1. THE GAME: Flag Football is designed to utilize the skill and basic strategy of football without the contact. Elimination of contact is the purpose of the following set of rules. Violators of these rules who jeopardize the safety of other players will be asked to leave the field of play and may face further disciplinary actions.

2. TEAM: Men’s and Women's Rec and Competitive leagues will consist of 7 players on the playing field. While on offense, 4 players must be lined up on the line of scrimmage. On defense, 3 players must be lined up on the line of scrimmage. Teams may not start a game with less than 5 players. Co-Rec leagues will consist of 8 players on the field. Throughout Co-Rec games, there may never be more men than women on the field of play at any moment. On offense, 4 players must be on the line of scrimmage. On defense, 3 players must be on the line of scrimmage. A girl must be involved on every other play. Being involved means throwing, catching, or running the ball past the line of scrimmage (snapping the ball does not count as being involved). Teams may have up to 20 players on one roster.

3. EQUIPMENT: All players must wear the flag belts provided by the Intramural department. Flags must be totally exposed during the game, shirts must either be tucked in or at least 4” above the flag belt. Any attempt to hide the flags will result in a penalty. Tying flag belts to prevent removal will result in automatic ejection from the game. Game footballs will be provided but alternate balls may be used if approved by both team captains at the beginning of the game. No cleats with exposed metal will be allowed. Hard billed hats, hoods, and shorts or pants with pockets or belt loops will not be allowed under any circumstances.

4. DURATION: The game will be divided into two halves, with each half consisting of 20 minutes continuous running clock. The clock will not stop after touchdowns or for extra point attempts, but will stop for injuries and timeouts. The clock will stop in the final two minutes of the second half for out-of-bounds, after touchdowns, for extra point attempts, penalties, change of possession, incomplete passes, and injuries, provided that the lead is smaller than 17 points. If time expires after a touchdown, an attempt for extra points will be allowed. Mercy Rule: If at any time after half time a team is trailing by 40 or more points the game will be called at that point and the other team will be declared the winner.

5. STARTING THE GAME: A coin toss will be used at the start of the game to determine possession. The team winning the coin toss will have the choice of taking the ball first, picking which end zone to defend, or deferring their choice to the second half. There will be no kickoffs. The offensive team will begin 1st down on their own 15 yard line. This will also be the case after a touchdown is scored or to start each half.

6. EXTRA POINTS: After a touchdown is scored the offensive team will have the option of going for one, two, or three points. A one-point attempt will originate at the 3-yard line, a two-point attempt will begin at the 10-yard line, and a 3 point attempt from the 15-yard line. If the defending team intercepts an extra point attempt, they can attempt to return the ball to their end zone. If they do so successfully then the defending team will be awarded 2 points regardless of the point value the offense was trying to obtain.

7. TIES: In the event of a tie, a coin toss will be used to determine which team gets the ball first. The winner of the toss will have their choice of offense or defense. Each team will have four downs to score from the 20-yard line. If the first team scores, they will have the choice to go for one, two, or three extra points. Then the second team has their chance to score from the 20-yard line and, if successful, have the choice to go for one, two, or three extra points. If the score remains tied after the first overtime then the
team that was on offense first in the first overtime will be on defense first for the second overtime. All subsequent overtimes will alternate the first offensive possession. In the third and all following overtimes all extra point attempts will be an attempt for 3 points. If an interception occurs during the first half overtime it can be returned for a score and will end the game.

8. DEAD BALL: Anytime the ball carrier touches the ground with any part of the body other than the feet or hands, the ball is dead at that spot. Any time the ball touches the ground it is dead at that spot, this includes fumbles, bad snaps from the center, and muffed punts. The team that fumbles (fumbles will be dead at the spot of the fumble, not where it hits the ground) will retain possession unless the play occurred on 4th down and a 1st down was not acquired. If a player has the ball in their possession and loses their flag belt the play will remain live, but to be downed the defensive team must touch the ball carrier with one hand below the waist. No defensive player may remove an offensive player’s flag belt prematurely; in addition, no defensive player shall swat at the ball when an offensive player is in possession (unsportsmanlike penalty will be enforced for both violations).

9. BLOCKING: Blocking is limited to screen blocking. In addition to normal blocking penalties, anytime the arms of the blocker or the rusher are extended in front of the body or to the outside of the shoulders a penalty will be called. Defensive players must remain at least 1 yard off the line of scrimmage until the ball is snapped. Players attempting to “bull rush” either with a lowered shoulder or extended hands will be penalized for unsportsmanlike conduct.

10. BALL CARRYING: Flag-guarding and stiff-arming are not allowed. A ball carrier must try to avoid all defensive players; trying to run over them will result in a penalty and could result in ejection from the game. A ball carrier cannot jump, hurdle, or dive to gain more yards, or for any other reason.

11. ROUGHING THE PASSER: Any contact with the quarterback while he/she is in the throwing motion will be declared a roughing the quarterback penalty. The defensive player must be in control and must be going for the flag. If a defensive player is going for the ball and contacts any part of the quarterback then a penalty will be called.

12. PUNTING: An offensive team on 4th down must declare their intention to punt before they approach the line of scrimmage. A punt may be either kicked or thrown. The defensive team must have 4 people on the line of scrimmage and neither team may move until the ball is punted.

13. QUARTERBACK, RECEIVING AND SCORING: The quarterback must line up a minimum of 1 yard behind the center. A receiver only needs one foot in-bounds for a legal catch. To score a touchdown only the ball must cross the goal line, in bounds. The body does not have to cross the goal line. The center may snap the ball either between the legs or to the side of the center.

14. INADVERTANT WHISTLE: If a ball is blown dead before the play is finished, the team in possession of the ball at the time of the whistle may either repeat the down or take the ball where it was blown dead.

15. ROUGHNESS AND UNSPORTSMANLIKE CONDUCT: An official may remove a player from the game for any unsportsmanlike conduct or unnecessary roughness. Please review the intramural policies on participant misconduct and ejections.

16. PENALTIES:

Loss of down + yardage
Illegal forward pass (+ 5yds from the spot of the foul)
Two consecutive male-to-male passes in co-rec league (+ 5 yards from the spot of the foul)
Intentional grounding (+ 5 yards from the spot of the foul)
Flag Guarding (+ 10 yards from where foul occurred)

5-Yard Penalties
Delay of game (from succeeding spot)
Offside / encroachment (from succeeding spot)
Not enough players on the line of scrimmage (from previous spot)
Illegal motion (only one person may be in motion at the time of the snap)

10-Yard Penalties
Interference with attempt to field a punt (a minimum of 2 yard buffer zone)
Defensive pass interference + 1st down (from the previous spot)
Roughing the passer + 1st down (from previous spot or the end of the run)
Unsportsmanlike conduct (from the succeeding spot)
Holding, offensive or defensive + 1st down for defensive holding
Illegal use of arms and/or hands (from the spot of the foul)
Clipping, Tripping, or Illegal block (from the spot)
Hurdling or Diving (from spot of the foul)
Pushing out of bounds (from the spot)
Offensive pass interference (+ 10 yards from the previous spot)

Captains are the only ones who may discuss penalties with the referees.

The team captain is responsible for thoroughly informing all team members of all intramural rules and policies and game rules as documented here.

Questions? Contact –

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