

Welcome to UVA!

My time here has been incredible; the community here is so rich in people interested in learning and bettering themselves, and there is so much that one can pursue in both their studies and for recreation. You've come just in time; the autumn colors here are some of the most beautiful, and there is little that I love more than an early morning walk to grounds, a slight chill in the air, and the rustling of golden leaves in the trees. Even during the pandemic, when some activities are restricted, I cannot think of a better place one can be for their undergraduate years.

As a transfer student, I found it hard to immerse myself into the UVA community. I missed two years of setting down roots and I think I suffered for it. That said, I think I have some advice for newcomers to UVA. I would highly encourage you to try to get involved in whatever interests you; there are so many clubs and interest groups on grounds, and even if you aren't studying the main subject of a given club, you can still have a lot of fun and make friends along the way. I also want to really emphasize that the transition of coming to UVA, especially now with the current pandemic, can be tough. You are *not* alone, and I hope that you know there are so many resources available to you and so many incredible people, students and professors, who would love to talk to you. Being in a good headspace, with people you know, is absolutely vital for success in your academic pursuits.

Despite the tumultuous state of things after such a rough year, I hope you have an amazing time here. The memories you make here will surely stay with you for a long time, and I hope you make lots of good ones! Every year and class is unique, yours is no different; I think, with some effort, you can make the next four years great!

Michael