Intramural Sports – Flag Football Rules
Department of Physical Education and Athletics
Case Western Reserve University

ELIGIBILITY
- Players must be CWRU students, faculty or staff on a team’s IMLeagues roster to participate
- All players must have a CWRU ID on their person in order to play – NO ID, NO PLAY, NO EXCEPTIONS
- Varsity athletes are ineligible for their sport or related sport for one year
- Club Sports athletes may not make up more than half of a team in their related sport
- Professional athletes are not eligible for their related sport

FIELD AND EQUIPMENT
The Field
- The game shall be played on field that is sixty (60) yards long and twenty (20) yards wide with ten (10) yard end zones on each end
- All equipment (except a game ball) is provided
Football
- Teams shall use a regulation size football with a pebble-grained leather or rubber surface
- The Intramural Sports Program will not supply footballs
- Teams may use their own ball or obtain one from the Issue Room while on offense as long as it meets specifications
Jerseys
- Teams should wear shirts or jerseys of matching or similar color
- Pinnies may be provided upon request from the Intramural Supervisor
- Jerseys do not need to be numbered
Shoes
- Athletic shoes must be worn
- No metal may be exposed on any cleat
- All molded plastic cleats are allowed unless deemed dangerous by an Intramural Supervisor
- If cleats screw in, the plastic must completely cover the metal portion of the cleat
Other Equipment
- All other equipment worn by participants must be deemed safe by an Intramural Supervisor
- No hard casts, hard-billed hats, jewelry, pads/braces may be worn

NUMBER OF PLAYERS
Maximum Players – Seven (7) players may be on the field at one time for each team
Minimum Players – Five (5) players for each team MUST be present to begin the game
- If a team is not ready to play by game time, they will forfeit – must be issued by an Intramural Supervisor
- The game may be continued (but not started) with less than five (5) players if they have a chance to win

GAME CLOCK
Length of Game
- Each game will consist of seventeen (17) minute halves plus seven (7) plays
- Three (3) minutes halftime – Can be shortened if both teams are ready
- The game clock will not stop
- Exceptions: timeouts called with under 2 minutes or stoppage by Intramural Supervisor
- A game shall become “official” at halftime
Time Outs
- Each team will get one (1) time out per half of regulation, and one (1) during overtime; no carry-over
- Each time out is one (1) minute – Can be shortened if both teams are ready
Overtime
- There will be no overtime for regular season games
- In playoffs, if the game is tied at the end of regulation, overtime will commence
- A coin toss will determine the captain that will have choice of offense or defense or the end of the field in which to play
- The captain losing the toss will chose the opposite choice of the winning captain
- Each team will start 1st and goal from the opposing team’s 10-yard line (pending penalties)
- Each team will play a series on offense and defense (unless the defensive team causes a turnover and scores a touchdown)
- The offensive team will have one (1) offensive series to score a touchdown
- Each overtime period consists of an offensive series for each team
- If the score is still tied after each overtime period, play will continue until a winner is declared
- The possessions will alternate throughout overtime (i.e. team A was on offense first in the first overtime, they will be on defense first in the second overtime)
- Each team will have one (1) timeout during the entire overtime.

START OF PLAY
- Prior to the start of the game, there shall be a pre-game captain’s meeting with the Intramural Supervisor
- The Captains will play rock-paper-scissors to determine one of three following choices:
  - Defer their choice to the beginning of the second half
  - Choose to go on offense or defense first
  - Choose which end of the field to defend
- If the option is deferred, the opposing captain shall choose first. If the option is not deferred, the opposing captain shall make the remaining choice
- The result of the initial rock-paper-scissors shall determine who gets first choice at the start of the second half

SUBSTITUTIONS
- Between downs any number of eligible substitutes may replace players on the field
- The substitute must enter from the team area and the player leaving the field must leave the field through the team area before the ball is snapped
- Each substitute must also have the proper game equipment

SCORING
- The Intramural Supervisor will keep the official score
- Players may ask for the score at reasonable times that will not impede the progress of the game

Touchdowns
- Six (6) points will be awarded for a touchdown (Nine (9) points will be awarded for female-involved touchdowns in Co-Rec games)
- A touchdown is scored with the when the ball breaks the vertical plane of the end zone
- The player scoring the touchdown must have their flags checked by the nearest player for illegal attaching of the flag belt
- Any tying or securing of flag belt shall be grounds for ejection

Point After Attempts
- After each touchdown, the scoring team will have an opportunity for a Point After Attempt
- All Point After Attempts will be tried from the 10-yard line
- The Captain must designate the point value they are trying for to the Intramural Supervisor
- One (1) point will be awarded for a try crossing the 5-yard line
- Two (2) points will be awarded for a try crossing the goal-line

