

# Success Plan for WSU Global Campus Psychology B.S. Student (Pastoral Counseling Focus)

## Pre-Semester Preparation (July 16 – August 11)

- **\*Orientation & Onboarding (Mid-Late July): Begin by completing WSU's New Cougar Orientation modules and the Global Campus online orientation course (required before advising and registration). This will introduce you to essential WSU systems and resources. Make sure your myWSU student portal and WSU email are set up, as these will be used for class registration, financial aid, and official communications. Familiarize yourself with Canvas\*\*, WSU's learning management system (all Global Campus courses use Canvas). For example, learn to navigate the Canvas dashboard and course sites – WSU provides a *Canvas Overview for Students* tutorial to help you get comfortable. Finally, schedule a meeting (virtual) with your academic advisor once orientation is done to finalize your fall course schedule and discuss transfer credits.**
- **\*Technology Setup: Ensure your computer and internet meet WSU's tech requirements for online learning. Install any software you'll need: WSU offers free Office 365 (Word, Excel, PowerPoint, OneDrive storage) for all active students. Test your webcam, headset, and Zoom ahead of time in case classes or meetings use video conferencing. If you haven't already, explore the TechReady resources on the Global Campus site, which cover recommended browsers and plugins for Canvas. Download the Canvas mobile app if you plan to use it, and bookmark important sites (myWSU, Canvas, WSU Library).**

- **Being** “tech-ready”\*\* means fewer surprises once classes start. Consider setting up a backup plan (such as knowing a nearby library or café with Wi-Fi) in case of connectivity issues during the semester.
- \*Time & Workspace Management: **Create a plan for balancing full-time online coursework with your other responsibilities. A good rule is to budget 2–3 hours of study time per week for each credit hour of coursework - as a full-time student (~12 credits), plan on ~24–36 hours weekly for reading, lectures, and assignments. Set up a dedicated, comfortable study space that minimizes distractions (ideally a quiet area with good lighting and ergonomic seating). Post a daily and weekly schedule for yourself: for example, designate specific hours each day for class videos, reading, and participating in discussion boards. Setting clear goals and a personalized but flexible schedule\*\*** will help manage your time effectively. Let family or housemates know your school schedule to reduce interruptions. Use organization tools that work for you – e.g. a planner or digital calendar with all assignment due dates (after syllabi are available), and to-do apps or reminders for staying on track. Developing these habits now will set the stage for a productive semester.
- \*Suggested Readings & Study Prep:\*\* Use the weeks before Aug 11 to refresh foundational knowledge and prepare for your psychology courses. Since you’re focusing on pastoral counseling, start exploring resources that integrate psychology and spirituality. For instance, you might read introductory texts like *Psychology 2e* (OpenStax’s free online psychology textbook) to review core concepts – especially if it’s been a while since your last psych class. To gear up for the **pastoral counseling** angle, consider reading a book or articles on counseling in faith-based settings (e.g., writings by the American Association of Christian Counselors). Also explore content on **men’s mental health** to align with your goal of helping men – for example, the website *HeadsUpGuys* provides expert-backed tips and self-check tools for men’s depression and suicide prevention. While not required, these readings will give you context and talking points once classes start.

- Additionally, if any of your fall courses have known textbooks or reading lists, try to get them early – skimming the first chapter or two can make you feel more prepared. Lastly, brush up on academic skills: you might complete an online tutorial on APA style writing or watch a video on effective note-taking for dense reading. Taking these steps now will boost your confidence when the semester begins.

## Academic Roadmap – First Semester and Beyond

- **\*First-Semester Course Recommendations:\*\*** As a new transfer junior, your first semester (Fall 2025) should mix core requirements with courses tailored to counseling. Work with your advisor to ensure you meet any prerequisites. Common choices for junior transfers include:
  - **Statistics for Psychology (PSYCH 311)** – If you haven’t already taken an equivalent, this course is critical and required for the major. Mastery of statistics is important for understanding research in psychology. Completing PSYCH 311 early (with a C- or better) is also an admission requirement to be a certified psychology major at WSU.
  - **Research Methods in Psychology** – WSU’s psych B.S. likely requires a research methods or experimental psychology course (often numbered PSYCH 312 or similar). This course will teach you how to design studies and analyze psychological data, which is foundational. Taking it in your first semester (or soon after Stats) will strengthen your academic research skills.
  - **Core Psychology Courses:** Choose 1–2 upper-division psychology courses that align with counseling. Since you’re interested in pastoral counseling and men’s issues, you might consider:
    - *Abnormal Psychology* (PSYCH 333, if offered online) – to learn about mental disorders, which is key for any counselor.
    - *Developmental Psychology* or *Child & Adolescent Psychology* – understanding the lifespan development is valuable for counseling

