like you've turned into a computer or something.... Were there any parts of this that you liked better than other parts, that you enjoyed writing?

S: Yeah, I liked describing—like the skiing and walking through the woods and stuff. I enjoy writing like that. 'Cause I enjoy doing it so...

T: And were there any parts that gave you trouble?

S: I don't think so. It's kind of like—I felt that it wasn't—like I—this first part, you know, I was just wondering in general and then I kinda switched into my own experience and that wasn't too smooth, I don't think. Yeah, you know, I just—the part where I was describing what we did.

T: Yeah, well you need the—let's see: "I wonder what part domestic animals play in the ecosystem.... Domesticated animals are personalized diversions for humans." See, you've answered it too soon.

S: But...that's like an observation.

What stands out in this conference is the domination of the teacher. She speaks more than twice as much as the student (351 to 162 words), but a word count alone does not make clear the nature of that domination. The teacher seems to have in mind what Knoblauch and Brannon (1984) call an "ideal text." She has an image of the true version which this paper should ultimately conform to. In this truer state, the paper would illustrate, through the description of the author and her pet, the reasons why we treat pets in special ways. The language of the paper would be "human" and avoid broad assertions that might *answer* the question raised in the paper; rather, the author should indicate no more certainty than to suggest that, "God this is strange, we're funny creatures." Indeed, just after the excerpt I've quoted here, the teacher offers the student language from this ideal text, urging the student to qualify her assertions with "it seems to me..."—whereupon the student reminds the teacher that their textbook tells them to avoid "it seems."

Many changes that the student might make in moving toward this ideal text *would* improve the writing. The conclusion does seem too assured, and it doesn't deal with the complexity of the question raised. The problem is the lack of negotiation in the conference. The teacher identifies a problem and suggests remedies before the student is even convinced that a problem exists. Even at the very end of this first segment, the student repeats her justi-

fication of the conclusions as "observations." Paradoxically, when given an opportunity to state her own judgment of the paper, the student identifies the mismatch between the opening and the descriptive parts which, she claimed, she enjoyed writing more than the "scientific" opening. This judgment is not really so far from the agenda the teacher opens with. The conference might have looked a great deal different if the teacher had begun by focusing on the effectiveness of the descriptive passages and then encouraged the student to fit the opening and conclusions to this effective writing.

But because the teacher's agenda is set rather inflexibly early on, she misses this and other opportunities to build on the observations of the student. The student is shut out in two ways: first, she is put on the defensive when the instructor calls her conclusion "false." Then, even when the conclusion/observation issue is momentarily dropped, the teacher doesn't hear the student's contributions. When the student attempts a summary of the teacher's suggestions about the conclusion, the teacher changes the subject:

S: I don't have to make it so—like I ought to stick on this conclusion—which is unnecessary.

T: And also, when you do that you tend—to lapse into this scientific language.

It is not at all clear that the student understands what is to be done with the ending, but the teacher moves on. Similarly, she fails to follow up on the student's comment about enjoying the writing of the descriptive parts. In her analysis of the transcript, the instructor admits that when the student identifies the problem with the shift from scientific to more casual descriptive language, she "stubbornly cling[s] to my diagnosis about questions and answers." This conference illustrates what Freedman and Sperling (1985) call "cross-purpose talk":

*With no match in focal concern, T and S will likely be talking at cross purposes and may not even be attending to what the other is saying.... This cross-purpose talk manifests itself in a T-S conference when S and T each bring up a topic of concern over and over again, no matter what the other wants to focus on, indicating that T and S often have different agendas for what needs to be covered in the conference. (117)*

The teacher reviewing the conference put the problem a bit more bluntly: "Mea culpa. I ran over this kid like a Mack truck."

### "IT JUST DIDN'T MAKE SENSE"

The final conference excerpt deals with a paper called "Mailaholic," which attempts to explain the writer's addiction to getting letters. It starts out in a

lighthearted, almost "cute" way, detailing her love of various kinds of stamps and stationery and the way she and other dorm members place unopened letters on their lunch trays to flaunt the fact that someone has written to them. Then, as in the previous paper, there is a shift in tone, and, in brief paragraphs, the writer explains what letters from mother, boyfriend, and best friend mean. At first reading, this short paper—about 700 words total—seems the least promising of the three (the word superficial comes to mind). But like an expert canoeist, the teacher follows the current of the student's language to a real insight.

T: How do you feel about this paper?

S: I don't like it. I like the topic. I like the title, but I had a hard time...I had a lot of ideas I wanted to put in...and they didn't seem to flow. Like I read the paper that you gave us Thursday...I just liked it. Like everything flowed and went together smoothly. And this, I'm like...it just doesn't say anything. I wanted to say something but I didn't say it the right way,

T: OK. Tell me what you were trying to say...in a few sentences...if you had to tell me what your paper was about.