Safety
- A safety is scored if any part of the ball is still in the end zone when the runner is de-flagged
- A runner carries the ball from the field of play to or across their own goal line, and it becomes dead there in their possession except if the momentum rule can be applied
  - If a defensive player or kick returner’s original momentum carries them into the end zone, it shall not be a safety
A spot penalty on the offensive team is committed behind their goal line
A player fumbles, muffes, bats, punts, or passes a loose ball and the result of the play ends behind their goal line in their team’s possession
When a safety is scored, the ball belongs to the scoring team at their 14-yard line
Two (2) points will be awarded for a safety

**MERCY RULE**
- At the end of regulation second half, if the following point differentials are present, the seven plays will not be played, and the game will end under mercy rule
- Open or Greek games – 19 point spread
- Co-Rec games – 25 point spread

**PASSING / RECEIVING**

**Passing the Ball**
- All players are eligible to touch or catch a pass
- The passer can catch a pass as long as they aren’t the first player to touch the pass
- The original offense may attempt one (1) pass play per down as long as any part of the passer’s body is behind the line of scrimmage plane when the ball leaves the passers hand
- If the entire body of passer is across the line of scrimmage plane, the pass is illegal
- The pass is also illegal if the team possession has changed during the down, or if the pass is intentionally thrown to the ground or out-of-bounds to save loss of yardage (to stop the clock, a passer may throw the ball directly into the ground if the motion is continuous with receiving the snap)

**Ineligible Participation**
- Any player who runs out of bounds unforced and returns the field of play is considered to be participating illegally
- All players are considered eligible receivers -- An eligible receiver maintains their eligibility unless they run out-of-bounds unforced

**Completed Pass**
- A forward pass is completed when caught by a player inbounds
- It is a catch as long as one foot, or first part of the body to touch the ground, is inbounds and the player simultaneously has possession of the ball

**Simultaneous Catch**
- If a pass is caught simultaneously by members of opposing teams inbounds, the ball becomes dead and is awarded to the offensive player at the spot of the catch

**Pass Interference**
- Unnecessary contact with an opponent OR restricting a player from access to a pass while on offense or defense is pass interference
- Players may not wave their hands in the face of an opponent to disrupt their vision of the ball (face guarding)

**PUNTING / KICK-OFF**

**Punting**
- On fourth (4th) down, the offense must announce to the Intramural Supervisor if they are going to punt the ball or not
- Neither team may move past the line of scrimmage until the ball is kicked away
- There are no fake punts
- The kicker must immediately kick the ball in a continuous motion of receiving the snap
- Defensive players may jump to attempt to block the kick, but cannot cross the line of scrimmage
- There are no fair catches and the punting team may not interfere with the receiving team’s ability to catch the ball
- If the ball goes out-of-bounds or comes to a stop before being touched; the ball is dead and belongs to the receiving team at that spot
- If the receiving team touches the ball and is recovered by another player before the ball touched the ground:
  - If the player is on the receiving team, the ball is live and maybe advanced
  - If the player is on the kicking team, the ball is dead but belongs to the kicking team at that spot
- Exceptions: If the receiving team blocks the punt beyond the line of scrimmage, the kicking team may catch and advance the punt
- If the punt touches the ground and rolls, the receiving team may pick the ball up and return it

**Kick-Off**
- There are no kick-offs – the drive starts from the offense’s first line to gain

**SNAPPING**
- The ball is live after a legal snap
- A legal snap consists of one fluid motion from the ground to a player who is at least two-yards behind the line of scrimmage

**LINE-TO-GAIN**
- The line-to-gain shall be established after all penalties are administered and prior to the snap of the ball
- The offense has four consecutive downs to get into the next zone, less any penalties

**FUMBLES**
- Once the ball touches the ground, the play is dead
- The ball may be intercepted before the ball touches the ground
- Teams cannot intentionally fumble or throw the ball backwards out of bounds to conserve time

**BLOCKING / CONTACT**

**Blocking**
- All players will be limited to screen blocking
- Screen blocking is legally obstructing an opponent without contacting them with any part of the blocker’s body
- The blockers hands and arms shall be at their side or behind their back
- Any use of the arms, elbows, or legs is illegal
- A blocker may use their hand or arm to break a fall or to retain their balance

