Intellectual virtues refer to deep personal qualities and good habits of the mind that enable us to achieve truth, knowledge, and understanding necessary for us to flourish as humans. Intellectual virtues include qualities like curiosity, open-mindedness, attentiveness, intellectual courage, intellectual tenacity, intellectual autonomy, intellectual thoroughness, and intellectual humility. These characteristics emphasize the fact that learning and good thinking have an ethical and character-based aspect to them, which come from practicing these intellectual virtues.

One of the intellectual virtues which I think I am strong at is intellectual autonomy. It refers to the ability and willingness to think for oneself. I consider myself strong in this ability because when it comes to making a decision, I make it on my own and do not let anyone make that for me. Although I listen to what my parents or my friends have to say about something but, in the end, I make my own decisions, which at times might be different from what others advised me with. It is important to me to think through things by myself and evaluate different situations to arrive at a decision. Moreover, I tend to reflect over what others might do if they were in my position, and talk about things that are going on in my life with them; nevertheless, I still form my own decisions by logically approaching the matter while trusting my judgment, knowledge, and life experiences. In addition, I do not seek other people’s approval or validation for my decision, if I truly believe something to be right. I will, thus, take action based upon it regardless of whether others confirm or disapprove of it. For instance, if a friend wants me to tell her about any negative characteristics or habits that she has, I would tell her the truth without being afraid of whether she may not like hearing it. I would rather tell the truth and be honest with her instead of lying.

 One intellectual virtue that I think I am lacking in is my sense of curiosity. I feel like sometimes I am not curious and motivated enough to search for some of the questions that I do not yet have answers for. It may be because I feel entitled to getting all the answers and when I do not get them, I become upset. I often forget the fact that if I choose to know something and find a way to acquire knowledge about it, I may get the answer I am looking for; instead of completely ignoring that question and trying to move on with other subjects. It often happened to me, while I was growing up, that I would have some questions regarding God and prayers. I kept asking those questions from my parents and would often get answers such as, “when you grow you will understand and find them out yourself." However, as I grew older, I did manage to find the answers to some of those questions, but my lack of curiosity impeded me to obtain answers to all of them. I realize that I have to overcome this weakness because, in academics, a lack of curiosity may hinder my ability to understand the subject matter. It is out of a fundamental need to know answers to questions, which develop within a student’s mind, which ultimately drive them to grasp difficult concepts.

Therefore through this semester, I have planned to write down some questions that I might have and ask about the things that fascinate me, not simply by trying to look for them online, but through actual conversations and cross-questioning people in my community.