

Autumn Quarter Reflection

When I first began classes this quarter, I was nervous to say the least. I was worried that classes and extracurriculars would be too much to handle, or that I would not be able to keep up with my peers. But I was also optimistic – excited to meet new people and have new experiences. In my first assignment for HONORS 100 (an essay about my journey to the University of Washington) my main goal for the quarter was to get involved in the UW community in a meaningful way.

Looking back on this quarter, I've worked towards this goal, joining RSOs and taking on responsibility. My goals, however, have changed and become less definite as I've become aware of the many different opportunities. I've also surprised myself. At the start of the year, I was afraid of over-committing myself – afraid of being busy. However, I've been able to manage my classes while also planning and participating in events for extracurriculars. I've been busy, and I've realized that I love being busy.

Throughout the quarter, I have also reshaped my expectations for myself and my perception of what it means to be a college student. As a high school student, I had an idealized perception of college students: once I entered college, I would need to be a perfect student who had everything together, and I thought getting the most out of college meant not making mistakes. As I've met and talked to more UW students, I've realized that I do not need to project an image of perfection to contribute to the university community. Many of the students I've talked to have shared how they've made mistakes, they've been rejected from internships, they've felt imposter syndrome – in short, they aren't perfect. But they have accomplished and grown so much. I looked up to my peers when I first started at UW, but I hold a deeper admiration now – and I appreciate myself more as well.

As I continue at UW and in Honors, I hope to continue to get involved. I would like to pursue research and join more extracurriculars across broader disciplines – for example, I recently joined Synaptech, a neurotechnology club that explores the intersection of medicine and engineering. I am also looking forward to taking more classes. My course load next quarter will be more intense than the classes I'm taking this quarter, so I hope to continue to develop my time management skills to not only do well in my classes but engage more deeply with the material. If it is possible in the future, I might also consider participating in a study abroad program. I originally thought study abroad was not for me, but after Honors 100, I've seen how many options exist for study abroad and I've discovered a few that might interest me.

By the end of my time at the University of Washington, I hope to have an initial path in life and have developed the skills to pursue this path. Though I don't know where I will be in four years, and my path after college won't even be set at the time of graduation, I look forward to exploring different directions and disciplines. I look forward to engaging with different points of view and changing my own perspectives. In general, I look forward to forming a deeper understanding of the world and how I can participate in it.

Word count: 567