- across ages.
- *Psychology of Gender or Sex Roles* – if available, this would directly relate to your focus on helping men by exploring how gender influences behavior and mental health.
- *Multicultural Psychology (PSYCH 403)* – exposure to cultural and diversity issues in psychology. This will be beneficial for pastoral work in diverse communities.
- *Human Sexuality (PSYCH 230)* – an interesting elective (cross-listed in psychology) that could be relevant for counseling individuals and couples from a pastoral perspective.

Aim for a manageable load: typically 4 courses (around 12–13 credits) for full-time online. For example, a balanced first semester might include PSYCH 311 (Statistics), PSYCH [Research Methods], one core psych elective (from the list above), and perhaps an elective or UCORE (general ed) if you need it. If you have room, you could also take an **introductory course in Human Development (HD)** or a related discipline to broaden your counseling foundation.

- \*Degree Requirements & Sequencing: **Keep in mind the overall B.S. in Psychology requirements. You need a minimum of 35 credits in psychology, with at least 15 credits at the 300–400 level. Within those, WSU requires** at least 10 credits of 400-level psychology courses\*\*, which often include advanced topics and capstone experiences. Plan to spread out your 400-level courses in your junior and senior years. For instance, you might take one 400-level course in your second semester of junior year (e.g. *Counseling Psychology Seminar* if offered, or *Capstone in Psychology* if required), and the rest in your senior year. Be mindful of prerequisites: many 400-level courses will expect you to have completed foundational courses like PSYCH 311 and junior standing.

If you have specific pastoral interests, consider **electives outside the Psych department** that complement your goals. For example, you could take courses in **Human Development (HD)** on family relationships or

trauma, or courses in **Comparative Religion or Philosophy** that could inform your spiritual approach to counseling. WSU Global Campus offers a Human Development minor (18 credits) that covers lifespan development, child/adolescent development, and family studies – this could be highly relevant and it's available fully online. Another complementary minor might be **Sociology**, focusing on social services or inequalities (since understanding societal factors can help in counseling men in crisis or transition).

Work with your advisor to **sequence core requirements** efficiently. Typically, you'd finish PSYCH 311 (Statistics) and a research methods course early. Then take mid-level courses (300-level) in major subfields of psychology (cognitive, biological, social, developmental, etc.) to get a well-rounded background. In your senior year, plan for any **capstone or senior thesis/project** if required. Some students opt to do an independent research project or practicum (e.g. *PSYCH 498/499 – Undergraduate Research*), which can count toward upper-division credits. If you're interested in research, by second semester start talking to faculty about enrolling in an independent research or reading course – even as a Global Campus student, you **can** participate in research under a faculty mentor (for example, you could do a literature review or assist with data analysis remotely).

- **\*Tailoring to Pastoral Counseling:\*\*** Within your coursework, seek opportunities to tie assignments to your interest in pastoral counseling and men's mental health. In papers or projects, you might choose topics like the efficacy of faith-based counseling, or challenges in men's help-seeking behaviors. WSU's program allows for this kind of customization in many classes (e.g., in Abnormal Psych you could research depression in men, or in Developmental Psych, write about fatherhood and mental health). This not only keeps you engaged, but also starts building your expertise in the niche you care about.

