Regulations published in the Texas A&M Intramural Sports Handbook will be the governing policies for all intramural sports. Team captains are responsible for possessing a thorough understanding of these regulations and their implications. The current National Intramural-Recreational Sports Association (NIRSA) Flag and Touch Football Rules will be in effect with the following interpretations and exceptions.

1. **PARTICIPATION**

   a. Proper identification must be presented by all participants in order to check in. Proper identification is a government-issued photo ID.
   
   b. **Roster:** Each player’s name must appear on the roster before he/she enters a game.
   
   c. **Coaches:** Each team may have one coach who is designated by the team captain. Coaches do not need to appear on the team roster, and teams do not need to use the same coach throughout the season. The coach is allowed to interact with officials and scorekeepers during the game, but must stay off the field of play except during time-outs.
   
   d. Any player **disqualified** from a contest will be removed from that game but can still play in their next contest.
   
   e. Any player, coach, or fan **ejected** from a contest will be removed from that game and automatically suspended from all intramural activities, pending a meeting with the appropriate intramural staff member.
   
   f. Intramural staff retain the authority to require an ejected player, coach, or fan to leave the facility. Any individual instructed to leave must do so immediately.
   
   g. **Protest Procedure:** Judgment calls may not be protested. If a team wants to protest a rule interpretation, the protest must be made immediately at the time of the questionable incident. Notify the official. The clock will stop while a protest is being filed.
   
   h. **Eligibility:** The eligibility of all players is the responsibility of team captains and the individual players. Refer to the intramural handbook for details.
   
   i. **Blood Rule:** Players who sustain an injury causing an open wound will be required to leave the game. A player may not re-enter the contest until the flow of bodily fluids is stopped and the wound covered.
   
   j. **Jewelry:** Participants are not permitted to wear any jewelry.
   
   k. **Medical Alert Bracelets** – Permitted, must be taped flush with the skin and may be visible.
   
   l. **Casts/splints:** Not allowed under any circumstances. Knee braces with exposed metal, hard plastic, or metal hinges must be covered with padding or foam at least ¼ inch thick.
   
   m. **Religious Headwear** – In the event a participant may not expose his/her uncovered head, the intramural supervisor may approve a covering or wrap which is not abrasive, hard or dangerous to any other player and which is attached in such a way that it is highly unlikely to come off during play. This stipulation applies only to religious headwear to cover the head and does not apply to any necklaces/rings/earrings/bracelets or any other form of jewelry.
   
   n. Elastic headbands and hair control devices without metal, hard plastic, or bandanas without knots are permitted. Hard items, including, but not limited to, beads, barrettes and bobby pins are prohibited. Other head decorations or headwear are not allowed.
   
   o. **Uniforms:** Flag Football teams are strongly encouraged to wear jerseys or shirts of similar color. In general, home teams should attempt to wear colors, and away teams should wear a white or light gray. This is a guideline and not a requirement. The Intramural Sports Department will require
teams to wear jerseys at the staff’s discretion, based on the colors each team is wearing. These jerseys will be provided by the Intramural Sports Department.

p. Players may wear a knit or stocking cap (no caps with bills) and/or soft, pliable, non-abrasive gloves. Bandanas with a knot are not permitted.

q. **Footwear**: Outdoors – all players must wear athletic shoes. Metal cleats, spikes, or toe cleats will not be permitted. Five finger shoes are not considered athletic shoes.

r. **Pants**: Participants are encouraged to wear athletic style shorts or pants.

s. Any slippery substances of a foreign nature on equipment, clothing, or an exposed part of the body is illegal.

t. All equipment decisions made by the intramural staff or Rec Sports medic on duty shall be final.

