FLAG FOOTBALL RULES

Administrative Rules

1. **Eligibility**: W.C.C. students, faculty, and staff are eligible to participate.
2. **Identification**: Participants must present a valid W.C.C. picture ID card at all times and may be asked for further identification if necessary.

Administrative Game Rules

1. **Pre-game procedures**: All of the team’s identification should be handed directly to the respective Intramural staff member by the team captain 10 minutes prior to match time. At that time, the team captain will receive jerseys (if needed) and must inform the scorekeeper of player numbers.
2. **Team captain/manager**: Only the team captain/manager (one person per game) will be allowed to speak to the officials and scorekeeper.

Special Game Rules

1. **Game**: A regulation game consists of two halves of 20 minutes each with a 3 minute half-time. The game clock continues to run throughout the half (running time). A coin toss will determine the options for the first half. The winner of the toss may choose to defer until the 2nd half, start on offense of defense first, or select which goal to defend.

2. **Teams**: Teams should start the game with 7 players; however, a minimum of 6 players are needed to avoid a forfeit. If a team is reduced to less than 6 players, the game will be forfeited.

3. **Players’ equipment**: Players must wear the appropriate equipment and attire. Teams must wear legal numbered (front and back) matching-color uniforms. The Intramural Sports program will provide nylon mesh jerseys for teams without numbered uniforms. Illegal equipment or attire consists of:
   a. Headwear containing any hard, unyielding, stiff material, including billed hats, or items containing knots.
   b. Any jewelry
   c. Pads or braces worn above the waist.
   d. Shoes with metal, ceramic, screw-in, or detachable cleats. Exception: Molded cleats as part of the shoe.
   e. Shirts of jerseys that do not remain tucked in. Any hood on a coat, sweatshirt, or shirt that does not remain tucked in.
   f. Pants or shorts with any belt(s), belt loop(s), or exposed drawstring(s), shorts/pants with pockets.
   g. Leg and knee braces made of hard, unyielding material, unless covered on both sides and all edges overlapped.
   h. Any slippery or sticky foreign substance on any equipment of exposed part of the body.
Exposed metal on clothes or person.

Towels attached at the players waist.

4. **Time-Outs:** Each team is allowed only one time-out per game. The game clock will be stopped for 30 seconds during time-outs.

5. **Mercy Rule:** If a team is 20 points or more ahead with 7 minutes to go in the second half, the game shall be officially called. If a team scores during the last 7 minutes of the second half and that score creates a point differential of 20 or more points, the game shall end at that point.

6. **Tie Games:** No ties, 2 minute overtime or 1 team scores

7. **Substitution:** Substitutions may be made at any time during the game but only during a dead ball.

8. **First Downs:** 1 first down can be achieved by reaching the midfield line.

9. **Punting:** No punting, ball placed on 20 yard line.

10. **Line of Scrimmage:**
    
    **Defense:** The defensive line of scrimmage is 2 yards off the ball. Following the “ready for play” and until the snap, no player may encroach, touch the ball, nor contact an opponent or in any other way to interfere with them. Any infraction results in a penalty.
    
    **Offense:** Must have a minimum of 4 players set on the line of scrimmage at the snap. All offensive players must come to a complete stop and remain stationary in legal position without movement of feet, body, head, and arms for at least 1 full second before the snap. Once the center has placed his or her hand on the ball, no offensive player may enter the neutral zone. The player receiving the snap must be at least 2 yards behind the offensive line of scrimmage. All snaps must pass through the center’s legs. A player in motion does not count as a player on the line of scrimmage. All offensive players must be within 15 yards of the ball. Only one offensive player may be in motion but in motion towards the opponent’s goal line. Any infraction results in penalty.

11. **Backward Passes and Fumbles:** Any ball that is fumbled during a down will be dead by rule once it has touched the ground. A backward pass or fumble (prior to hitting the ground) may be caught or intercepted by any player inbounds and advanced. A player may not intentionally throw a backward pass out of bounds to avoid being downed. Once a ball has touched the ground, the ball is considered dead. Any infraction will result in penalty.