# Career Preparation – Building Counseling Skills and Credentials

- **\*Relevant Certifications & Skills: Beyond coursework, start acquiring practical skills that will set you apart in the counseling field. A great first step is to get certified in Mental Health First Aid, a nationally recognized program that teaches you to identify and respond to signs of mental health crises. It's often a one-day or weekend course (sometimes available online) and will give you basic helping skills and a resume-worthy certification. Similarly, look into suicide prevention training such as QPR (Question, Persuade, Refer)\*\* – a short, often free 60-minute training that anyone 16+ can take. QPR training will teach you how to recognize suicide warning signs and how to intervene effectively, which is crucial knowledge for any counselor or pastoral care worker.**

As you progress, consider other workshops like **ASIST (Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training)** or **Crisis Text Line volunteer training** to get hands-on experience with crisis intervention. These experiences will not only build your confidence in handling tough situations but also demonstrate your commitment to helping others. You might also pursue training specific to pastoral settings – for instance, some churches or organizations offer lay counseling training or Stephen Ministry leadership courses for those providing peer support in congregations.

- **\*Preparing for Graduate School (If Applicable): If you intend to become a licensed counselor or therapist, plan on attending graduate school after your B.S. Common pathways include a Master's in Counseling (Clinical Mental Health Counseling), Master's in Marriage and Family Therapy (MFT), or even a Master of Divinity with a counseling emphasis for pastoral counseling. Start researching programs by the middle of your junior year. Note the prerequisites: many counseling graduate programs require certain undergraduate courses (e.g., Abnormal Psychology,**

- **Developmental Psychology, Statistics** - which you will cover in your plan). Aim to maintain a strong GPA (especially in your psychology courses) as grad programs can be competitive. In your senior year (or the summer before), you should prepare for and take the GRE if required by your target programs (some may not require it, but having scores ready is wise). Also, cultivate relationships with your professors so that you can secure strong letters of recommendation\*\* – engage in classes, attend virtual office hours, and perhaps do a research or internship credit under their supervision so they can speak to your skills.

If pastoral counseling specifically is your end goal, research seminaries or graduate programs that specialize in it. You might find programs like a **Master's in Pastoral Counseling** or **Master's in Theology (Counseling concentration)**. Decide if you want to be licensed by the state or work within a church setting without a license, as this will guide your path. *Clergy do not need state licensure to counsel within their congregation*, but to practice as a counselor in private practice or a clinic, you **will** need a state license. This usually means earning at least a master's in a counseling field and completing supervised training hours.

- **\*Understanding Licensure Pathways: Since you mentioned LPC and MFT: know that in Washington State, the LPC equivalent is the Licensed Mental Health Counselor (LMHC). To become an LMHC, you will need a relevant master's degree and about 3,000 hours of postgraduate supervised experience (around 2-3 years), plus passing a licensing exam. MFT licensure has similar requirements but focused on couples and family therapy. If you lean toward those, consider taking some courses in family systems or couples counseling (perhaps an elective or plan for such in grad school). On the other hand,** pastoral counseling credentials\*\* can involve both religious and clinical components. A few states offer a specialized pastoral counselor license (e.g., Licensed Pastoral Counselor in Kentucky or Maine) which typically require one to be an ordained minister with a counseling degree and substantial supervised experience. Even if your state doesn't license pastoral counselors

- specifically, you can pursue certification through organizations like the *National Association of Christian Counselors (NACC)* or the *National Board for Certified Pastoral Counselors (NBCPC)* after grad school. These certifications usually require a combination of theological training and clinical counseling experience, but they can be a mark of credibility if you want to integrate faith and counseling in your career.

In the short term, consider joining professional associations as a student. The **American Association of Christian Counselors (AACC)**, for example, offers student memberships – it’s the largest Christian counseling organization and provides webinars, resources, and networking in the pastoral counseling field. Similarly, you could join the **American Psychological Association (APA) as a student affiliate** and specifically engage with APA’s Division 36 (Society for Psychology of Religion and Spirituality) or Division 51 (Society for the Psychology of Men and Masculinities). APA’s Division 51, for instance, is devoted to the study of men’s psychological issues and promoting healthy masculinity – following their publications or events can deepen your insight into the population you want to help. These memberships and activities will expand your professional network and expose you to the latest research and best practices as you move toward a counseling career.

