



Navigating Your F-1 Status at Evergreen Valley College

Fall 2026 International Student Survival
Guide & Compliance Manual



The F-1 Visa Exists for One Purpose: To Study

IN STATUS



You are **actively following all rules** tied to your **educational purpose, every single semester.**



Result: Seamless progression to graduation, authorized work opportunities, and smooth U.S. re-entry.

OUT OF STATUS



You have **violated** a USCIS **regulation** or college **administrative deadline.**



Triggers:

- Reported to USCIS/SEVIS system immediately.
- Official orders to depart the U.S.
- Severe difficulty re-entering the U.S. in the future.

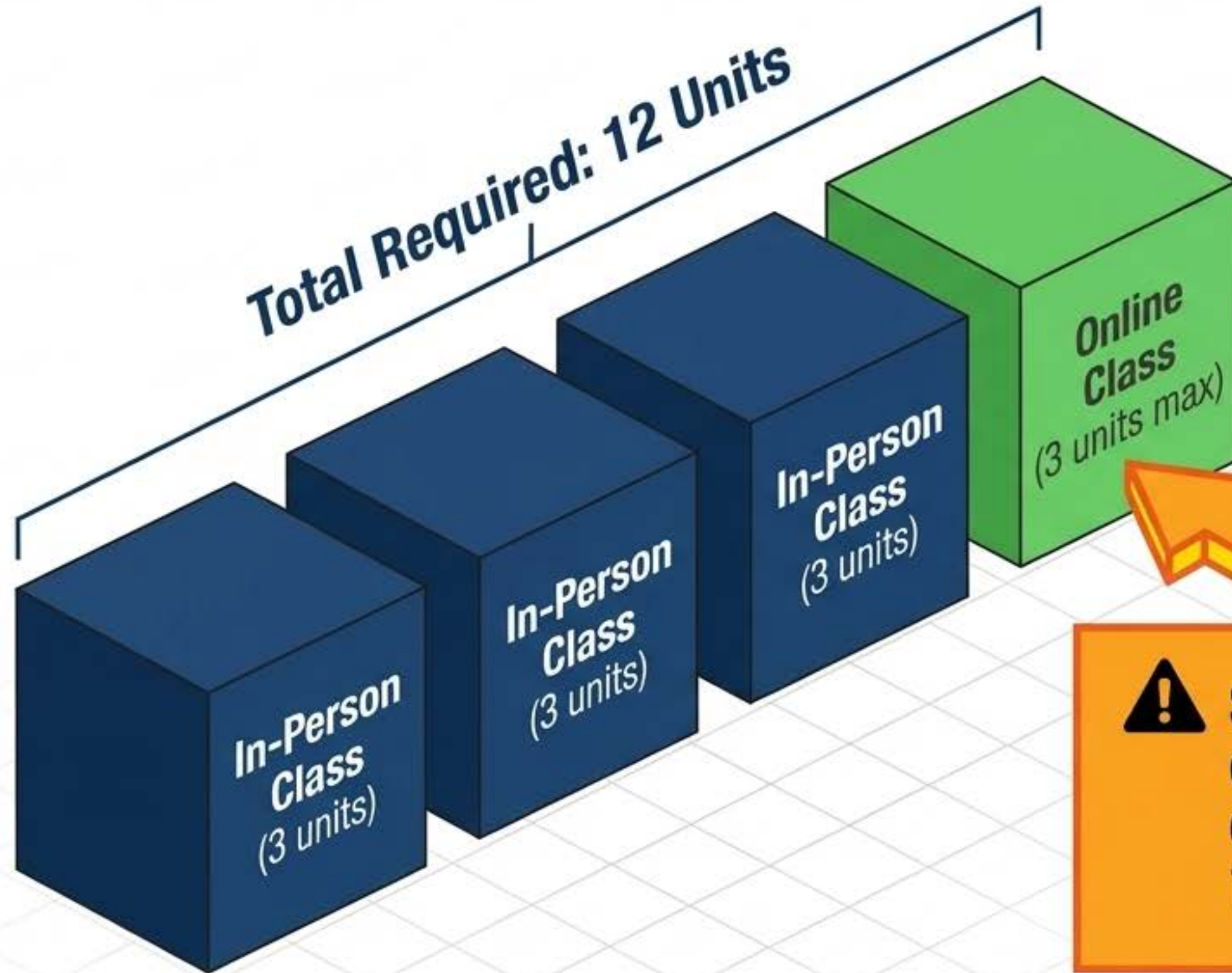
Ignorance of the rules is not an excuse. This guide ensures you stay in the green.