**Blocking Fundamentals**
- A player who screen blocks shall not:
  - Take position closer than a normal step from the opponent when they are behind a stationary opponent
  - Take a position close to a moving opponent that their opponent cannot avoid contact by stopping or changing direction
  - The speed determines where the screener may take position
  - The position will vary and must be at least one (1) normal stride from the opponent
  - Move after assuming legal position, unless the blocker is moving in the same direction and path of their opponent
  - Take position with another player to be interlocked with one another or aid the runner to avoid the runner from being de-flagged
  - If the screener violates any of these provisions and contact results, they have committed an illegal contact penalty

**Charging**
- A runner shall not charge into an opponent regardless of if the opponent is in their path or not
- The runner must avoid contact by stopping or changing direction

**Defending the Blocker**
- All defensive players must move around the offensive player’s screen block while avoiding contact
- Arms and hands may not be used to contact the opponent
- The defensive player may use their arms and hands to break a fall or retain their balance
Defensive Contact
- In an attempt to remove the flag belt, a defensive player may inadvertently contact the runner’s body, but not the face or neck, with their hands
- A defensive player may not hold, push, or knock down the runner in attempt to remove the flag belt
- Any act deemed malicious is grounds for penalty, ejection, and/or suspension

PENALTIES
Loss of 5 Yards:

**DEAD BALL FOULS**
1) Delay of Game
2) Encroachment (2nd Consecutive encroachment – loss of 10 yards)
3) False Start
4) Illegal Snap
5) Illegal Formation
6) Illegal Substitution

**LIVE BALL FOULS**
1) Aiding the runner by Teammate
2) Failure to Wear Required Equipment
3) Illegal Forward Pass (+ loss of down, if by Team A)
4) Illegal Backward Pass (+ Loss of Down)
5) Illegal Motion
6) Illegal Procedure
7) Illegal Shift
8) Illegal Male Advancement – Co-Rec
9) Intentional Grounding (+ Loss of Down)

Loss of 10 yards:

**DEAD BALL FOULS**
1) Unsportsmanlike Conduct

**LIVE BALL FOULS**
1) Illegal Player Equipment
2) Kick Catching Interference (punts) (PS or Spot)
3) Flag Guarding
4) Illegal Flag Belt Removal
5) Illegal Bat, Kick
6) Illegal Participation
7) Illegal Contact
8) Hurdling over a player
9) Illegally secured flag belt (+ Loss of Down)
10) Pass Interference – Defense
11) Pass Interference – Offense
12) Personal Foul
13) Roughing the Passer (+ Automatic First Down)

Loss of 10 yards and automatic ejection:
1) Flagrant unsportsmanlike conduct by players or non-players
2) Flagrant spiking, kicking, or throwing the ball
3) Flagrant personal fouls
4) Tackling
5) Fighting
6) Intentional Tampering with Flag Belt

ALL RULES NOT COVERED IN THIS DOCUMENT REVERT BACK TO THE NIRSA FLAG FOOTBALL RULE BOOK
CO-REC MODIFICATIONS

All previously listed rules apply to Co-Rec games in addition to those listed below

Number of Players
- Number of players is still 8 on 8 (4 males, 3 females or vice versa)
- Minimum to play is 5
- Cannot have one gender with more than 2+ opposite gender (CANNOT have 4 males, 2 females)

Legal Combinations:
- 4 Males, 3 Females
- 3 Males, 4 Females
- 3 Males, 3 Females

Punts
- Males or Females may return punts

Male Runners
- A male runner **CANNOT** be the first player to advance the ball through the scrimmage line
- Once the ball has been ran or passed through the scrimmage line, any player may break the plane
- There are not restrictions concerning runs by a female

Male to Male Forward Pass Completions
Closed Play – A male player may not complete a legal forward pass to a male
Open Play – Any player may complete a pass to any other player (On male to male completions, the male must be beyond the line of scrimmage)

Consecutive Forward Passes
- During the offensive team’s possession there **may not be two (2) consecutive legal forward pass completions** on downs from a male passer to a male receiver (includes the try)
- Once a pass is completed from a male passer to a male receiver, the play is **closed**
- To **open** a play, a legally thrown forward pass must meet the all of the following criteria:
  1) Female involvement (Passer and/or Receiver)
  2) Legal forward pass
  3) Resulting in positive yards
- All series begin as **open**
- A male to male completion and a subsequent lateral to a female does **NOT** open the play, and would result in a penalty if the play was already closed

Penalties
- Illegal Male to Male forward pass – 5-yards + loss of down
- Illegal Male advancement – 5-yards

Scoring
- **6 points** – Male to Male scoring play
- **9 points** – Any play with a female involved (female involvement is cancelled after a change of possession)
- **Tries and Safeties**: worth the same as regular flag football rules