**SOSU Intramural Flag Football Rules**

***The Intramural office reserves the right to make amendments to these rules deemed essential to the success of the program.***

**I. GENERAL ELIGIBILITY**

1. Participation is limited to currently enrolled, fee-paying SOSU students, faculty members, and staff. Members of the community are not eligible.
2. In order to participate in an intramural contest, each player must present their current, valid SOSU ID Card. Exceptions must be directed to the Intramural Office for consideration by the coordinator during regular business hours (8:00am-5:00pm). Bring a photo ID to obtain a waiver. No such waiver will be granted on the field.
3. No alcoholic beverages will be permitted in any recreation or athletic facilities; Tobacco use of any kind is prohibited in all recreation and athletic facilities (indoor and outdoor). Violations will result in forfeiture of the game by the team in violation.

**II.** **TEAM COMPOSITION**

1. Players can only compete for one team during the intramural flag football season and tournament.
2. Each team will have a captain. Since the games will be officiated by the honor system, it is up to the team captains to settle all questions regarding the rules of the game. If a solution can’t be found, then it will go to the field supervisor for a ruling to be made. Team captains are the only ones allowed to address the field supervisor. Any and all calls made by the field supervisor are final.
3. Teams will consist of 7-12 members; however, each team will only have 7 players on the field at one time.
4. Game time is forfeit time. A team needs at least 5 legal players to begin the game. If a team drops below five players at any point in the game or for any reason, the game will be declared a forfeit.

**II. GAME TIME AND LENGTH**

1. There will be a pre-game Captain’s Meeting. The field supervisor will review rules and answer any questions. This is a mandatory meeting for the captain of the team. In the captain’s absence, the Co-captain must be in attendance.
2. Games will consist of two 20-minute halves with a 5-minute halftime. The clock will run the entire game. Each team will be given 2 timeouts per half. These timeouts will be one minute in length and will stop the clock. Teams may be penalized for unsportsmanlike conduct for using stall tactics. Approximately 2 minutes before the end of each half the field supervisor shall inform both team captains of the playing time remaining in each half.

 A coin toss will determine which team will gain possession of the ball first. The team that wins the coin toss has three options:

* 1. First possession of the ball
	2. Defend the goal of their choice. (Note: If a team with first option choices to defend a goal, the other team will automatically get the ball.)
	3. Defer their option to the second half.
1. Overtime will be played during the tournament. In overtime:
	1. A coin toss will be conducted to start the overtime period. The winner of the coin toss has the choice of offense or defense. If the game goes to a second overtime, the team which lost the toss at the beginning of the first overtime has the choice to start on offense or defense for the second overtime. The choice will then alternate for each succeeding overtime period.
	2. Each team will have 4 downs to score from their opponent’s 10 yard line. Teams who begin their overtime period outside of the 20-yard line due to penalty must score in 4 downs and will NOT receive any first downs for crossing zone-line-to-gains in the process. Teams may receive another set of downs by penalty only (automatic first down)
	3. When a team scores they will attempt an extra point(s).
	4. The team on defense first will have its chance to score and attempt an extra point
	5. Overtime will continue until a winner is declared.
	6. The defense may intercept the ball and return it for a touchdown. In this case, they will win the game. If they do not score the overtime will proceed as necessary. The offensive team’s series is over when the defense intercepts a pass.

**III. EQUIPMENT AND PLAYING FIELD**

1. Individual player equipment must meet the following requirements:
	1. Shirts: All shirts must be tucked in and remain tucked in during play. No hoods of any kind are permitted. If the player wears a half shirt, it must be a minimum of 4 inches above the waist. Shirts must not have arm openings larger than 4 inches.
	2. Pants: Players may not wear pants or shorts that have belt loops or an exposed drawstring. Players may not wear towels that hang from the waist.
	3. Headgear: Players may not wear baseball style caps or other rigid headwear. Knit and stocking caps are permitted. Players may wear a headband no wider than two inches and made of non-abrasive cloth, elastic, fiber, permitted. Bandanas with knots are prohibited (no do-rags). Rubber or cloth elastic bands may be used to control hair.
	4. No pads allowed. EXCEPTION: To protect an injury.
	5. Shoes: All players must wear shoes. Tennis/running shoes, soft-soled shoes, and football shoes are permitted. Metal spikes, baseball-style spikes, and cleats with metal exposed are prohibited. Any player caught wearing spikes will be ejected from the game.
	6. Jewelry is NOT allowed to be worn by any participant during a flag football game. Only medical alert bracelets are permitted.
2. Each player must wear a flag belt, with one flag on each hip.
	1. Failure to wear a flag belt at the start of play, if noticed by an official prior to the snap is a live ball penalty (5 yards)
	2. If a runner loses his/her flag during the action, play continues. The play ends when a defensive player touches the runner with a two hand touch between the shoulders and the knee.
	3. If failure to wear the flag belt is noticed by the official after the play starts, the play continues with the ball becoming dead when the runner is touched between the shoulders and the knees. The defense can accept the result of the play or penalize for failure to wear required equipment (5 yards).
	4. Tampering with the flag belt in any way to gain advantage, including tying, using foreign material, or other such acts is unsportsmanlike conduct. (10 yard loss of down and player disqualification)