2. **THE GAME**

a. The game shall be played between two (2) teams of seven (7) players each. A minimum of four (4) players are required to start the game and continue a game.

b. **Field of Play**: The field is eighty (80) yards long by forty (40) yards wide and is divided into four 20 yard zones.

c. **Flag Football Equipment**:

   i. **NO SHORTS WITH POCKETS/BELT LOOPS MAY BE WORN**. Shorts may be checked out at the Penberthy building for use if needed. Shorts are provided on a limited basis, and participants should not rely on shorts being available for checkout throughout the entire season.

   ii. **Game Ball** – Each team must provide their own ball. Game balls can be checked out at the Penberthy building. Men’s games will use the regulation-sized football while **Women’s and Coed games may use the regulation, intermediate, or youth size**. The team on offense has its choice of what ball it would like to play with. The referee is the sole judge of any ball offered for play and may change the ball during play at his/her discretion.

   iii. **Shoes**: Each player must wear shoes. Regulation rubber soled cleats, plastic cleats, detachable rubber cleats that screw into the shoe, and tennis shoes are the only permissible footwear. Sandals, street shoes, hiking boots, combat boots, or metal spikes are not allowed. No steel cleats, metal tips or shoes with detachable steel cleats that screw onto the shoes may be worn.

   iv. **Pads**: Players may wear soft, pliable pads or braces on the leg, knee, and/or ankle. Braces made of any hard material must be covered with at least one-half inch padding for safety reasons.

d. **Forfeits**: A team will forfeit a game when it is not ready to play by ten (10) minutes after the scheduled game time. The following penalties will be enforced during the ten (10) minute grace period. Teams will play an entire game even if they are late.

   i. **3 minutes**: Team ready for play will be awarded a 6 pt. touchdown.

   ii. **6 minutes**: Team will be awarded a second 6 pt. touchdown making the score 12-0.

   iii. **9 minutes**: Team will be awarded a third 6 pt. touchdown making the score 18-0.

   iv. **10 minutes**: Team will be awarded 1 extra point and the game will be declared a forfeit with a final score of 24-10.

e. Unless moved by penalty, play starts at the beginning of each half with the ball placed on the offensive team’s 14-yard line.
3. THE COIN TOSS

a. Each game will begin with a coin toss. The captain winning the toss will have his/her choice of one of the options for the first half or will defer his/her option to the second half. The options for each half are:
   i. To choose whether his/her team will be on offense or defense first.
   ii. To choose the goal his/her team will defend.

b. The captain not having the first choice of options for a half will exercise the remaining option.

4. GAME TIMING

a. **Game Length:** A game will consist of two halves with a three (3) minute intermission. Both halves will be twenty (20) minutes in length. In all leagues, the clock will run continuously in the first half. In the second half, the clock will run continuously until the last two (2) minutes, when we will proceed according to 2-minute mechanics.

b. **2-Minute Policies and Mechanics:** The clock will stop in the final two (2) minutes of the second half for a:
   i. Team time-out - clock restarts on the snap
   ii. Incomplete legal or incomplete illegal forward pass - starts on the snap
   iii. Out-of-bounds - starts on the snap
   iv. Safety - starts on the snap
   v. First down - depends on the previous play
   vi. Touchdown - starts on the snap (after the Try)
   vii. Penalty and administration - dependent on previous play (EXCEPTION: An accepted delay of game foul ALWAYS starts on the snap)
   viii. Referee’s time-out – starts at his/her discretion
   ix. Touchback – starts on snap
   x. Team A is awarded a new series – dependent on previous play
   xi. Team B is awarded a new series – starts on the snap
   xii. Either team is awarded a new series after a legal punt – starts on the snap
   xiii. Team attempting to conserve time illegally – starts on the ready whistle
   xiv. Team attempting to consume time illegally – starts on the snap
   xv. Inadvertent whistle – starts on the ready whistle
   xvi. NOTE: With less than 2 minutes remaining in the game, the offended team of any foul will have the option to start the game clock on the snap when it would have normally started on the ready.

c. **Overtime:** If scores are tied at the end of the second half, the game will be recorded as a tie game (game over) during the regular season. During the playoffs an overtime period will be played. A coin flip will determine the options. All overtime periods shall be played toward the same goal line.
   i. An overtime period consists of one possession by each team.
   ii. Unless moved by penalty, each team will start first and goal from the 10-yard line. Each team will have a series of downs to score a touchdown.
   iii. If the score is still tied after one overtime period, as many period as necessary will be played to determine a winner.
iv. Try for points will be attempted and scored during overtime.

