FLAG FOOTBALL

I. Eligibility
   a. Any undergraduate student, enrolled in a minimum of one credit hour, with a valid Bethany ID card is eligible until they withdraw from the college or fail to comply with other eligibility guidelines.
   b. Any faculty member or administrative/staff personnel employed by the college w/ an administrative/staff ID card.
   c. Current school year intercollegiate student-athletes are eligible to participate in all IM sports NOT related to their respective sport in their NCAA traditional season. Refer to IM handbook for further details.

II. Roster Size
   a. Maximum 12 players

III. Scoring
   a. Teams carrying the football into the opposing teams endzone will be awarded 6 points.
   b. Two points will be given for a defense downing an offensive player with the ball in their own endzone.

IV. General Rules
   a. A team will consist of up to 8 players on the field at a time with an equal number of guys and girls playing, or more guys than girls.
      a. Teams will be allowed to play their scheduled contest if they do not have their minimum of 2 women or 2 men present at game BUT teams will play 2 players short until the minimum of 2 women or 2 men arrive.
   b. Each team will be allotted two time outs per half and one for any overtime period.
   c. Games will consist of two 20 minute halves, running time, with the final 2 minutes of the game being stop time similar to NFL rules.
   d. The 25 second play clock will begin once the ball is placed on the field and declared ready for play.
   e. Rock, paper, scissors will determine possession or side.
   f. Players are prohibited from wearing any type of metal cleats at any time, and no cleats at all may be worn until soccer season is over.
   g. Opposing teams must wear contrasting colored shirts or jerseys (pinnies will be provided).
   h. Each half will begin with a free kick from the kicking teams own 20 yard line (unless moved due to penalty).
   i. Before the ball is kicked everyone from the kicking team must be behind their own 20 yard line and the receiving team must be behind their own 40 yard line.
   j. Teams will have 4 plays (downs) in order to advance at least 10 yards on the field at a time.
   k. In the event a team has 3 downs they may either punt the ball to the other team or make a final attempt. If this final attempt fails the opposing team takes control of the ball from the final spot.
   l. No fake punts will be allowed.
   m. During a punt both teams must have at least 4 players within one yard of the line of scrimmage.
   n. The defense may attempt to block the punt as long as they do not cross their line of scrimmage at any time.
   o. Any punts or kickoffs that go out the back of the endzone will be placed on the receiving team’s 20 yard line.
   p. The offensive team must have at least four players on their line of scrimmage before the ball is snapped.
   q. One offensive player may be in motion at a time before the ball is snapped.
   r. The person receiving the snap must be at least 2 yards behind the line of scrimmage.
   s. Forward passes may be made from any point behind the line of scrimmage.
   t. Only one foot needs to be in bounds for a catch to be complete.
u. An offensive blocker is allowed to use their hands to block a defensive player as not as there is no holding or chop blocking.

v. Players are not allowed to guard their flags in any way while they are running with the ball.

w. If a runner loses any flags inadvertently the play will continue and “deflagging” will revert to a one-hand tag between the shoulders and the knees.

V. Conduct and Disqualification:

x. Good sports conduct is essential in IM Sports contests. Therefore, if a player or players are ejected from a game, they will receive a minimum, automatic one game suspension. The suspension of that player becomes effective immediately following the ejection and carries through the remainder of that game, and the following game. While on suspension, the player is not allowed to participate in any IM Sports-sponsored sport, special event, or activity. In order to be reinstated for play, the player(s) must meet with the IM Coordinator. Failure to meet with the IM Coordinator maintains the suspension in full effect. In some cases where appropriate, the IM Coordinator may suspend the player(s) for a longer period. In extreme situations, the matter will be referred to the Dean of Student Services.

VI. Officials Authority:

a. An official assumes authority 15 minutes prior to the scheduled game time, and until they have left the field. The officials have the authority to rule on any situation not specifically covered in the rules. His/her decision is final. The official has the right to eject players or have them sit out of part or all of the game. Fans, coaches, and spectators are a part of a team and any fouls they commit will go against their team.

VII. Equipment of Players:

a. Cleats may be worn at Alexander Park. Padded suits or special protective devices (i.e. shoulder pads, helmets, etc.) are not allowed at any time during the season. Players must wear shoes. Players of opposing teams must wear contrasting colored jerseys.