**IV. ADVANCING THE BALL & SCORING**

1. The play clock is 25 seconds. Over 25 seconds will be penalized for delay of game.
2. Only one player is allowed in motion before the snap.
3. The offensive team must have at least 4 players on the line of scrimmage at the snap. The defensive line of scrimmage is 5 yards off the ball.
4. The snapper must pass the ball to the Quarterback in a continuous motion from the ground at least 2 yards behind the line of scrimmage.
5. All players of either team are eligible to touch or catch a pass. One foot must land in bounds before any part of the body lands out-of-bounds. One knee is equivalent.
6. The passers lead foot must be behind the line of scrimmage when the ball leaves the hand.
7. If the ball is in the passers hand when de-flagged, passer is down.
8. The position of the ball when de-flagged is the spot of the ball.
9. Stripping of the ball is illegal.
10. Defensive players may not throw a forward pass following a fumble, recovery, or interception.
11. If a player intercepts the ball in the end zone, the player may return it out of the end zone. If the player is de-flagged while running in the end zone, it is a touchback.
12. Only one forward pass can be thrown per down.
13. A ball that is fumbled is dead when it hits the ground. The team that was in possession of the ball prior to the fumble retains possession, unless it was fourth down and a first down was not attained.
14. Inadvertent whistle: At the time of the inadvertent whistle the team with possession of the ball has the option of replaying the down or the result of the play to the spot where the ball was located at the time of the whistle.
15. Intentional grounding: Illegal to avoid a sack. Legal to stop the clock.
16. If a team elects to punt the ball on the 4th down, the following procedure must be followed:
	1. Team captain must declare the intention to punt.
	2. The offensive team must line up on the line of scrimmage with the exception of the punter
	3. The defensive team may have two receivers back to field the punt, all other defensive players must line up on the line of scrimmage.
	4. The ball must be snapped to the punter.
	5. No member of either team may leave the line of scrimmage until the ball has been punted.
17. The only type of blocking that is allowed is screen blocking.
18. The screen blocker must have his hands behind his back.
19. Any use of the hands, arms, legs, or body to initiate contact is illegal.

c. All official calls are final. The number of officials on the field is limited. The officials will watch closely for illegal blocking. Team captains may not dispute the calls of officials on this or any other call. The only protests allowed are rule interpretation

1. There will be no kick-offs, the 1st possession will start at the teams own 15-yard line. All subsequent situations that would call for a kick-off will start at the 15-yard line of the team that would receive the kick.
2. Teams may advance the ball by any legal means with the following restriction:

The ball carrier may not:

* 1. Hurdle defensive players EXCEPTION: hurdling of a down player is legal.
	2. Attach the flag in such a manner that it cannot be easily removed
	3. “Guard the flag”, this includes
* Stiff arming
* Carrying the ball in a position that protects the flag
* Lowering the shoulders in such a manner which places the arm over the flag belt
* Batting a defensive player’s hand away from the flag belt.
1. A touchdown shall count for six (6) POINTS.
	1. If the official deems that the flag has been illegally fastened (tied, twisted, tucked in, etc.), the player is disqualified and an unsportsmanlike conduct penalty is enforced. (10 yards from the previous spot with the loss of down and the score is nullified, no loss of down if it occurs after change of possession.)

 After a touchdown, the scoring team attempts a PAT (point after touchdown). The captain will indicate which distance the offense will attempt the PAT

* 1. **From the 5-yard line-Worth 1 point**
	2. From the 10-yard line-Worth 2 points
	3. From the 20-yard line-Worth 3 points
1. A safety is worth 2 points.
2. (Mercy Rule) If a team is leading by 19 points, or attains a lead of 19 points or more, in the final 2 minutes of the game, the game will end.
3. **PENALTIES AND ENFORCEMENT**

**If for any reason an official call can’t be made by either team or the field supervisor, the down will be replayed and time added back to the game clock.**

**Loss of 5 Yards**

* 1. Illegal forward pass (loss of down)
	2. Excessive time-out illegally used or requested.
	3. Delay of game
	4. Putting ball in play before declared ready-for-play
	5. Illegal snap
	6. Offensive player illegally in motion at the snap
	7. False Start
	8. Player on line receiving snap
	9. Intentional grounding (loss of down)
	10. Defensive holding

**Loss of 10 Yards**

1. Stiff arm
2. Running into opponent (charging)
3. Illegal use of hands or arms by offense
4. Flag guarding (loss of down)
5. Hurdling Exception: Hurdling of a down player is legal.