v. When B (defense) secures possession, the ball is dead and the series is over. The ball will be placed at the B 10 yard line, and team B will begin their series of 4 downs, if available.

vi. Each team is entitled to one timeout for the entire overtime session, and time outs do not carry over from regulation.

d. **Timeouts**: Each team is entitled to three (3) timeouts per game. A charged timeout requested by any player will not exceed one minute. Timeouts cannot be carried into overtime during the playoffs. The clock stops during all timeouts.

e. **Delay of Game**: After a ball is declared ready for play, the offensive team has twenty-five (25) seconds after the referee has sounded the whistle to put the ball in play. **Penalty**: Delay of Game, 5 yards.

f. The official may order the clock to be stopped/started when, in his/her opinion, either team is trying to conserve or consume playing time using tactics in his/her judgment to be unfair.

g. **Substitutions**: Substitutions are allowed at any time that the ball is dead, but games must not be delayed by them. Each substitute shall be in uniform and ready for play with flags in position.

5. **SCORING**

a. **Touchdown Values**: All touchdowns are six (6) points. The player scoring the touchdown must raise his/her arms so the nearest official can deflag the player. If the official determines that the flag belt has been secured illegally, the touchdown is disallowed. The player is disqualified and a penalty will result.

b. **Try for 1, 2, or 3**: An opportunity to score one (1) point from the 3-yard line, two (2) points from the 10-yard line, or three (3) points from the 20-yard line by running or passing only shall be granted the team scoring a touchdown. Once the offensive captain has declared his/her choice (try for 1, 2, or 3), he may change the decision only when a charged timeout for either team is taken. A team’s choice cannot be changed if a penalty should occur. If the defensive team intercepts a pass or fumble during the try, the try shall be ended.

c. **Safety**: A safety results when a runner carries the ball from the field of play to or across his/her own goal line, and it becomes dead there in his/her team’s possession. A safety results in two (2) points for the defensive team.

d. **Mercy Rule**: If a team is nineteen (19) or more points ahead when the referee announces the 2-minute warning for the second half, the game is over.

   i. Prior to applying the Mercy Rule, there must be a down free of any accepted live ball fouls.

   ii. If a team scores during the last two minutes of the second half and that score creates a point differential of nineteen (19) or more points, the game will end at that point.

6. **DEFINITIONS**

a. **Flag Belt Removal**: When the flag belt is clearly taken from the runner in possession of the ball, the ball is declared dead and the down shall end.

   i. In an attempt to remove the flag belt from a runner, an opponent may contact the body and shoulders, but not the face, neck or any part of the head of the runner with their hands.
ii. An opponent may not hold, push, or knock the runner down in an attempt to remove the flag belt.

iii. If a flag belt inadvertently falls to the ground, a one-hand touch between the shoulders and knees constitutes a ‘tackle’.

iv. A runner is also down if any part of that runner touches the ground other than the feet, hands or ball while in the hand of the runner.

b. **Offensive Scrimmage Line:** The offensive scrimmage line is the yard line and its vertical plane which passes through the forward point of the ball.

c. **Defensive Scrimmage Line:** The defensive scrimmage line is the yard line and its vertical plane which passes one yard from the point of the ball nearest its own goal line.

d. **Minimum Line Players:** The only offensive player required to be on the line of scrimmage is the snapper. The remaining players may be on their scrimmage line or in their backfield.

7. **BALL IN PLAY, DEAD BALL, & OUT OF BOUNDS**

a. **Ball Declared Dead**

A live ball becomes dead and an official shall sound his/her whistle or declare it dead when:

i. It goes out of bounds.

ii. Any part of the runner other than the hand(s) or foot (feet) touches the ground.

iii. A touchdown, touchback, safety, or successful try is made.

iv. The ball strikes the ground following 1st touching by K.

v. K catches a punt which is beyond the neutral zone; when an untouched punt comes to rest on the ground and no player attempts to secure it.

vi. A forward pass strikes the ground or is caught simultaneously by opposing players.