## Online Engagement and Networking

- **\*Connecting with Peers and Faculty: Even though you’re an online student, WSU Global Campus offers many ways to engage with the community. A great first step is to join the WSU Global Campus Psychology Club. The Psych Club’s Global Campus chapter is open to all online students interested in psychology and provides a forum to discuss psych topics, hear from guest speakers, and form study groups. They often host virtual events – for example, a Fall semester kickoff Zoom meeting where you can meet the club officers and other students. Attending these not only expands your learning beyond the classroom but also helps you feel part of the WSU Cougar**



- **community. Plus, active involvement can earn you** points\*\* toward cool perks (Global Campus students get involvement points that can be redeemed for WSU swag, and attending club meetings counts toward eligibility for honor cords at graduation).

Beyond the psych club, look into other **student organizations** available through Global Campus. ASWSU Global (the student government for online students) lists various clubs – if you have interests in faith-based groups, see if there is a virtual faith or service club. And remember, if you don’t find a club that aligns with pastoral counseling or men’s ministry, you have the option to **start your own** via ASWSU Global! For instance, you could form a “Global Campus Peer Ministry” or a support group focused on men’s mental health awareness, with guidance from the student involvement office.

- \*Global Connections Events: **WSU Global Campus runs** Global Connections, **a program that organizes webinars, workshops, and virtual events for online students. Keep an eye on the Global Connections calendar - events range from career development (like virtual career fairs and résumé workshops) to academic skills sessions and even fun social events (trivia nights, mindfulness and stress reduction sessions, etc.). Participate in** Week of Welcome\*\* activities in early August if they have them; these can include virtual campus resource tours, Q\&A sessions with staff, and mix-and-mingle events for new students. Engaging in these will help you learn tips for success directly from staff and seasoned students (for example, Virtual Mentor panels often share how to manage online classes effectively).
- \*Networking and Mentorship: **Start building your** professional network **in the field of psychology/counseling. Create a LinkedIn profile (if you haven’t already) and join the WSU Global Campus LinkedIn group or other relevant groups. WSU often emphasizes the use of** Handshake\*\*, the platform for jobs and internships – so complete your Handshake profile via the ASCC (Academic Success & Career Center) website and check regularly for opportunities (even remote internships or volunteer positions in counseling fields can be

- found there). In fact, WSU Global Connections has hosted webinars on online branding with LinkedIn and Handshake – watch for those career week events to learn how to optimize your profiles and connect with alumni.

Seek out a **mentor** if possible. ASWSU Global and WSU's Alumni Association sometimes facilitate mentorship programs that pair students with alumni or professionals. Having a mentor in counseling or pastoral work (even informally, such as a counselor at your church or a professor whose interests align with yours) can provide guidance and networking leads. Don't hesitate to email professors whose work interests you – even if you never meet in person, building rapport with faculty can lead to research collaborations or at least a strong reference in the future.

If research intrigues you, express interest to your instructors about assisting them. Some faculty may have opportunities for Global Campus students to help with data coding, literature reviews, or online surveys. WSU also hosts the annual **SURCA** (Showcase for Undergraduate Research and Creative Activities) – as an online student you can still participate by doing a poster virtually or in-person if you're willing to travel. Engaging in research adds to your experience and connects you with the academic side of psychology, which is valuable if grad school (especially a Ph.D.) is in your sights.

- **\*Best Online Resources for Psychology & Pastoral Counseling: As you progress, bookmark high-quality resources that will support your studies. For psychology, the WSU Libraries' website will be a treasure trove – you can access research databases, journals, and even request books delivered to you. The library offers a dedicated Global Campus librarian to assist with finding articles on topics like pastoral counseling or gender issues. Utilize free online libraries of psychology, such as APA's PsychLearn or the Noba Project\*\* (which has modules on various psych topics). For pastoral counseling specifically, look into resources like:**
  - *The Journal of Psychology and Christianity* or *Pastoral Psychology* journal (available via library databases) for scholarly integration of faith

- and counseling.
- **Professional organizations' resources:** e.g., APA Division 36 (Psychology of Religion and Spirituality) often has newsletters or webinars you can access as a student; the AACCC (mentioned earlier) provides free articles and an online archive for members.
- **Ministry-focused training:** The Association for Clinical Pastoral Education (ACPE) site has information on pastoral counseling competencies and possibly free materials on spiritual care. Even if formal CPE training is something for after undergrad, reading up on their standards now can inform your perspective.

