

Hey, Class of 2024!

Welcome to UVA! I know that this is a strange time to join our community with the pandemic and everything else that's going on, but I know you'll rise to the challenge and make the most of your experience here. Remember that you belong at UVA, and your fellow Hoos are good people ready to help you every step of the way!

Something that I love about UVA is how one moment can change the direction of your whole career. In my first-writing requirement class, the professor came in ready to discuss the new Sherlock Holmes story he assigned us to read. It was at 9:00 AM so most of us were still waking up (myself included) but I vividly remember the day I decided to become an English Major. He was walking us through the story, making sure we understood the pieces of evidence Sherlock pieced together to solve the case. And when he finished, he asked us why this particular story had horror elements to it. 'Horror elements?' My sleep-deprived brain didn't remember getting chills when reading the story so I thought the professor was just trying to run the clock until class ended. But when he walked us through the scene again, emphasizing the details I hadn't noticed on my first read-through, I felt the dots in my brain connect and thought, 'That must have been terrifying for the client!' My mind was metaphorically blown and I realized that that was the feeling I want to associate with my education. The feeling of my world-view being shattered in a split second and then asking myself where I can learn more things to surprise myself like that. I later became an official Biology-English Double Major to accommodate my new passion for the Arts. And even though I've had my fair share of all-nighters writing 10 page papers or studying for difficult exams, I can confidently say that I am smarter and happier than I was when I came in.

I hope you find something you want to study that makes you step out of your comfort zone too as an Undergraduate here. You'll surprise yourself with how amazing you really are. Good luck in the years to come and, hopefully, you'll find your passion here just like I found mine.

Go Hoos!

Sincerely,
Ellyes Adnane
Class of 2021