

Maeve Curtin, University of Virginia, Class of 2018

1. Tell us a few things about yourself (family, job, things that bring you joy).
  - a. I moved to Scotland after getting my MPP from Batten in 2019. I ended up in Scotland kind of in a roundabout way, but I do think a lot of the experiences I had at UVA kind of led me here. I ended up falling into a PHD studying collaborative development, and that's what I'm doing in Scotland now. I love living in Scotland, I get to go hiking and cook and bake all the time. I've had a lot more time for some of my personal passion. I also play Lacrosse over here, which is really fun.
  - b. What is your UVA story?
  - c. How did you decide to come to UVA?
    - i. I went to Days on the Lawn, and being in state I always considered UVA, but never was a school that I toured prior. For whatever reason it wasn't really at the top of my list, and I think that has to do with so many people I know from high school having gone. I just really remember falling in love with it that weekend I came down. Seeing how older students and 4th years felt so invested in the community it really made me see how special this place is.
  - d. What did you do when you were a student at UVA?
    - i. In reflecting back at my time at UVA I probably did too much. If I could do it over again there are certain things that I would have said no to. I collected a lot of leadership roles like being an RA, being in best buddies, doing moderating for sustained dialogue and tutoring.
    - ii. Were women encouraged or discouraged to join extracurriculars?
    - iii. Not in the extracurriculars space did I ever feel like we were discouraged or encouraged to. The spaces I was in had a lot of women in them.
    - iv. Were some more welcoming than others?
    - v. Greek life experience?
    - vi. Truly some of my best friends were from my sorority. I loved doing our philanthropy events, it was one of the things that I enjoyed most. I was in charge of our Fraternal Organization Agreements and that was really fun. I used to deliver our Green dot training and helped bring it on board at UVA in 2015. I loved the little opportunities to talk with the chapter about education and have some of those sustained dialogues within the chapter or bring in people who are working in city non profits to talk to our chapter about the relationship with the city.
2. What is your favorite UVA memory?
  - a. I remember this one night that was in spring of my 4th year, right before Founders day. A couple of my friends and I in our lawn room decided to have people over

to see the secret society do their things. We ended up just having a party at 5 AM where we had mimosas, waffles and wore robes. What I really loved about it was feeling like we were part of these traditions but also creating our own traditions alongside that and creating community.

3. What was a transformative moment for you at UVA?
  - a. It was only a few weeks into my time at UVA that the *Rolling Stone* article came out. That semester was hard because Hannah Graham disappeared and there was also a lot of social unrest and police brutality going on. When that article came out, I remember reading it in Newcomb and then going to my anthropology class and the teacher dedicated the whole session to discussing it and I just knew I had to do something. Coincidentally I had signed up for this bystander intervention program. That was a moment where I realized I am a part of this community and I am also enabled to change it. I ended up doing a lot of work against violence prevention and continued to work with the bystander intervention program. That early moment of this is horrible and this is so sad led to people founding new organizations and trying to create active change in their communities.
4. What was the most challenging thing about UVA?
  - a. I think for me there's a difference between institutional challenges and community challenges and personal challenges. On a personal level one of the hardest things about UVA was the competitive nature of it. There was a culture of one upping each other in how burnt out you can be. I didn't have time to really invest in myself up until 4th year. From a community perspective I think UVA can't be separated from the history of Charlottesville. UVA has done a better job in recent years of being much more intentional in how they engage with the community, working towards being less extractive.
5. Tell us about a woman/women at UVA who inspires you – now, or during your time on Grounds.
  - a. Charleen Green was a huge influential figure in Charlottesville leading the office of human rights. She was really willing to build relationships within the student body at UVA. She wanted to help students be better citizens and stewards of Charlottesville. We did a program called Walk a Thousand Miles in my Shoes that looked at Refugee resettlement. I would also say I was inspired by the work of Dean Amaro, who early on in my first year had to go through so much villainization. She devoted her life to advocating and helping survivors. She did a lot to support students at UVA and I admired her resilience and dedication.
  - b. What relationships did you form with other women and did you find it easy to make those connections?
    - i. I formed relationships with alumni that will continue to serve me from a personal and professional perspective. I also formed relationship with people in the community and had mentors and sponsors that I could

connect with. I was lucky in that I feel like I had a huge network of women I could reach out to.

- c. What was the presence of women's groups and movements on campus like?
    - i. I was involved in the ISC, which was a CIO dedicated to women. As far as social movements I would say there was a lot of work on providing survivor networks.
  - d. How many courses did you take at UVA that were taught by female professors? Could you talk a little about the courses they taught and the kind of diversity that the courses and the prof(s) represented?
    - i. A lot of my female professors were in the politics department, even though more of my professors were still men within that department. I took a race, medicine, and incarceration class that was taught by a woman. A lot of my grad classes were taught by women.
6. What were your experiences with sexism or misogyny on Grounds?
- a. I think that most of my experiences with misogyny are things that you hear a lot of women talking about. Seemingly benign comments that actually aren't. Luckily I was surrounded by a group of friends who I felt very empowered by. Certainly in situations of going out you have the uncomfortable touching and I think that definitely happened in the bar and frat social setting.
7. Was there an open LGBTQ+ presence when you went to UVA?
- a. There was. There was the LGBTQ center which was kind of hidden. In talking to people this was an element of safety for them. I certainly had a number of friends who were out, and I knew a few people who were transitioning, though not super openly. What you wouldn't see as much of was probably like couples who were not heterosexual exhibiting PDA.
8. Did you feel pressured to go into a certain field or avoid a certain field during your time in college?
- a. I don't think I felt particular pressure at UVA, I felt like I had a lot of freedom here.
  - a. Did you notice a disparity in the population of men and women in your major?
    - i. Yes, in my Government major/at Batten not as much. Certainly within the global development studies major the vast majority was women.
  - b. Do you know of any efforts your institution has made since you graduated to make their classes more inclusive?
2. What was relationship/hookup culture during your time at UVA?
- a. I think there was definitely a high level of hookup culture. Among my female friends it was more of an idea of I can do whatever I want to do, and at least outwardly the hook up culture was presented as being empowering.
3. Was there any talk about consent and respect on campus? If so, do you think it was thorough/helpful?

- a. During my time there the conversations surrounding these topics certainly grew. I definitely saw people intervening in dodgy situations.