Lastly, since your heart is set on helping men, keep exploring specialized content like APA's **Guidelines for Psychological Practice with Boys and Men** (published in 2018) and follow organizations like *Movember* (which has reports on men's health) or academic blogs from Division 51. These will not only educate you but also inspire ideas for class projects and eventually, your own counseling practice.

## Support and Mental Health

- \*Personal Wellness and Stress Management: **Succeeding in an online program requires taking care of your own mental health. Full-time study plus life's other obligations can become stressful, so it's crucial to be proactive about self-care. Establish a routine that includes** breaks and downtime\*\* – for example, use the Pomodoro technique (25-minute focused study, 5-minute break) during study sessions to avoid burnout. Schedule regular exercise or at least walks outside, as physical activity greatly aids mental well-being. Since you're interested in pastoral care, you might already have spiritual or reflective practices; continue those (prayer, meditation, journaling) to maintain your sense of purpose and balance. Don't isolate yourself – if you're feeling overwhelmed or down, reach out to someone (a friend, a family member, a fellow student, or a mentor). Even a virtual coffee chat with a classmate can re-energize

- you during a tough week.
- **\*Global Campus Support Services:\*\*** WSU provides a robust network of support for online students – you are *not* on your own out there! Here are key resources to be aware of:
  - **Academic Support:** Take advantage of **free online tutoring** through the Western eTutoring Consortium. WSU Global Campus students get **unlimited 24/7 tutoring for free** in many subjects (math, writing, statistics, etc.). This means you can submit a paper draft to the online writing lab or hop into a live tutoring session for help with coursework at nearly any hour. If you find a class challenging (say, Statistics or a research project), use this service early and often – it can make a huge difference in your understanding.
  - **Writing Help:** In addition to eTutoring, WSU's **Undergraduate Writing Center** offers online consultations. Given that psychology classes will involve a lot of writing (essays, research reports in APA format), don't hesitate to have a writing tutor review your drafts for clarity and APA style. This will improve your writing skills over time.
  - **Library and Research Help:** The WSU Libraries have an **Online Student Services** page. You can chat with a librarian 24/7, and they will mail books to distance students for free. They also provide access to databases like PsycINFO for psychology research articles. If you're doing a research paper on (for example) the effectiveness of pastoral counseling, a librarian can help you do a literature search efficiently. There are even recorded workshops like *"Researching Remotely as a Global Campus Student"* – consider watching those to fully leverage the library's offerings.
  - **\*Mental Health Services:** **WSU cares about its students' mental health, and as a Global Campus student, you have several options.** Counseling Services: **You are allowed to access WSU's Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) if you pay the student health fee (which might be optional for online students). This would give you up to 12 counseling sessions per year with WSU counselors (often via secure video). Check with**

- **Cougar Health Services** about eligibility and fees for **Global students**. If that's not an option, **WSU** has partnered to offer free digital mental health tools: **for instance**, WellTrack Boost, **which is a self-guided interactive therapy app for managing stress, anxiety and depression**. There's also WellTrack Connect **(to help find external counselors if needed)** and Togetherall\*\*, a peer support community for mental health. These online resources are available 24/7 to all WSU students to help maintain wellness. Set them up now (download the app or create login) so they're ready if you ever want to use them.

Additionally, WSU Global has a *Student Care* team and **24/7 crisis support line** for students in distress. The same crisis line that serves other WSU campuses is available to Global Campus students: **509-335-Victim (335-8288)** or a dedicated number (509-335-2360) for after-hours crisis counseling. In any emergency mental health situation, don't hesitate to call – there will always be a professional to help you. Memorize or save the **988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline** (dial 988) as well. It's comforting to know these safety nets are in place; hopefully you won't need them, but life happens, and help is there if you do.

- **\*Community and Faith-Based Support:\*\*** Given your pastoral inclination, you might also lean on your faith community for support. If you are involved in a local church or group in Spokane Valley, consider sharing with them your journey – they might provide encouragement, prayers, or even mentorship from someone in pastoral care. Balancing school and spiritual life is important, especially since you want to integrate the two. Perhaps you can start a small online prayer or check-in group with fellow Christian students (WSU may have an online chapter of Chi Alpha or other campus ministry that you can join virtually). Such community can buffer against the isolation online students sometimes feel.

