

Hello, Class of 2024!

Welcome to UVA!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!! I know that this pandemic sucks (let's be real), but we are so excited to have new students on Grounds despite the current global situation.

When I was a first-year, I remember being very overwhelmed about not knowing anyone, not knowing my way around, and having all new classes. I can only imagine that it's even harder for you, having to navigate all this through a pandemic. Remember to take breaks and take care of yourself!! Even though the semester is mostly online, I know that we will find ways to make the most of it, and find new ways to connect 6 feet apart, through zoom, phone calls, emails, letters, etc! I know that it's tiring to hear that over and over again, but embracing those things right now has definitely been helping me get through this.

There is SOO much to look forward to in these next four years, even if you are starting off on a rocky start. The hardships this semester will help you grow like never before, and there are still so many ways to make this semester full of lasting memories. Some of my favorite memories here have been late nights with roommates/hallmates, ordering insomnia, and talking alllll night long. Finding a community with my hallmates, through clubs, and through my architecture classes has been most important to me.

I really hope that your first weeks at UVA are going well and you feel welcomed here! I am already amazed by how resilient the Class of 2024 has been, not letting a pandemic get in your way! My best advice is to remember to take time for yourself, connect with people even when it's hard or scary or awkward, and don't get tooooooooo wrapped up in schoolwork :) Everything will work out in the end (trying to remind myself that too).

Good luck on your first semester!

PS: if you happen to speak even a just a little bit of Spanish, check out Hablemos, which is a way to practice Spanish and make new friends!!! (our Instagram is @hablemos_uva, DM us if you want to be added to the listserv :))

All the best,
Izzy Padilla
Class of 2021