

Hello, Class of 2024!

Welcome to UVA! Although this is not the first year experience I had, it is not the fourth year experience I expected either. During these unprecedented times, it is so important for the UVA community, new and old, to come together and make it as enjoyable and safe as possible. Think about it: you have made it to one of the most prestigious and wholesome universities. This is something to be very proud of. Thousands of people just like you are in the same boat: trying to enjoy and learn while being safe.

If I'm being honest, I didn't enjoy my first semester at UVA at all. I even thought about transferring. My roommate was my best friend from high school (which people say is a bad idea, but it worked out for us) and there were about 20-30 people here from my high school. It felt like everybody else was making friends, but my friend and I felt so stuck and lonely, like we only had each other. I remember sitting at croads with my roommate late one night and seeing groups of people walking to places to see new friends and have fun. It hurt to feel like we missed our opportunity to meet people. But that wasn't true at all. I actively tried to join more clubs, talk to people in my classes, and even rush Greek life. I wasn't even sure if I wanted to join a sorority, but I ended up doing so and it was one of the best decisions I made in college. I lived in my sorority house my third year and the feeling of being constantly surrounded by girls I love and look up to completely contrasted the feelings I had first year. As cheesy as it sounds, it felt like I was home. As a fourth year, I live in another house with those same best friends and am dreading the days until when I will have to say goodbye and good luck in the real world. Just remember that just because your first couple months are rough, it doesn't mean that your whole college experience will be. These truly are the best years of your lives and it hurts to see them fly by.

My recommendation for you is to try to make the most of every moment, something I have been trying to do lately. I used to look forward to the weekends, when I could go out on the corner with friends. But since that is no longer a safe option, it has forced me to live in the moment with fun activities to do each day. Whether this is grabbing dinner with friends, going on a walk with my roommate, or even just having a movie night. Things will go back to normal soon enough and a more typical college experience will follow but use this time to try to make some deeper connections and lifelong friends, easier said than done, I know. I wish you the best of luck this year and your remaining years at UVA and am always here if you need some advice/ want to chat.

Sincerely,
Anvitha Kambham, Class of 2021
Ak7ky@virginia.edu