Finally, remember that asking for help is a sign of strength. Whether it's asking a professor for an extension in a genuine crisis, or reaching out to a counselor because you're overwhelmed, WSU's culture encourages using the support available. You'll also be learning a lot about mental health in

your classes – apply those lessons to yourself when needed (practice the coping strategies you read about). By caring for your own mental well-being, you'll be in a much better position to succeed academically *and* to eventually care for others as a pastoral counselor.

## Long-Term Planning (Junior Year through Graduation)

- **\*Goals for Junior Year: This year is about laying the foundation. Academically, aim to complete most of your core psychology requirements by the end of junior year. By May, you should have Statistics, Research Methods, and several upper-division psych courses under your belt. This will position you to take on any advanced seminars or capstone in your senior year. Make a 2-year course plan\*\* now (with your advisor) mapping out each remaining requirement and elective, and check it against course offering schedules (some online courses might only be offered in Fall or Spring). Update this plan each semester with any changes.**

Junior year is also the time to start gaining **practical experience**. Look for summer opportunities related to counseling or ministry. For example:

- **Internships/Volunteer:** Perhaps in Summer 2026, you could intern or volunteer at a community service agency, a church counseling center, or a nonprofit focusing on mental health or youth mentorship. Even if it's not a formal internship, consistent volunteering (like at a crisis hotline, youth group, or shelter) is invaluable experience. Keep an eye on Handshake and local community boards for roles like *"peer counselor"*, *"camp counselor for at-risk youth"*, or *"ministry intern."* You may also reach out proactively to organizations (e.g., NAMI Spokane, local counseling practices, or religious organizations) to ask if they take volunteers or interns.
- **Undergraduate Research:** If you haven't done so, try to get involved in research by second semester of junior year. As noted, you

- can enroll in *PSYCH 498/499* for credit if you find a faculty supervisor. For instance, if any WSU faculty are studying health psychology, spirituality, gender, or related areas, you could assist them. This will teach you research skills and strengthen your resume (especially for grad applications). WSU's Office of Undergraduate Research can help connect Global Campus students with projects, and there are recorded Global Connections sessions about doing research remotely. Even a small project (like helping analyze survey data on a professor's project) looks great academically.
- **Networking & Conferences:** By late junior year, consider attending a professional conference if possible. APA has an annual convention (sometimes they have virtual components or student discounts), and the AACC has a World Conference on Christian Counseling. There are also regional psychology conferences. Attending these (even virtually) can spark ideas and put you in touch with people in the field. Also explore whether WSU Global offers any travel grants for online students to attend such events.
- **\*Senior Year Strategy:\*\*** Your senior year will be about polishing off remaining credits and launching into the next phase of your career. Key academic tasks will be:
  - Complete any remaining 400-level courses and capstone. WSU might require a senior capstone or thesis; if yours is a **Capstone Project**, perhaps you can design one around pastoral counseling (like a literature review on a counseling technique or a small study). If it's an internship capstone, maybe you can get credit for a supervised ministry or counseling experience.
  - Check your credit totals: ensure by graduation you have **120 credits total, with at least 40 at the upper-division level** (common WSU requirements). Because you transferred with an AA, you likely have most lower-division done, but confirm you've met all **WSU UCORE** general education requirements or that your AA degree covered them.
  - If you picked up a **minor or certificate**, make sure to fit those courses in. For instance, if doing the Human Development minor, plan

- to finish those 18 credits by senior spring.

In early senior year (Fall 2026), if you are applying to grad school, you will be busy with applications. Start drafting your **personal statement** and updating your **resume/CV** over the summer prior. Ask 2-3 faculty (or supervisors from internships) by September for recommendation letters so they have time to write them. Many grad school deadlines are in December or January. Your coursework will also likely include tough classes then, so time management will be critical.

Even if you're not immediately pursuing grad school, senior year is job-hunting time for those aiming to work right after the B.S. Leverage WSU's **Career Services**: do a resume review appointment (the ASCC can do this remotely), practice interviewing (they have online mock interview tools and workshops). Attend the **Virtual Career Expo** that Global Connections hosts – even if it's not psychology-specific, you might find opportunities in social services, nonprofits, or tech companies looking for psych majors.