12. **Forward Passes and Interceptions:** If a player is in the air attempting to catch a ball, the player must contact the ground with at least one foot in-bounds with the ball in their possession prior to going out of bounds, unless contact by the opponent causes the player to first touch out-of-
bounds. If possession of the ball is lost simultaneously when they hit the ground, it is not a catch. If a forward pass is caught simultaneously by members of opposing teams, the ball is dead at the spot, and possession belongs to the team that snapped the ball.

13. **Pass Interference:** Any contact in the view of the official, interfering with the attempt to catch a pass (offensive or defensive player) is pass interference, unless in the view of the official, it occurs when two or more eligible receivers make a simultaneous and bona fide attempt to reach, catch or bat a pass. It is also pass interference if an eligible receiver is de-flagged or touched prior to touching the ball on a pass thrown beyond the offense’s line of scrimmage. If the pass interference by the defense is intentional and/or unsportsmanlike, the defense may be penalized with an unsportsmanlike conduct foul.

14. **The Flag Belt:** All shirts must be tucked in, and are not permitted to hang over the flag belt. Should a player lost their flag belt legally or illegally during a down and should that player gain possession of a live ball, that player will be considered down when a legal tag (one hand touched by the defense between the shoulders and knees, including the hand and arm) is made. When a player scores they must immediately raise their hands and allow an official to remove their flag belt. This is done to insure the flag belt has not been illegally secured. If the belt had been illegally secured the score is disallowed, the player ejected and a 10 yard Unsportsmanlike Conduct penalty will be administered from the previous spot. Players must have possession of the ball before they can legally be de-flagged. It is illegal for a defensive player to intentionally pull a flag from an offensive player who is not in possession of the ball. In cases where a flag belt is removed illegally, play should continue with the option of the penalty of the play. **The flag belt must be on all offensive players prior to the snap of the ball.** Any infraction will result in illegal procedure penalty.

15. **Guarding the Flag Belt:** Runners shall not flag guard by using any part of the body to deny the opportunity for an opponent to pull or remove the flag belt. Flag guarding includes but is not limited to:
   a. Swinging the hand or arm over the flag belt to prevent an opponent from de-flagging.
   b. Placing the ball in possession over the flag belt to prevent an opponent from de-flagging.
   c. Lowering the shoulders in such a manner that guards flag.

16. **Screen Blocking:** Legally obstructing an opponent **without** using any part of the body to initiate contact. Screen blocking shall take place without contact. The blocker shall have their hands and arms at their sides of behind their back. A screen blocker cannot use their hands, arms, elbows, legs or body to initiate contact. If they do use contact it will be called a Personal Foul. Screen blockers may **not:**
   a. Take a position closer than a normal step when behind a stationary opponent.
   b. Make contact when assuming a position at the side or in front of a stationary opponent.
c. Take a position so close to an opponent that they cannot avoid contact by stopping or changing direction.

17. **Stiff Arming:** Stiff arming is not allowed; a personal foul will be called, and if warranted an unsportsmanlike conduct or ejection will result.

18. **Obstructing the Runner:** A defensive player shall not hold, grasp, or obstruct the forward progress of the runner when attempting to remove the flag belt.

19. **Defensive Rush and Use of Hands:** The defensive rush may not start until the quarterback has caught the snap. Defensive players must attempt to go around the offensive blocker. Defensive players must not use any part of his/her arms, hands, elbows, or any part of the body to contact the offensive player.

20. **Aiding the Runner:** A player shall not grasp, pull, push or aid any teammate runner.

21. **Face Guarding:** A defensive player may not use their arms and hands to intentionally obstruct the receiver’s view of the ball.

22. **Unsportsmanlike Conduct:** No player shall commit non-contact/contact acts during a period or intermission. Examples include but are not limited to the following:
   a. Any acts of unfair play.
   b. Using inappropriate language or disconcerting acts to interfere with the offense’s signals.
   c. Intentionally kicking an opposing player.
   d. Intentionally swinging an arm, hand, or fist (punching) at an opposing player.
   e. Attempting to influence a decision by the official.
   f. Disrespecting an official of IM staff.
   g. Indicating objections to an official’s decision.
   h. Using profanity, insulting language or gestures.
   i. Intentionally contacting a game official during the game.
   j. Intentionally tripping an opponent.
   k. Throwing the runner to the ground.
   l. Tackle the runner.
   m. **FIGHTING of any kind will result in an AUTOMATIC EJECTION.** The individual will need to leave the field and surrounding premises before any play can continue.