vii. A backward pass or fumble by a player strikes the ground or is caught simultaneously by opposing players.

viii. A ball snapped, which hits the ground before or after getting to the intended receiver, is dead at the spot where it hits the ground.

ix. A forward pass is legally completed or a loose ball is caught by a player on, above, or behind the opponent’s goal line.

x. A runner has a flag belt removed legally by an opponent.

xi. A runner is legally tagged if the flag belt has fallen off prior to being deflagged.

xii. A passer is deflagged/tagged prior to releasing the ball.

xiii. A muff of a punt strikes the ground.

xiv. K’s punt breaks the plane of R’s goal line.

xv. B secures possession during a Try or overtime.

xvi. An official sounds his/her whistle inadvertently during a down.

b. **Out-of-Bounds:** A ball in player possession is out-of-bounds when either the ball or any part of the runner touches the ground or anything else, except a player or game official, which is on or outside a boundary line. If the runner in-bounds bumps into or is touched by player or an official on the sidelines out-of-bounds, the ball is still in play.

8. **SERIES OF DOWNS & LINE TO GAIN**

a. **Series of Downs:** A team in possession of the ball shall have four (4) consecutive downs to advance to the next zone by scrimmage.
b. **Zone Line to Gain:** The zone line to gain in any series shall be the zone in advance of the ball, unless distance has been lost due to penalty or failure to gain. In such case, the original zone in advance of the ball at the beginning of the series of downs is the zone line to gain. The zones formed by the marking of the twenty and forty yard lines are used to determine the distance to be gained. The most forward point of the ball, when declared dead between the goal lines, shall be the determining factor.

9. **KICKING/PUNTING THE BALL**

   a. Prior to putting the ball in play on fourth down, the offensive team must declare whether it chooses to go for a first down or punt. If the offensive team chooses to kick, the ball must be kicked.
      
      i. The offensive team may put the ball in play with a punt on any play, but it must notify the defensive team. There are no quick kicks.
      
      ii. The snap must be received at least two yards back and the kick must be executed behind the scrimmage line within a reasonable time. There are no fake punts.
      
      iii. After receiving the snap, the kicker must kick the ball immediately and in a continuous motion.
      
      iv. No player may cross the line of scrimmage until the ball has been kicked.
      
      v. Kick out of bounds - If the kicked ball goes out of bounds between the goal lines or comes to rest in bounds untouched and no player attempts to secure it, the ball becomes dead and belongs to the receiving team at that spot.
      
      vi. A punt that touches anything while the ball is on or behind the receiving team’s goal line can be downed by the receiving team and is a touchback.
      
      vii. Opportunity to catch a kick - A player of the receiving team who is within the boundary lines and located so that he/she could have caught a kick, which is beyond the scrimmage line, must be given a fair opportunity to catch the kick. **Penalty:** Kick Catch Interference, ten (10) yards.
      
      viii. The defensive team may attempt to block a punt as long as team members do not cross the plane of the defensive restraining line. A blocked punt that is caught behind the line of scrimmage (on the offender’s side) may be advanced by the offense.
      
      ix. When a punt, which has crossed the line of scrimmage, touches a player from either team and then hits the ground, the ball is dead and belongs to the receiving team. If it hits a player on the receiving team and then is caught in the air, it can be advanced by the receiving team. If it is caught by the kicking team (after the ball contacts a receiving team player), the ball is dead, belongs to the kicking team, and a new series begins for the kicking team.

   b. Once a punted ball breaks the plane of the receiving team’s goal line, the ball is declared dead and a touchback is awarded.

   c. **There are no fair catches.**

10. **SNAPPING AND PASSING THE BALL**

   a. The ball must be snapped backwards and off the ground. The ball does not need to be snapped between the center’s legs, but the center cannot have his/her feet over the scrimmage line. In a legal snap, the movement must be a quick and continuous motion of the hand or hands backwards. Once the ball leaves the ground, the defense may rush.
b. **Direct Snap:** The player who receives the snap must be at least 2 yards behind A’s scrimmage line. The distance is determined by the point at which the ball is first touched following the snap. The snapper may not snap the ball to him/herself. **Penalty:** Illegal formation, five (5) yards.