S: How much getting a letter means to me: But I just...I don't know...I like a lot of times, you know, it just didn't make sense. It was like I didn't know how to say it.

T: Do you think you addressed that anywhere on the page?

S: Yeah. I think where I'm saying about how I go about reading a letter. You know after I...if there's one there...after I've gotten a letter and just sit there and let everyone see it. And then when I get in the privacy of my own room...then I read it, 'cause then I feel I'm with the person rather than having all this noise around me and I can't concentrate.

T: Yes?

S: And then if I don't get a letter...I like sort of envy them and am real jealous. And it's like when they do what I do...it's wrong because they're hurting me. I do the same thing. I put it on my lunch tray and let everyone see the letter.

T: Yes?

S: I like that part of it. Maybe I just don't like the beginning or how I get into it. I don't like the transitions. Sometimes I don't see how I get where I'm going.

T: OK. Then you think that perhaps you were trying to find your topic, found it, and then ran out of it?

S: Yeah.

T: Where do you think you really started to get into it?

S: On the second page.

T: All right...

S: But I don't really dig into the mess. What I understood about it is...I think that's where I actually start talking about what I mean to say about it, you know.

T: Yes?

S: So I suppose if I just cut off the first page and start it out with the rest?

T: Yes?

S: What I should try to do...

T: What other kind of things are you trying to say?

S: Uh...

T: When you think about what getting a letter really means.

S: Well, on the last page...about when I get a letter from my boyfriend, or my best friend, or my mom...what feelings I get when I get it...a letter from them.

By this point the agenda is set. The rest of the conference explores what these feelings are, and as the writer talks, she moves beyond the juvenile tone of the original draft to an insight into her own need for letters:

S: And like I was really close to my mom this summer. So it's like I'm up here and I don't want them to forget me. And so I just want to keep grasping...you know...to make sure that life is still going on. And when I go home...everything isn't going to be the same, but it isn't going to be dramatically different.

While this observation still relies, to a degree, on the commonplace "make sure that *life is still going on*," the writer seems to have found a reason for her need for letters.

She has been able to make these moves toward understanding because the teacher gave her room. The ratio of teacher talk to student talk differs radically from the second conference quoted earlier. Here the teacher speaks only 97 words to the student's 397, and in many of the exchanges she simply prods the student with a "yes." Such a ratio, of course, may not be an "ideal" to work towards; so much student talk could be digressive. But in this case, the student seems to be working from a global and unformed dissatisfaction with her paper to a more analytic evaluation that will guide her revision. The writer's initial evaluative responses were scattered: it doesn't "flow," it has

a lot of ideas, it "doesn't say anything," and "I don't think I did it the right way." The teacher's question about the intent of the paper causes the writer to identify her purposes—to explain what letters meant to her. And again, in response to the teacher's question, the student notes that only on the second page does she really deal with her newly stated purpose. The writer is closing in; she admits that although she begins to deal with her focus on the second page, she doesn't "really dig into the mess." The teacher then pushes her in this direction by asking what things she was trying to say about getting letters; the agenda for the rest of the conference is set.

Or almost set. The student does offer up a concern early in the conference—a concern the teacher wisely ignores. In her first evaluation of the paper, the student says, "I don't think I did it the right way." This comment, common in an early writing conference, suggests that the student has been taught some ironclad rules for writing essays, and she wants to see whether these rules still apply. Toward the end of the conference, this concern once again surfaces as the student asks about her conclusion:

S: When you write a conclusion, is it supposed to be restating the beginning of the thing? I had a hard time. I didn't know how to end it.

The teacher responds that the writer must decide for herself and that each paper is different.

Finally, this conference illustrates the role of talk in revision. Revision is often used synonymously with rewriting; we change our writing by writing again and making changes. The student in this conference is revising by talking; she is creating an alternative text, an oral text that can be juxtaposed against the one she has written. The next draft she might write is not simply a nebulous possibility; rather, it is a draft that has, to a degree, been spoken. Near the end of the conference the teacher asks what she might do next, and the student answers, "I think I'll probably cut off the first page and a half and work on...I don't know...giving examples. *Like what I told you a few minutes ago.*"

This emphasis on allowing students to speak these oral texts may seem almost insultingly self-evident. But in reading and annotating these transcripts, teachers were appalled at the opportunities that were missed—when they cut off students, and when they told students to expand a section rather than allowing them to expand orally. Students did not get a chance to hear what they know.

## IMPLICATIONS

The lessons to be learned from this kind of self-examination are painfully obvious—but worth remembering because, in our eagerness to teach, we often forget the obvious.

