

ASU experiences teach philosophy grad to appreciate all forms of learning

By Julia Taylor, ASU News
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Editor's note: This story is part of a series of profiles of notable [spring 2026 graduates](#).

Going into college, Sophia Will expected to gain the most knowledge through lectures, readings and academic assignments. Growing up in Scottsdale, Arizona, she knew Arizona State University offered a wide breadth of academic opportunities, and was excited to engage in such a vibrant learning environment.

What she didn't expect was how much she would also learn through her everyday experiences, conversations and interests outside of her coursework. She constantly found connections between encounters in her daily life and what she was studying in class, she said, teaching her to not underestimate any form of learning.

Complex ideas like this are exactly what drew Will to the [School of Historical, Philosophical and Religious Studies](#). She loved asking deeper questions and challenging assumptions to better understand the world around her. Even within one of the largest universities in the country, Will says she sought a "small college" experience, which she found within the philosophy department's close-knit community. She developed a sense of belonging within the Philosophy Lounge, home to the [Philosophy Club at ASU](#) and "Phlapjacks and Philosophy Fridays."

"Some of my most meaningful undergraduate memories have been made in that room, whether through studying, thoughtful discussions, shared meals or simply spending time with people I have come to know and love through that very space," she said.

Will was also a member of the [Leadership Scholarship Program](#), where she grew as a leader and also made some of her closest friendships. She had multiple experiences in Washington, D.C., through ASU, first through the [Policy Design Studio and Internship Program](#) and then as a congressional intern for the U.S. House of Representatives.

A member of [Barrett, The Honors College](#), Will's thesis, "Laughing at the Truth: A One-Act Play Exploring Satire as a Tool for Civic Understanding," was a direct result of her university

experiences, she says. It explored how satirical political comedy can make complex political ideas more accessible, fostering deeper learning and greater civic engagement.

This spring, Will is graduating with her bachelor's degree in [philosophy \(morality, politics and law\)](#), preparing her for her next endeavor — attending the [Sandra Day O'Connor College of Law](#) this fall as a member of JD Class of 2029. She plans to focus on public health and policy during her legal career, with additional interests in constitutional and Indian law.

We caught up with Will to learn more about her time at ASU:

Question: Did any other ASU support play a role in your journey?

A: Yes! In addition to the support I received outside of SHPRS, many faculty and staff within the school have supported me in ways that have had a sincere impact on me, both academically and personally. My advisor, [Michael Currey](#), has been an invaluable source of guidance — his advising sessions not only helped me navigate my academic path, but also made me feel genuinely supported and cared for. Additionally, [Thad Botham](#) has been a constant mentor throughout my time at ASU. From my first semester in PHI 101 to helping me with my law school application process, he has consistently offered support, encouragement and mentorship that go above and beyond his role as a professor and have been instrumental in my growth as both a student and a person.

Q: Which professor taught you one of the most important lessons you've learned at ASU? What was the lesson?

A: Two classes in particular taught me some of the most important lessons I've learned at ASU: [Nathan Ballantyne](#)'s PHI 420 course on Experts, Novices, and Frauds; and [Ian Peebles](#)' PHI 420 course on Virtue Ethics. These courses fundamentally shaped how I evaluate information and understand ethical responsibility. I learned how to critically assess expertise from an epistemic perspective, while also thinking more deeply about what it means to live well and act virtuously. These lessons continue to influence me in my everyday life — I find myself returning to them often, and I don't think I ever will stop.

Q: What's the best piece of advice you'd give to those still in school?

A: You get out of it what you put into it. The small, daily habits you build — how you engage, show up and give your best — ultimately shape what you gain from your time in school. So if you care about something — whether it's a class, club, opportunity or person — show up, and keep showing up consistently. Because in the end, you'll be glad you did!

Q: Is there anything else you'd like to tell us about your time as a student at ASU?

A: I feel incredibly grateful for the opportunities I've had and the amazing people I've met during my time at ASU. My undergraduate experience has truly shaped who I am, and I'm so excited to continue my journey at ASU Law! Forks up!

This story originally appeared on [ASU News](#).

Main image



Sophia Will is graduating this spring with her bachelor's degree in philosophy. Her next step? Attending the Sandra Day O'Connor College of Law this fall as a member of JD Class of 2029. Courtesy photo