

Dear Class of 2024,

Welcome to UVA! I'm pretty sure almost none of you were expecting your college careers to start out like this and you may have some worries, but fear not, I know you will still have an amazing undergraduate experience. This year will just make all the coming years even more special. Y'all are young and bright and can persist through tough trials.

Before attending UVA, you were most likely the top of your class in high school. Now, you are surrounded by many others who were also at the top of their high school class. This may lead you to feel like you're not as smart as you think you are. You may start to get imposter syndrome. I know for sure that I felt this way, and I still do feel this way sometimes. However, don't let this bring you down! The fact that you're surrounded by smart people is a positive, not a negative. It means that there is a massive community around you that you can constantly learn from. What you learn from someone else, they may learn something different from you. In college, you will constantly be learning and exchanging ideas, leading to your constant growth. Don't forget the fact that you are still intelligent with a strong work ethic – that's what brought you to the university in the first place!

One thing I wish I did better first year is to reach out for help more often. Try not to be too stubborn or prideful – there are many resources here to help guide your learning. School is going to be hard, and there is no shame in reaching out for help, whether it be attending office hours, asking a question on Piazza, or collaborating with your peers. With that, I wish you all the best of luck and hope you stay safe and healthy!

Sincerely,
AM
Class of 2021