- \*Resume Building and Portfolio: **Throughout your junior and senior years, keep a record of your accomplishments. Save projects or papers you're proud of – for example, a research paper on pastoral counseling approaches, or a case study you wrote up in a clinical psych class – these can be part of a portfolio\*\*** to show future educators or employers your interests and writing ability. If you do presentations (say, a poster at SURCA or a talk for a class), keep those materials too. You might even create a simple personal website or use LinkedIn to feature these projects.

Continue adding to your resume any relevant experience: did you volunteer at a youth camp? Serve as a tutor or mentor? Lead a small group at church? All of that is applicable to counseling skills (leadership, empathy, communication) and should be highlighted. Given your focus, having both **psychological** and **pastoral** experiences will make you stand out. For instance, by graduation, you could have on your resume: *“Mentor – Men’s Ministry at XYZ Church (20XX-20XX)”* and *“Volunteer Crisis Counselor – Crisis Text Line (20XX)”* alongside your academic



achievements like “*WSU Psychology Club member*” and any honor societies (WSU might have a chapter of **Psi Chi**, the International Honor Society in Psychology – aim to join if eligible).

- \*Licensure and Post-grad Path: **If going directly into a career, research entry-level jobs in fields like mental health support, case management, or ministry roles. A B.S. in Psychology can qualify you for roles such as a** case manager, youth counselor (non-licensed), psychiatric technician, or research assistant\*\*. Given your pastoral interest, you might also look at positions like *pastoral care coordinator, chaplain assistant*, or program roles in faith-based nonprofits. These can be stepping stones while you perhaps work on a graduate degree part-time or a seminary degree. Use your senior year to speak with the WSU **Career Counselor** about strategies – they can connect you with Coug alumni in similar fields (perhaps through **Mentor Cougs** or the **Alumni Association**).

Finally, map out a timeline for any post-grad credentials. For example, if you plan to take a year off before grad school, decide how you will strengthen your profile in that year (maybe obtaining an entry counseling certificate or taking some theology courses). If you plan to dive into grad school right away, be prepared for applications and interviews during your senior year. Either way, by the time you graduate in Spring 2027, you should feel equipped with not only a strong academic background but also practical experiences and a clear vision of your next steps.

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By following this comprehensive plan, from summer prep through your first semester and onward to graduation, you will set yourself up for success as an online psychology student at WSU. You’ll gain the knowledge, skills, support network, and confidence needed to achieve your goal of becoming a pastoral counselor who makes a positive impact in men’s lives. Embrace this journey with enthusiasm and resilience – and remember to utilize all the resources at your disposal (both at WSU and beyond). **Go Cougs!** ☐

- \*Sources:\*\*

- WSU Global Campus Orientation & Next Steps
- WSU Academic Outreach – Canvas LMS Overview
- WSU Department of Psychology – Major Admission Requirements
- WSU Psychology Degree Requirements (Credit and Level Distribution)
- WSU Course Offerings (Examples: Human Sexuality, Multicultural Psych)
- WSU Undergraduate Research Opportunities (Psych 498/499)
- Mental Health First Aid – Program Description
- SAMHSA on QPR Suicide Prevention Training
- WA State LMHC Licensure Requirements
- Psychology.org – Path to Pastoral Counselor (Education/Licensure)
- National Association of Christian Counselors – Certification Info
- American Association of Christian Counselors – Membership Info
- APA Division 51 (Men and Masculinities) – Mission Statement
- WSU Global Connections – Career Networking (Handshake/LinkedIn webinar)
- WSU Global Campus Psych Club Event (Involvement benefits)
- WSU Global Campus Student Involvement Opportunities
- WSU Academic Success & Career Center – eTutoring (Free online tutoring)
- WSU GPSA – Mental Health Resources (WellTrack, etc.)
- WSU Student Care Network – Global Campus Crisis Line
- Reddit r/wsu – Counseling sessions for students (health fee) (Contextual)
- WSU Global Campus Current Student Resources (TechReady, Study Tips)