

Hello, Class of 2024!

Welcome to UVA! I know this is such a crazy and “uncertain” (I am so tired of hearing this word, and I know you probably are too) time, and definitely not what you had envisioned your first year of college looking like. Although these times are tough right now, I promise that once we get through this, it will make your remaining time at UVA all the better. I have no doubt that whoever you are, you will find your place within our community. *Trust me*, I know how hard first year can feel. I, myself, did not have the easiest transition coming into school. But I am here- three years later- to tell you that you can do it, and that it is so worth it to keep pushing through!

There are endless times and experiences I wish I could share with you from my time at UVA. Of course, what I love about UVA is all of the people I have met through various activities and clubs which our university offers; I’m sure you’re somewhat aware of these, so I’m not going to drill this into you and try and convince you to join some specific club or anything. Instead, I’d like to tell you about my time studying abroad! I studied abroad for a semester in Valencia, Spain, and also for a J-Term in Mendoza, Argentina. These two experiences have changed my entire college career, and I urge anyone and everyone to explore international education! Learning and developing in another country is so priceless, and I wish I could relive each experience over again. Even if you think your major wouldn’t fit a study abroad, I promise you, it can! I used to work for the Engineering International Programs office, and there are so many opportunities which are available to people of all majors in all regions of the world. Start planning now! Especially with COVID, I know I’m getting a bit stir-crazy, and can’t wait to (hopefully) be able to travel upon graduation. Anyways, I really hope you get the chance to do something like this! I have made connections and relationships with people all around the world through these opportunities, and I wouldn’t take it back for the world.

I encourage you to get outside of your comfort zone and push yourself to try new things during your time at college, even during this mostly virtual semester. However trying this semester may be, I am confident that you will find your people and your community which will make a home for you at UVA, just like I did! I wish you all the luck with your first semester and the rest of your years at UVA. We are so excited to have you!

Beat Tech, Go Hoos!

Sincerely,
A Fourth Year Friend
Class of 2021