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Honors 100
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Autumn Quarter Reflection

Entering the University of Washington, my spirit was filled with excitement and worries. I wanted my first quarter to be memorable and check off the goals I had off my list with ease. Moving into my first apartment? Check. Learn how to ride the bus? Check. Attend my first lecture? Check. The first two weeks flew by so quickly and effortlessly. As assignments started to build and midterms crept closer, I felt overwhelmed. I wasn't completing my goals as quickly as before or even feeling confident in the quality of the work I was producing. It was not a good feeling to say the least. After many meaningful conversations with my friends and even with myself, I took a moment to recognize I held myself to a critically high standard.

I expected myself to adapt to a new environment with no issues, which is completely unrealistic. Trying to do everything at once was mentally and physically draining. I am learning to take care of myself and reach out to others for extra support. Transitioning from high school to college, not to mention adjusting to a worldwide pandemic, has shifted what I value and how I want to spend my time. Instead of worrying about all that I have to do here in four years at the UW, I simply want to be present each and every day.

Despite these hardships, I took on a few challenges that have resulted in some new opportunities. I was determined to figure out how I could begin meeting the requirements for my major, and even what major I wanted to pursue. After meeting with my advisor, I am planning to pursue a double major in Political Science and Education, Communities, and Organizations. Being able to hear from an advisor who knows the steps I need to take to achieve my goals really helped to centralize my thoughts and diminish my concerns. In addition to this step, I also applied to the Undergraduate Community-Based Internships (UCBI). As I applied, I was anxious about having to handle a rejection as I am a freshman and had not had the chance to build my college experience. To my surprise, I was offered an interview to all three of the organizations I applied to. Though I am still in the waiting process, I am appreciative of the opportunities I took on and I am excited to see what experiences I am presented with.

As the first fall quarter is beginning to wrap up, I am excited to see what next quarter brings. By the end of this first year, I want to have more confidence in my abilities and be content with the progress I make each day, knowing that I will always have a chance to continue improving tomorrow. I want to have a concrete system that balances the academic standards I set myself to and the life I have outside of my school work. I have had the chance to learn what works best for me in both my academics and outside of it too. I've learned how to take notes that help me retain information, how much time I should spend reading everyday, and how to evenly distribute my work throughout the week. More importantly, I've understood how I can take care of my mental and physical self, how late I am willing to stay up for the sake of school, and how to show my appreciation to others. This beginning has presented me with highs and lows, but I am starting to understand it's all a part of the process. As long as I can push past the obstacles and be grateful for the moments where all I feel is joy, I know everything will work out in the end.

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