

To a Class of '24 Member,

First and foremost, welcome to the UVA community! I know you've worked hard to finally call yourself a Hoo, so here's to all that paying off! Second, we are both probably sick of letters involving phrases such as "unprecedented", "trying times", "new normal", "safe and healthy", etc., so I'll cut to the chase – from my four years here, this is what it takes to find success in college:

- First year is all about finding your balance. This is where everyone gets a kind of reset on their lives. Take the opportunity to expand your friend group beyond just people from high school. Clubs and classmates are typically the best place for this, so try to Zoom message people you think are cool, attend all the club meetings (even if you don't think you will be active), and get close with your roommate – you will be in each other's bubble for the next three months! Having connections is paramount – knowing the right people makes life so much easier. Simply being a good student is now just a baseline.
- That being said, college is still school, so keep those grades up. Use your second-fourth semesters to take as many credits you can handle. Get that knowledge under your belt and pump up that GPA in preparation for your upperclassmen years.
- By the time you get to third year, it's all about the job search. I assume you'll know what to do by this point, so just keep the two previous points in mind, so that you'll have everything set up beforehand.
- And finally, you'll be where I am today, in your fourth and final year. I have been fortunate enough to keep a small friend group who I dearly appreciate, and a career path I can find security in. Now, it's more or less just riding it out to the finish line.

So in summary, first year is yours to dominate. It's a fresh start for you, and take comfort in the fact that nobody else knows what they're doing either. I hope my advice didn't come off as too harsh or intimidating – I wanted to perhaps offer more realistic ideas.

With regards,

Daniel Le (dbl3jf)

UVA '21