c. The snapper is the only player required to be on the scrimmage line (orange ball spotter) at the snap.

d. **Offensive Player in Motion:**
   i. One offensive player may be in motion, but not in motion toward the opponent’s goal line when the ball is snapped.
   ii. Such a player must be behind the line of scrimmage when the ball is snapped.
   iii. Only one offensive player may be in motion at a given time. **Penalty:** Illegal motion, five (5) yards from the previous spot.
   iv. Other offensive players may not draw the defense offsides.

e. **Fumbles:**
   i. A backward pass or fumble which touches the ground between the goal lines is dead immediately at the spot where the ball hits the ground and belongs to the team last in possession unless lost on downs.
   ii. Out of Bounds - A backward pass or fumble going out of bounds between the goal lines remains in possession of the fumbling team at the out of bounds spot. If out of bounds behind the goal line, it is a touchback or safety.

f. **Encroachment:** Following the ready for play and until the snap, no B player may encroach, touch the ball, nor may any player contact opponents or interfere with them in any way. This includes standing in the neutral zone to give defensive signals or shifting through the zone. After the snapper has placed his/her hand(s) on the ball, it is encroachment for any player to break the plane of his/her scrimmage line, except for the snapper/center’s right to be over the ball. **Penalty:** Encroachment, five (5) yards from the previous spot.

g. Offensive players are responsible for retrieving the ball after each scrimmage down. The snapper will bring the ball from the huddle to the scrimmage line (first ball spotter - orange). A towel may be used to help keep the ball dry and must be placed behind the deepest offensive player at the start of each play from scrimmage.

h. All offensive players must be motionless for one second preceding the snap, except for a (one) player moving parallel to or away from the scrimmage line. **Penalty:** Illegal motion, five (5) yards from the previous spot.

i. An offensive player that shifts (other than going legally in motion) must stop for one full second before the snap. **Penalty:** Illegal shift, five (5) yards from the previous spot.

j. A player may hand the ball forward or backward at any time.

### 11. PASSING

a. All players are eligible to touch or catch a pass. During a scrimmage down and before team possession has changed, a forward pass may be thrown provided the passer’s feet are behind the offensive scrimmage line when the ball leaves passer’s hand. Only one (1) forward pass can be thrown per down.

b. A forward pass is counted as a completion or interception as long as the first part or the person to make contact with the ground after the catch, usually one foot, touches in bounds.

c. A forward pass is illegal:
   1. If the passer’s foot is beyond Team A’s scrimmage line (orange ball spotter) when the ball leaves his/her hand.
   2. If thrown after team possession has changed during the down.
3. If intentionally grounded to save a loss of yardage.
4. If a passer catches his/her untouched forward pass.
5. If it is the second forward pass during a down. **Penalty:** Illegal forward pass, five (5) yards from the spot, loss of down, if prior to change of possession.
d. **Pass Interference:** Once a pass is in the air, the ball belongs to anyone who can get it. Any contact which occurs between two or more players making a legal attempt to catch or bat the pass is considered incidental.
   i. After the ball is snapped, and until it has been touched, there shall be no offensive pass interference beyond the offensive scrimmage line (when the legal forward pass crosses the offensive scrimmage line). **Penalty:** ten (10) yards from the previous spot.
   ii. After a legal forward pass is released by the passer and until it is touched, there shall be no defensive pass interference beyond Team A’s scrimmage line (while the ball is in flight, which crosses the Team A scrimmage line). **Penalty:** ten (10) yards from the previous spot.
   iii. If the pass interference by either player is intentional or unsportsmanlike, his/her team shall be penalized an additional ten yards and the player may be ejected.
e. **Simultaneous Catch:** If a forward pass is caught simultaneously by members of opposing teams, the ball becomes dead and belongs to the offensive team at the spot of the catch.