The DSO is Your Gateway. Ask Before You Act.



When in doubt—ask them before taking action. If your DSO is unavailable, you may contact SEVP directly at sevp@ice.dhs.gov.

The Full-Time Equation: 12 Units Minimum

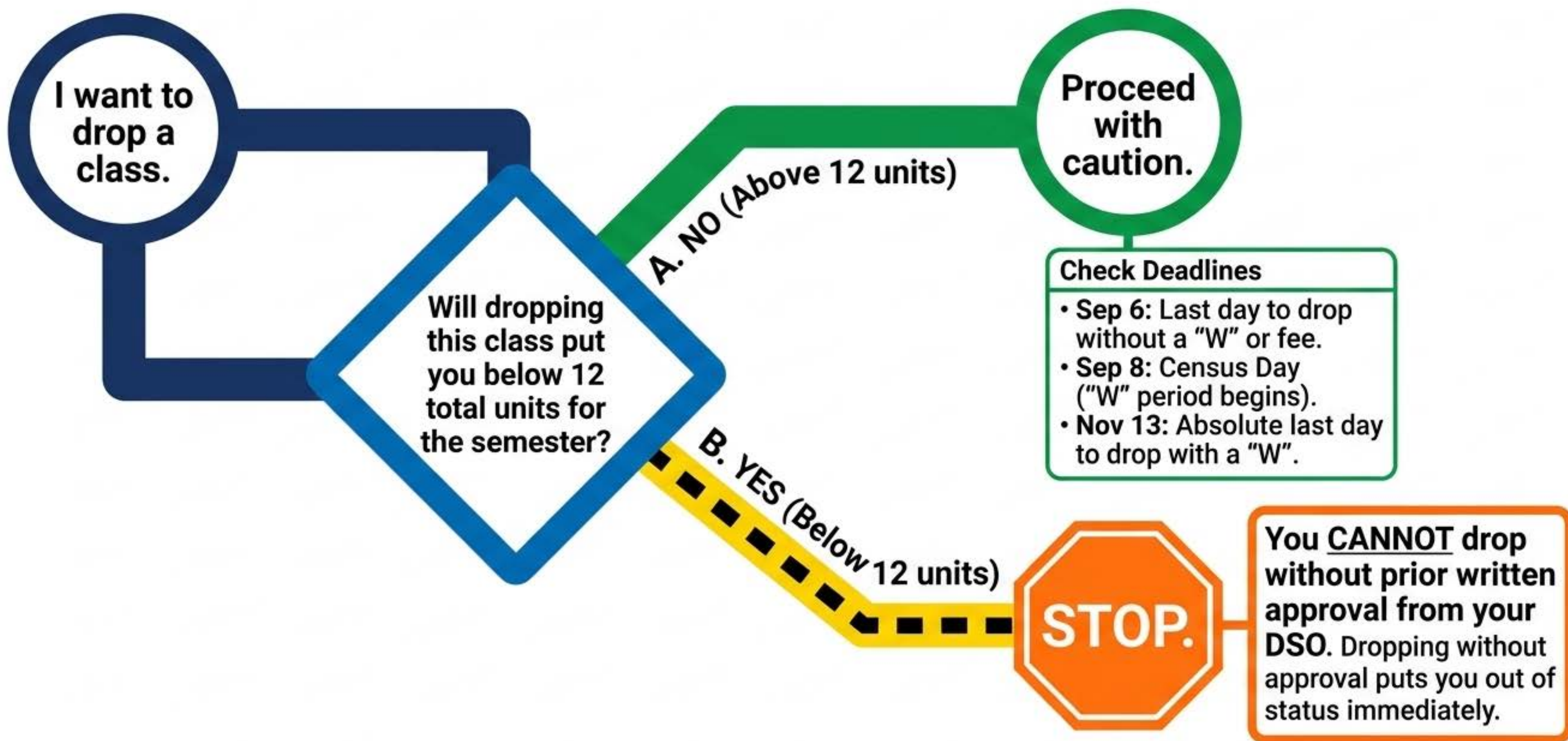


- **Fall & Spring:** 12 units required.
- **Summer & Intercession:** Optional.
- **Minimum GPA:** 2.0 at all times. If struggling, contact your DSO and an academic counselor immediately.



STRICT LIMIT: Only ONE online/distance course (up to 3 credits) can count toward your full-time 12-unit requirement per term.

Thinking About Dropping a Class? Follow the Path.



Clearing the Financial & Medical Checkpoints



Health Insurance is Mandatory.

Required for the entire duration of studies.
Purchased through EVC. The cost is **automatically included** in your school **tuition and fees**—as long as you are enrolled, you are covered.



Clear All Fees by Census Day.

DEADLINE: September 8, 2026.

All tuition and fees must be paid in full before this date. Failure to pay risks being dropped from classes, destroying your F-1 enrollment status.

⚠ WARNING: F-1 International students are NOT eligible for financial aid, college grants, fee waivers, or deferment.

The Phased Rules of F-1 Employment

	First Semester (Fall 2026)	Second Semester Onward (On-Campus)	Off-Campus (Post-OPT)
Allowed?	 NOT ALLOWED	 Conditional	 Highly Restricted
Requirements	N/A. Focus entirely on academics.	EVC GPA must be strictly above 3.0.	Tied to academic completion.
Approvals	None.	DSO written approval required BEFORE starting.	Requires DSO approval AND official USCIS authorization.

Working without authorization = Immediate removal from the United States and potential bars on future re-entry.

The 21-Day SEVIS Window



Your student record is strictly monitored in the SEVIS database. If your life changes, the clock starts.

The Triggers

- 1  Moved to a new apartment?
(Change of Address)
- 2  Switched your academic focus?
(Change of Major/Program)
- 3  Need more time to graduate?
(Program Extension)



You have **exactly 21 days** from the event to notify your DSO so they can update SEVIS. Missing this window violates your status.

Guarding Your Certificate of Eligibility (Form I-20)

OFFICIAL U.S. GOVERNMENT FORM
U.S. CITIZENSHIP AND IMMIGRATION

I-20

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Before leaving the U.S., your DSO must sign here.