1. We all tend to talk too much. The little lecturettes that pop up in writing conferences usually bring things to a grinding halt.
2. The opening minutes of the conference are critically important in giving the conference direction—they act as a kind of *lead*. The student's contributions in these opening minutes need to be used to give the conference a mutually agreeable and mutually understood direction.
3. These agendas should be limited to one or two major concerns. Conferences seem to break down when a discussion about a "high-level" concern like purpose veers abruptly to a discussion of sentence structure.
4. Potentially, student contributions to the agenda-setting process often are missed if the teacher has *fixed* on a problem early. It is particularly easy for the teacher to fix on the agenda if he or she takes the papers home and marks them up before the conference. Furthermore, a marked-up paper indicates to the student that the agenda has *already* been set.
5. While the teacher must be responsive to the student's contributions in the writing conference, this does not mean that the teacher is nondirective. Students like the one in the first conference, may at first be unfamiliar with the evaluative-analytic language of the writing conference. These students often need to see how the teacher reads so they might get an operative understanding of what a term like "focus" means. The modeling described by Richard Beach (this volume) is vitally important in this type of conference.

Unfortunately, listing conclusions like this implies that the difficulty of conferences can be smoothed out and problems prevented. This is not my position.

I see the writing conference as a dialectic encounter between teacher and student, in which both assume complex roles. The teacher, in particular, cannot escape the difficult choices between praise and support, suggestion and silence, each choice carrying with it a risk. For that reason, I am uncomfortable with some of the metaphors increasingly used to describe this complex relationship, many of which echo private property and contractual law. The writer, we are told, "owns" the text, which should not be "appropriated" by the teacher (Knoblauch and Brannon 1982). Graves (1983) has similarly urged that the student has "ownership" of the text. Knoblauch and Brannon (1984) describe the ideal reading of a student text as follows:

*It is the rare composition teacher who reads student writing with the assumption that composers legitimately control their own discourses, who accepts the possibility that student intentions matter more than teacher expectations as a starting-point for reading, and who recognizes that the writer's choices are supposed to make sense mainly in terms of those intentions, not in proportion as they gratify a reader's point of view of what should have been said. (120)*

The polarization of terms in this description is striking: student intentions/teacher expectations, student control/teacher control. And the term "legitimately" introduces, once again, the implication that in defining the role of the teacher we are working within clear, almost legal, boundaries.

But if we push on these metaphors a bit, they wobble. Ownership implies clear property lines guaranteed by legal statutes that are (at least to lawyers) clearly spelled out. For the most part, those who own property can do what they want to with it, so long as the owner is not creating a major inconvenience to others. Those of us who view the property may have opinions about the esthetics of the house built on it, but the owner need not listen, and we need to be very careful about passing on these judgments.

The metaphor of ownership is not slippery enough. To a degree, the student owns his or her paper, but the paper is *intended* for others in the way property isn't; and so, to a degree, the writing is also owned by its readers. No one (I hope) condones the practice condemned by Knoblauch and Brannon in which students must guess at some Platonic text that exists in the teacher's imagination. But by the same token, the expectations of the teacher, the course, and the academy must interact with the intentions of the student. Intention, in other words, cannot be an absolute, a "God-term."

Let's take this paragraph you are now beginning to read. Who owns it—you or I? Does my intention *matter* more than your response? Questions like these divide the writing act in an unhelpful way. The text is neither mine nor yours—no one owns it. Even in writing it, I didn't feel that I was putting *my* meaning into language that would fit *your* needs. Rather, there was a constant interplay between audience and intention so that I can no longer disentangle my meanings from your expectations. I did not feel set against you, my audience; rather, you became part of me in the act of writing. And so it is in a good writing conference, like the third one I quoted, where the teacher becomes an active instrument in the student's search for meaning.

I began this chapter by claiming that few courses at the university push freshmen to assume responsibility for their own learning. I'd like to close with an instance of one that did, a philosophy course, which caused an almost Copernican shift in the writer's view of what it is to be a student. It is, I believe, the same kind of shift that a good writing course can initiate. The paper, written for a freshman English course, is entitled "Philosophy is Messing Up My Life," and it begins with the anxiety the student felt about taking an introductory philosophy course. At first the professor appeared intimidating, with a "strong philosophical nose, and eyes that could eat a question mark right through you." When the roll was called the writer barely managed an audible "here." Once the class started, the student opened his notebook and expected the instructor to begin by writing a definition of philosophy on the board. But he didn't. He asked questions to show the students that philosophy is, in this student's words, a "process of

questioning and answering things you don't understand in an attempt to arrive at the 'right' answer, which usually doesn't exist anyway."

This process of questioning has taken hold and started to "mess up his life":

*I start out by asking myself questions about life. I've come up with some disturbing answers.... The reason I called this paper "Philosophy Is Messing Up My Life" is because most of the answers make me look bad. I don't like that at all. Realizing that I have a philosophy has opened up a whole new world for me that I never knew existed. I'm not sure I'm ready for the truth yet. But I've made truth my responsibility...*

When we push students to speak, to evaluate; when we listen and don't rush in to fill silences, we may be able to transform the rules of studenthood in the way this philosophy professor did. And when we pose this challenge, we will be working at the very epicenter of a liberal education.

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