

Hello, Class of 2024!

I know this isn't exactly the way you'd pictured your first year of college would start. This is a difficult time for all students, and it's especially hard to be the new kids on the block right now. That being said, I hope that doesn't stop you from enjoying your first year of college. This year can be whatever you make of it.

Even with the restrictions imposed on us for the safety of the community, there are so many UVA organizations you can still get involved in. Choose a couple that speak to you and give them a go. Whether you love it or hate it, you'll probably make some friends in the process. But don't feel pressured to max out your schedule with classes and extracurriculars. Seek out events and experiences that make you feel happy and fulfilled, and let go of thinking about requirements and "what looks good." And don't forget to take time for yourself. This semester may be particularly stressful and unpredictable, and the importance of self-care can't be overstated. Don't get sucked into the "grind culture" of all work and no down time. Your mental and physical wellbeing are more important than your grades or your resume.

I won't claim that this semester won't be difficult. I don't envy your position of starting your college experience in the middle of a pandemic. But I believe in your ability to turn this situation around and make the most of it. No growth happens without struggle. Take this time to learn about yourselves, to explore new interests, and to make connections with others. As long as you do so safely and with respect for the community, the sky is the limit. Go forth and conquer!

Sincerely,

A Friendly Face on Grounds
Class of 2021