12. **BLOCKING, RUSHING, & CONDUCT**

a. **Offensive Screen Blocking:** Screen blocking is permitted and shall take place without contact. The screen blocker shall have his/her hands and arms at his/her side or behind his/her back. Any use of the hands, arms, legs, elbows, or body to initiate contact by an offensive player is illegal. A player must be on his/her feet before, during, and after screen blocking. This foul is ruled similar to the block/charge principle in basketball.
b. Defensive players must go around the offensive player’s screen block. The arms and hands may not be used as a wedge to contact the opponent.
c. **Player Restrictions:**
   i. No player shall make contact with an opponent which is deemed unnecessary.
   ii. There shall be no clipping or tripping.
   iii. There shall be no bumping the receiver. The defensive player must play the ball and shall not interfere with a receiver. However, defensive and offensive players are equally entitled to a passed ball.
   iv. Pulling or removing the flag belt from an offensive player as the ball is snapped or before a pass reception with the obvious intent of confusing the offensive player as an eligible pass receiver or ball carrier is illegal. **Penalty:** Illegal Contact, ten (10) yds.
v. A defensive player may not bump or push a runner out of bounds.
vi. Offensive charging is not permitted. The ball carrier may not run through a defensive player but must attempt to evade the defensive player. The runner is allowed to spin in order to avoid being de-flagged as long as he/she does not charge during the spin.
    vii. Runners shall not flag guard by using their hands, arms, or the ball in such a manner so that contact is made between the runner and an opponent which denies an opponent the opportunity to pull or remove the flag belt. **Penalty:** Flag guarding, ten (10) yards from the spot of the foul.
    viii. Stiff arming by the ball carrier is illegal.
ix. Defensive players may not steal or strip the ball from an offensive player once he/she has control.
x. The flag belt is to be fastened around the waist by use of the end clip. Any tampering to secure the flags so as to make them more difficult to pull is illegal and will result in ejection from the game. **Penalty:** Unsportsmanlike conduct, ten (10) yards from the previous spot, loss of down, and player disqualification.

xi. Players, coaches, and spectators are to position themselves between the 20-yard line markers on their team’s respective sideline.

d. **Roughing the Passer:** Defensive players must make a definite effort to avoid charging into a passer after the ball has been thrown. No defensive player shall contact the passer.

e. **Personal Fouls:** There shall be no personal fouls committed by players’ substitutes or coaches. Personal fouls include, but are not limited to: using fist, foot, knee, or leg to contact an opponent; tackling the ball player (disqualification); illegal contact; unnecessary roughness, hurdling, roughing the passer (when the defender contacts any part of the passer during his/her motion or follow through).

f. **Unfair Acts:** No player or non-player shall use verbiage or commit any act not in accordance with the spirit of fair play for the purposes of confusing the opponent. **Penalty:** Unfair act, ten (10) yards.

g. The fourth unsportsmanlike foul by the same team results in their forfeiture of the game.

13. **ENFORCEMENT OF PENALTIES**

a. Penalty Enforcement at the basic spot:

i. Pass play or during the punt (see exception below): basic enforcement spot is the scrimmage line (where ball was snapped).

ii. Post Scrimmage Kick Foul: On any foul by the receiving team on its side of the expanded neutral zone prior to the end of the kick, the receiving team shall retain possession of the ball. The basic spot is the spot at which the kick ends and the penalty will be enforced using the “all but one principle.”

iii. On all running plays: basic enforcement spot is the end of the run.

iv. All fouls are marked from the basic enforcement spot (Exception: An offensive foul behind the basic enforcement spot which becomes a spot foul, or the “all but one principle.”)

v. The only exception to the above regulations is roughing the passer; this penalty will be added on to the end result of the play.

vi. If there is a foul by the offensive team, other than unsportsmanlike or non-player, during a down which results in a successful touchdown or try, the acceptance of the penalty nullifies the score.

vii. If there is a foul by the defensive team during a down that results in a score, the offense may choose to enforce the penalty on the try or on the defense’s ensuing possession.

