

Hello First year!

Welcome to the UVA community! While I am a 4<sup>th</sup> year, I transferred here last fall and I really struggled with that transition. But I cannot imagine how difficult it is to start at a completely new school in the middle of this 2020 hellscape. But know this, while coming to UVA especially during this year will have its challenges, no matter where you are either on grounds or at home—you have a place at UVA. You worked hard to get here, and we are so glad that you are here—and don't let anyone tell you otherwise.

Like I said, my time at UVA has been shorter than most, but I've still had some great experiences through my involvement with various activities on grounds. The first time I felt like I had found my family at UVA was during an open mic through Flux—the poetry club at UVA. I had had a bad day, but decided on a whim to finally check Flux out, and everyone was so kind and affirming—it really blew me away.

I hope this school year goes well given the circumstances. My college experience has been quite different than most, and honestly that has been the best part of my college experience. From attending Community College, transferring, struggling at UVA, joining clubs and talking to my professors; I've grown a lot as a student and as a person.

So as you enter your college career, don't be afraid if your journey looks a little different than what society says college should be. And all the different skills and resilience that got you here at UVA will be greatly appreciated. So good luck this fall and for the rest of your time at UVA—you are going to learn and grow so much!

Glad to have you here,

A 4<sup>th</sup> year friend,