23. **Personal Fouls:** Any act listed below or any other act of unnecessary roughness is a personal foul. Players shall not:
   a. Punch, strike, strip, or attempt to steal the ball from a player with possession.
   b. Unintentional tripping of an opponent.
   c. Contact an opponent who is on the ground.
   d. Hurdle another player.
e. Contact an opponent either before or after the ball is declared dead.
f. Make any contact with an opponent that is deemed unnecessary.
g. Deliberately drive or run into a defensive player.
h. Clip an opponent.
i. Position themselves on the shoulders of a teammate or opponent.

24. **Penalty:**
   a. Illegal procedure, 5 yards.
   b. Illegal motion, 5.
   c. False Start/Encroachment, 5.
   d. Illegal pass, loss of 5 yards and loss of down.
   e. Illegal contact, 5 yards.
   f. Delay of game, 5 yards.
   g. Personal Foul, 10 yards.
   h. Stiff Arm, 10 yards.
   i. Aiding the Runner, 5 yards.
   j. Obstructing the Runner, 10 yards.
   k. Flag guarding, 10 yards.
   l. Illegal Block, 10 yards.
   m. Face Guarding, 10 yards.
   n. Pass Interference, 10 yards.
   o. Unsportsmanlike Conduct, ejection and 10 yard penalty.

25. **Scoring:**
   a. Touchdowns = 6 points
   b. Extra points = 1 points if successful from the 3 yard line
   c. Extra points = 2 points if successful from the 10 yard line
   d. Extra points = 3 points if successful from the 20 yard line
   e. Safety = 2 points
   f. Defensive conversion on Extra Point Attempt = 3 points

26. **Touchdown Administration:** Once a touchdown had been scored, the captain of the offensive team must immediately indicate where they would like to try for the point after.

27. **Safety:**
   a. If a player carries the ball across the goal line they are defending and the ball becomes dead while in their team’s possession.
   b. If an offensive player commits a foul in the end zone where the spot of enforcement is designated as the spot of the foul.
   c. Possession will be given to the scoring team at their own 15 yard line, unless moved by a penalty.
d. **Exception: Momentum Rule:** When a player intercepts a forward pass or catches a scrimmage kick between their 5-yard line and their goal line and their momentum carries them into the end zone where the ball becomes dead, the ball will belong to the receiving team at the spot of the catch or reception.

28. **Illegal Participation:** If a player competes on more than one team, both teams on which he/she participates will forfeit all the games which the player was a participant. Only W.C.C. students, faculty, and staff are eligible to participate with exception to community college students who must register through their respective program and play as a community college team.

29. **Referee:** The decision of the referee regarding facts connected with play and interpretation of the rules are final.

30. **NIRSA RULES:** All other rules are current NIRSA rules.

31. **Ejected Players:** Any player ejected from a game will be required to report to Ryan Perreira within 48 hours, to show cause why he/she should continue to play. If this is not done, the player will be suspended from further competition.

**NOTE:** The W.C.C. Intramural Sports disapproves of any form of threatening action toward officials (game or IM personnel) and will suspend or expel players for such actions.

**Penalties:**

Administered from the line of scrimmage, replay the down:

**Dead Ball:**
- Delay of Game-5 yds.
- False Start/ Encroachment-5 yds.

**Live Ball:**
- Illegal Motion-5 yds.
- Illegal procedures-5 yds.
- Face Guarding-10 yds.
- Unsportsmanlike Conduct-10 yds.
- Personal Foul-10 yds.

**Automatic 1st Down:**
- Defensive Pass Interference-10 yds.
Loss of Down:
  - Offensive Pass Interference-10 yds.

Administered from the spot of the foul:
  - Illegal Contact-5 yds.
  - Stiff Arm-10 yds.
  - Obstructing the Runner-10 yds.
  - Aiding the Runner-10 yds.
  - Illegal block-10 yds.
  - Flag Guarding-10 yds.

Loss of Down:
  - Illegal Forward pass-5 yds.