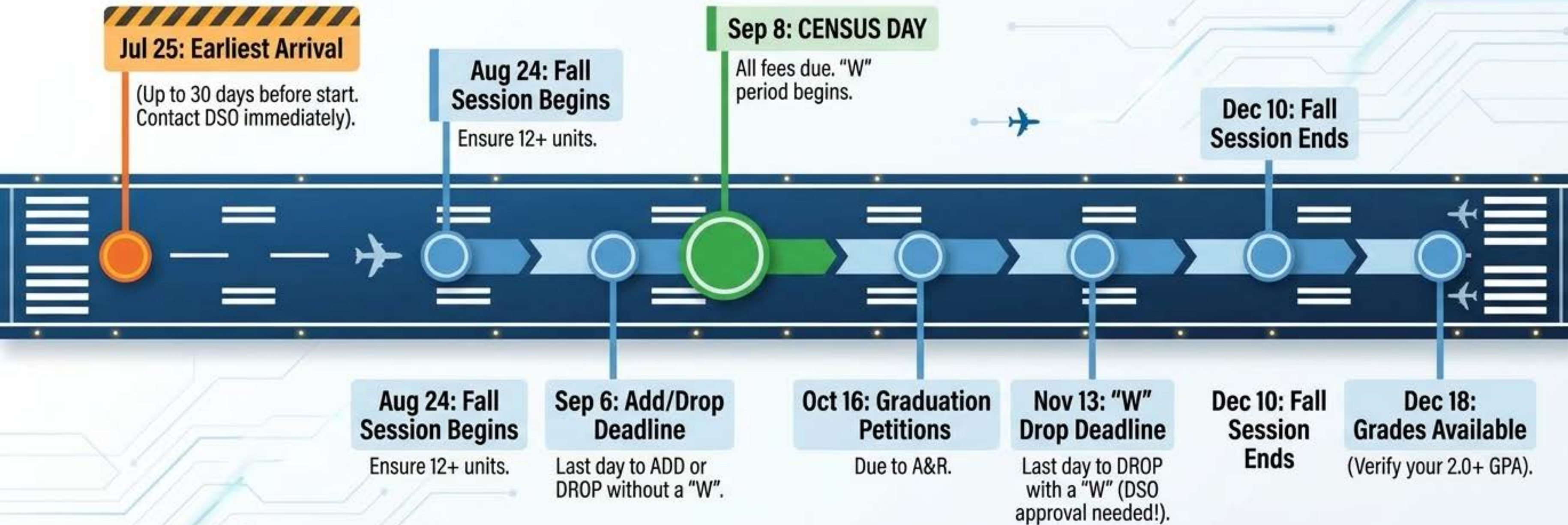
The image shows a sample of the back of a U.S. Government Form I-20. Three specific areas are highlighted with green rectangular boxes. The first box is at the top right, near the form number. The second box is in the middle section, which contains fields for the student's major and education level. The third box is at the bottom, containing a signature line for the Designated School Official (DSO) and a warning about leaving the U.S. Three white lines with circular endpoints point from the explanatory text on the right to each of these highlighted boxes.

Arrive max 30 days before start date. If you need a program extension, you **MUST** request it from your DSO **before** the end date expires.

Notify your DSO before making any changes to this section (Major / Education Level).

Before leaving the U.S., your DSO must sign here. **WARNING:** An absence from the U.S. of more than 5 months may result in the loss of your F-1 status.

Your Fall 2026 Flight Path & Deadlines



Always consult the
EVC Summer/Fall
Academic Calendar
for official updates.

Signing the Agreement: What You Are Actually Promising

Section 2 & 3: Academics

I will take 12+ units, keep a 2.0 GPA, and never drop a class without DSO approval.

Section 4 & 6: Financials

I will pay tuition by Sep 8 Census Day and maintain health insurance.



Form ISP-F1-CA | Fall 2026

By signing below, you
acknowledge you have
read, understood, and
agree to comply...

Section 5: Employment

I will not work without
authorization.

Section 7 & 8: Mobility

I will keep my I-20 valid,
report changes in 21 days,
and get signatures for travel.

Fall 2026 Final Action Checklist

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- ☐ Confirm enrollment in 12+ units before Aug 24.
 - ☐ Contact your DSO upon U.S. arrival (no earlier than July 25).
 - ☐ Sign the EVC USCIS Compliance Agreement at enrollment.
 - ☐ Pay all tuition and fees before September 8 (Census Day).
 - ☐ Do NOT drop any classes without talking to your DSO first.
 - ☐ Monitor your grades to keep your GPA at 2.0 or above.

**For Status & Visa Rules:
See your DSO at the ISP.**



**For Courses & Major Planning:
See an EVC Academic Counselor.**



**Welcome to Evergreen Valley College.
You are cleared for a successful semester.**