**Loss of 15 Yards: Spot Foul**

1. Defensive pass interference.
2. Tripping
3. Team not ready to play at start of half
4. Offensive pass interference (loss of down)
5. Striking, kicking, kneeing, elbowing, etc.
6. Unsportsmanlike conduct
7. Personal fouls
8. Persons illegally on the field
9. Illegal flag removal

**Summary of Penalties:**

**Line of Scrimmage**

1. Offside -Offense or Defense (5 yards)
2. Illegal snap (5 yards)
3. Delay of game (5 yards)
4. Illegal motion (5 yards)
5. Illegal formation – 4 men not on the line (5 yards)

**Passing**

1. Passer crosses the line of scrimmage (5 yards from line of scrimmage and loss of down)
2. Intentional grounding ( 5 yards from line of scrimmage and loss of down)
3. Offensive pass interference (15 yards from line of scrimmage and loss of down.)
4. Defensive pass interference (1st down at the spot of infraction for the offensive team)

**Delay of Game**

1. Continuing to play after a ball is dead ( 5 yards from spot of dead ball)
2. Recovering a dead fumble or falling on the ball (5 yards from spot)

**Flag Wearing and De-flagging**

1. Tackling (15 yards from spot of foul)
2. Tampering with flags (15 yards and ejection)
3. Flag guarding (10 yards and loss of down)

**VI. PROTESTS**

1. The intramural supervisor, on the field, will accept protests of rule interpretation only. Protests must be filed immediately after the play in question, once the ball is put back in play after the play in question, no protests will be honored. To file a protest, the team captain should ask the game official to get a supervisor, at this point the supervisor will hear the scenario, explain the rule that applies, and render a decision. Decisions made by intramural supervisors are final. There is no further appeals process. Supervisors will not listen to protests of judgment calls or competency, it is up to the team captains to sort this out. It is important to remember that the team captain is the only one who should address the field supervisor regarding protests.
2. **SPORTSMANSHIP**
3. Sportsmanship is an important part of intramural sports. Unsportsmanlike conduct will result in removal from the game.
4. Teams are responsible for keeping their spectators under control. Misconduct of spectators and players may result in ejection and/or forfeiture of the game. If at any time a team has 2 players or spectators ejected from the game, the offending team will immediately forfeit the game. Spectators must remain in the out-of-play areas. Only players are permitted in the playing area.
5. Unsportsmanlike Conduct (all enforced from dead ball spot, 10 yards)

No player shall commit unsportsmanlike acts during play or intermission including:

* 1. Using words similar to offensive audible or quarterback cadence prior to the snap in an effort to interfere with the offense’s signals or movements.
	2. Intentionally kicking the ball (other than a punt)
	3. Intentionally kicking an opponent or swinging an arm, hand or fist at any opposing player or official.
	4. Disrespectfully addressing an official or indicating objections to an official’s decision.
	5. Using profanity, taunting, insulting, or vulgar language or gestures.
	6. Fighting or leaving the sidelines and entering an altercation.

Two unsportsmanlike fouls by the same player or non-player results in disqualification. A player or non-player can be disqualified following the first unsportsmanlike foul.

There is zero tolerance for fighting. Players involved in an altercation will be removed from the game and suspended from all game play until a meeting is held with the intramural coordinator. At that time, the intramural coordinator will determine if the player will be eligible to return to intramural play or if they will be placed on the banned list.

1. Any player who uses foul language, violently protests a call, or curses the field supervisor, will be removed for the game. In addition, he will have to meet with the Intramural Coordinator during regular office hours before he is eligible to participate again. Any player who touches the field supervisor will be placed on suspension from all intramural activities for an indefinite period of time.
2. SOSU Intramural Sports does not recognize the use of coaches. Only the team captain may speak to the field supervisor regarding administrative matters. (protests, ejections, disqualifications, etc.)
3. Teams shall assist in removing trash and equipment from their game areas at the conclusion of the game.
4. **RAINOUTS/RESCHEDULING**
5. The SOSU Intramural Office reserves the right to postpone or reschedule a contest if circumstances warrant such action.
6. Games cancelled due to weather will be rescheduled.
7. In the case of inclement weather, the Intramural office will not make a decision regarding the playing of games until after 3:00 pm. An email will be sent to all team captains in the case of cancellation. If necessary, the captain may call the Intramural office at 745-3032. Only team captains should contact the intramural office, all other members of the team should contact their captain regarding information on cancellations.
8. When games are cancelled due to weather, the field will not be available for practice to avoid costly damage to the field.