

Hey Class of 2024,

Welcome to UVA and the start of your college career! I'm so sorry that it's under these Covid conditions, but I'm sure y'all will find ways to make the most of your first semester. Fortunately, we're all stuck in this pandemic world together, so you are never alone. It may not always feel like it, but there is a strong community of people near to and far from you who are happy that you're here at this great school.

I know it may feel like you're missing out on a lot, and the truth is that you are. I could go into stories of some of my favorite memories like my first football game, the different concerts I've been to here, and of course celebrating the national championship, but things are going to be different this year. However, the real power behind any of those moments is the shared experience of them with my friends, peers, and student community. You still have that. The beauty of UVA is the people you meet and get to interact with on a daily basis, through your classes, dorms, or whatever. It may be a little harder to meet the important people in your life, but it will happen organically.

I'm sorry you got a difficult draw of things by coming into college during all of this. Trust me, this is not how I intended to wrap up my time here. It's going to be difficult on every single person here, but that will only make us stronger as people and a community. I sincerely wish you the best on your journey and feel free to look me up if you ever need anything.

Welcome to UVA,
Austin Rapkins