* *How were your initial ideas about leadership changed throughout this course? How did they stay the same or be reinforced?*
* *In future leadership roles, what kind of leader do you want to be perceived as and how would you hope to demonstrate that?*
* *What did you learn from your PE check in, the H397 course, and self-reflections in Autumn?*
* *What are some goals you would hope to achieve if you were to do other student leadership positions in the future?*

One of the things I’ve been working on throughout my two years as an Honors Peer Educator is being comfortable with being a peer and an educator both. I previously defaulted to thinking about leadership in a very hierarchical way, based on my prior experiences in school and work, and my position in the family as the oldest of four children. It’s been a challenge for me to approach teaching from the same level as my students – perhaps a bit older and more experienced, but still a fellow student, a peer. I’ve even had to check myself in our H397 class in my role as a returning Peer Educator, remembering not to dominate conversations, to keep myself open to always learning and improving. Now at the end of this course, I feel like I have found success in balancing my roles as both a peer and an educator, finding ways to impart information while still joking and relating and having a good time.

I hope to carry over what I’ve learned about meeting students at their level to future leadership experiences. I particularly spend a lot of time working with children, and while I have always known that kids appreciate when you don’t underestimate them, treating them as an equal, I sometimes forget to put this into practice, defaulting to my position as the person in control. Even in group projects and other academic or workplace-based interactions with peers, I enjoy being in charge and delegating, confident that my way is the right way to get the job done well. I hope that my experience as a Peer Educator and my practice with working with students on a similar level to me will help me to be a more empathetic and responsive leader overall.

Throughout H397 and my Peer Educator reflections and check-ins, I have been reminded about how much I love working with UW Honors and helping incoming students to navigate their transition into college. I frequently found myself deeply invested in my students’ lives and their progress in the course, spending hours answering emails and responding to assignments in depth. I wanted every student to have the chance to feel recognized and heard. I would love to find a way to continue to do similar work in the future, whether it’s continuing to facilitate panels for incoming Honors students, finding ways to work with students in the classroom or through mentorship roles, or even just remembering to check in on classmates and friends to be that listening ear when they need it.

If I were to pursue other student leadership roles in the future, I would love to be able to reassure students who may be feeling nervous at tremulous stages of their journey, to offer clarity as best I can, and to connect them with resources that can help them beyond just what I can do, whether that be advising, counseling, or even just RSOs. I would also love the chance to work as a teaching assistant after I graduate, particularly if I enroll in an MFA program as is my current intention, or possibly in a TA or advising position through UW if grad school isn’t in the cards for me yet. I feel like it’s so useful for students to be able to talk to peers who have similar experiences and interests to them, whether they be academic or personal – I know that I have found it hugely helpful to speak with professors and advisors working in the fields that I am interested in exploring as role models, and equally I have enjoyed connecting with classmates who can share with me their insights and experiences. I want to continue to be a leader in whatever sphere I wind up in, connecting with and (hopefully) inspiring others to traverse the paths where I have left footprints behind.