

Hello, Class of 2024!

Welcome to UVA! I hope you are doing well during this unprecedented time. I realize that it is difficult to enter college right now due to the pandemic and the social injustice occurring in the country. I wanted to remind you that you are very welcome and wanted at UVA, and we would greet you with a warm embrace if COVID-19 allowed.

Even though this year will undoubtedly look different from previous ones, I want to remind you that there is still a lot to look forward to at UVA! One of my most memorable moments at UVA happened during my second year when our basketball team won the 2019 NCAA Men's Basketball Championship. Our team was strong, but never did I think that I would be watching the live broadcast of us winning at JPJ and then rushing to the corner, packed with thousands of students, to celebrate our victory! Although history may not repeat itself this year, I want to express that you'll have many experiences here that will surprise you and that you'll look back on during your fourth year and reminisce about. I would advise you to take advantage of the many opportunities you have at this wonderful school and continue to search for your place here. Try out different clubs and organizations! I have joined clubs that are related to my major that have allowed me to grow my networks and solidify my knowledge. I have joined organizations outside of my field where I have built lasting friendships. I have also joined clubs that I disliked and dropped out of! Even from that experience, I learned a lot about my interests. It is difficult to grow and discover your passions without exploring and putting yourself out there, so I encourage you to dive deep and let UVA surprise you!

I wish you good luck with the rest of your first semester, and I hope you have a valuable experience. Remember to wash your hands and wear a mask because the fully in person UVA is even better!

Sincerely,

Neal Patel, Class of 2021