



# HARVARD COLLEGE

Dean of Students Office

FIRST-YEAR EXPERIENCE

July 2020

Dear Members of the Class of 2024:

Welcome to Harvard College! Let me introduce myself: I am the Resident Dean of First-Year Students responsible for Ivy Yard. I will serve as your academic and residential dean this year. This means that I am available to help you and your immediate advisers (proctors, academic advisers, peer advising fellows, professors, etc.) sort out any academic or residential questions that may arise during your first year at Harvard. I am proud to be working with you this year to help you reflect upon and develop your talents, strengths, and abilities as members of the Ivy Yard community.

The rest of the staff here at the College and I are very much looking forward to working with you this year. This event marks an important transition for you and all your classmates. In addition to embarking on an interesting and challenging course of study, you will be part of a unique and exciting community. As a full-fledged member of this community, you will also be responsible for your own choices and actions in ways that may be simultaneously exciting and daunting. Keep in mind that all incoming students are likely to experience challenges and setbacks as they transition to college. Please know that with some effort and resourcefulness on your part you will be able to manage any setbacks and go on to flourish. Resourcefulness has two important components: 1) thinking creatively rather than solely relying on tactics and strategies that worked in the past, and 2) reaching out proactively to your mentors and supports here at Harvard for consultation and advice.

To that end, you have been assigned to one of the resident proctors in Ivy Yard. Harvard proctors are graduate students and University administrators who live in the dorms and conduct advising sessions on academic, personal, and residential matters. They are friendly and knowledgeable adults whom I encourage you to get to know well. Their primary role, along with your peer advisers, is to help create a warm and welcoming environment for you this upcoming year. You will learn of your proctor assignment soon.

Of course, your classmates will likely play an even more significant part in your first-year experience. Harvard College believes strongly in the educational impact of our community, which is largely why I and the other Resident Deans of First-Year Students have spent the summer carefully creating entryways that will reflect the remarkable diversity and strengths of the Class of 2024. Please recognize the importance of arriving with an open mind and a willingness to cooperate with the people you will meet. They, like you, are talented and remarkable and will contribute greatly to the quality of your experience at Harvard.

Finally, while a big part of my role is administrative, what I enjoy the most about my work is getting to know the first-year students. Even if you don't have an issue that needs sorting out, I encourage you to reach out and introduce yourself. I am available to meet with you virtually.

Once again, welcome, and best wishes for a rewarding and productive year. I hope to get to connect with you soon.

Sincerely,

Katie M. Derzon  
Resident Dean of First-Year Students, Ivy Yard  
Harvard College