

Hello, Class of 2024!

Congratulations on entering the UVA community! I hope that you are doing well despite the hardships brought by COVID-19 and the various forms of social injustice occurring across the country. You have prevailed despite all odds and will continue to do so as your studies continue at UVA. As a UVA student, I want you to know that you all always be accepted, welcomes, and wanted by the UVA community.

I cannot believe that four years have flown by so quickly for me. It seems just like yesterday I was unpacking my books in Lile-Maupin, entering O-Hill, and running to catch the Northline for class. Although these experiences will undoubtedly look different this year, these experiences are all still obtainable. Be sure to take lots of pictures to tell your family and friends in the future! One of the happiest moments of my time at UVA was first year was the day I met my roommate. After texting each day from January to our August move-in date, we immediately became very good friends that attended football games, ate together, and vented to each other about life at 3 am (haha). Even four years later, we are still roommates upon our arrival back to Charlottesville. The people you come into contact with are very special. I am SO grateful for the community of friends that I have developed from attending UVA. I know that I can rely on them for a pep talk, to travel to the mall, or random talks late at night. The community of UVA is very special and you are now a part of our opening community.

I know that you may feel a whirl of emotions! These are all normal feelings for beginning your first year of college, virtual or in person. When times get hard, just remember that you are capable of whatever you truly are passionate about. Be sure to explore majors and classes! This will allow you to actually be happy with coursework. Be open to conversation with new people. And lastly, wear your mask!

I wish you good luck with your first year; keep your head held high this year!

Sincerely,
Erica Stephens
Class of 2021