14. **COED MODIFICATIONS**

a. **Number of Players:** Coed games shall be played between two (2) teams of eight players, four (4) men and four (4) women. A team must have at least five (5) players present to start and continue a game. The five (5) players must contain at least two (2) members of the opposite gender. A team may never have more than four (4) players of either gender on the field at any time. Teams may play with any of the following male and female combinations:

i. 2 males/3 females

ii. 3 males/2 females
iii. 3 males/3 females
iv. 4 males/2 females
v. 2 males/4 females
vi. 3 males/4 females
vii. 4 males/3 females
viii. 4 males/4 females

b. **Game Ball**: Coed games will use the regular, intermediate, junior, or youth size football.

c. **Male Runner**: An offensive male runner cannot advance the ball through his scrimmage line. There are no restrictions during a run by a male runner once the ball has been touched beyond the scrimmage line, during a run by a female runner, after a change of team possession, and after a legal forward pass. **Penalty**: Illegal Advancement, 5 yards from the previous spot.

d. **Male to Male Completion**: During the offensive team’s possession, there may not be 2 consecutive legal forward pass completions from a male passer to a male receiver. This rule applies to the try. If a male passer completes a legal forward pass to a male receiver, the next legal forward pass completion must involve either a female passer or a female receiver for positive yards. The spot where the ball becomes dead by rule must be beyond the A scrimmage line. There are no other restrictions concerning a male passer completing legal forward passes to a female receiver, or female to female, or female to male. **Penalty**: Illegal Male Reception, 5 yards from the previous spot and a loss of down. Any other foul, whether accepted or declined, shall have no effect on whether the next legal forward pass completion is open or closed.

e. **Mercy Rule**: If a team is 25 or more points ahead when the referee announces the 2 minute warning for the 2nd half, the game shall be over.

f. **Touchdown Value**: If a female player scores a touchdown, the point value is 9. If a female player throws a legal forward pass and a touchdown is scored by any A player, prior to change of possession, the point value is 9.

15. **OPEN LEAGUES**

a. Open Leagues abide by traditional single-gender rules and do not adhere to any Coed modifications.

b. Open leagues are played without many of the roster restrictions and requirements of many traditional Intramural Sports leagues. In Open, there will not be a gender-specific number requirement for a team. Teams may consist of any number of males and females.

c. Most Open teams tend to be recreational in nature, although that description does not have to apply to all league participants. The leagues are designed to be participatory and inclusive for everyone that plays.

16. **UNIFIED SPORTS LEAGUES AND MODIFICATIONS**

a. Unified Sports combines individuals with disabilities (Athletes) and individuals without disabilities (Partners) on sports teams for competition. Simply put, Unified Sports is INCLUSION.

b. **Number of Players**: Unified games shall be played between two (2) teams of seven players. The suggested number of players on the field at any given time is four (4) athletes and three (3) partners. Teams are expected to abide by this roster balance as much as possible and in the spirit of the game.

c. **Game Ball**: Unified games will use the youth or junior size football.

d. **Athlete Involvement**: To legally gain positive yardage, each play must involve an athlete in some capacity. Examples of legal plays satisfying the requirement of athlete involvement include:
• An athlete completes a legal forward pass
• An athlete catches a legal forward pass
• An athlete runs the ball through the line of scrimmage, either as Quarterback or after receiving the ball from a handoff, forward pass, lateral, etc.
• Note – a play in which an athlete playing Quarterback hands the ball off or laterals the ball to a partner behind the line of scrimmage, who then advances the ball through the line of scrimmage, does not satisfy the athlete involvement requirement
• Exception – an offense may gain positive yards on plays that involve accepted defensive penalties without athlete involvement.
  o Example – Athlete A1 throws an incomplete pass to Partner P1. There is an accepted defensive pass interference on the play. The offense gains legal yardage on this play, even though the pass was not completed, and thus no athlete was involved.

  e. **Flag Colors**: Athletes will be designated by wearing red flag belts at all times. Partners must wear yellow flag belts at all times. **Penalty** – Illegal flag belt, five (5) yards
  f. **Mouth Guards**: Athletes must wear mouth guards at all times, as designated by Special Olympics. **Penalty** – Illegal equipment, five (5) yards
  g. **Other**: All other rules are adopted to follow NIRSA Flag Football guidelines, as well as the rules in this document.