Periods and Time Factors

Playing Time and Intermission: Playing time will be two 20 minute halves. The first half will have a running clock. The second half will also have a running clock, until the last 2 minutes, when the clock will stop similar to NFL Rules.

Mercy Rule: If a team is 25 points or more ahead, when the Referee announces the two-minute warning for the second half, the game shall be over.

Tie Game: In the event of a tie game, the following procedures shall govern play. The tie game will be resolved in the following manner:
1. A coin toss shall be held at a Captain’s meeting. The winning side can choose to play offense or defense first, or can choose which side of the field to play on. The losing side makes the choice yet unmade.
2. Each team will be given four downs to attempt to score a touchdown from the 10 yard line. If a touchdown is scored, the PATs will be attempted. The second team will then be given four plays to match or beat the score of their opponent. No coin toss will be held if the game is still tied after one overtime period. Teams will alternate starting on offense as the number of overtime periods increase. If the defense returns an interception for a touchdown, the game ends.
3. There is no game clock, however, the 25-second play clock shall begin once the ball is placed and declared ready for play. Each team is entitled to one time-out during the overtime period.

Time Outs: Each team shall have 2 time-outs during each half of the game. An Official may stop the clock at other times if, in his/her judgment, unusual conditions prevail that call for such an action (i.e. an injury).

Ball in Play, Dead Ball, and Out-of Bounds

Inadvertent Whistle: If an official blows his/her whistle inadvertently, the ball is dead and the play stops. Referee’s judgment will govern the situation.

Fumbles: All fumbles are dead as soon as the ball touches the ground. The ball will be spotted for the next down at the point where the ball first touched the ground, if the ball lands parallel to or behind the ball carrier. If the ball lands in front of the ball carrier, it will be spotted from the point where the player fumbled the ball. (Exceptions: Fumbles that land in either end zone.) Once any part of the ball carrier’s body touches the ground (excluding hands and feet) plays shall be ruled dead.

25 Second Count: The ball shall be put into play within 25 seconds after it is declared ready.

Kicking the Ball and Fair Catch

Putting the Ball in Play: A free kick begins each half of play. The ball shall be put in play by a place kick from some spot on or behind the kicker’s free-kick line. Unless relocated by penalty, the kicking team’s free-kick line on kick-offs shall be its own twenty-yard line. The ball shall be either held (un-elevated) by a designated placeholder or
place on a tee not to exceed 2 inches. The receiving team may return the ball. If the ball hits the ground without one receiving it, it is a dead ball and play resumes at the spot of the drop.

A. **Formation**: When the ball is legally kicked, all players of the kicking team must be in-bounds and all players, except the holder and kicker of a place-kick, must be behind their free-kick line.

B. **Free-kick Lines**: For any free-kick formation the kicking team’s free-kick line shall be at the twenty-yard line, unless altered by a penalty. The receiving team’s free-kick line shall be at the forty-yard line. It is encroachment for any player, other than the kicker and holder to be beyond the free-kick line after the ball is ready for play and until it is kicked.

C. **Punts**: The following procedure will govern punt situations:
   1. The offensive team must declare its intention to punt. No fake punts are allowed.
   2. Both teams must have at least 4 players within one yard of their line of scrimmage. Defensive players MAY attempt to block the punt by jumping straight up in the air. They may not, however, penetrate the line of scrimmage.
   3. The punter must be at least five yards behind the scrimmage line when receiving the snap. After receiving the snap, the punter must kick the ball immediately and in one continuous motion.
   4. A muffed punt is ruled dead at the spot, with the fumbler’s team maintaining possession (this is true unless the punt returner fumbles directly into the hands of a player on the kicking team, without the ball hitting the ground).
   5. A punt that is muffed in the end zone is a touchback.

**Snapping, Handling, and Passing the Ball**

A. **Legal Snap**: The ball must be snapped with one fluid motion from the ground. Legal snaps need not be through the legs.

B. **Formation**: The offensive team must have at least four players on their line of scrimmage.

C. **Motion**: One offensive player may be in motion, but not toward the opponent’s goal line. Other offensive players must be stationary in their positions without movement of their feet, body, head, or arms. The offensive team must have four players on their scrimmage line at the snap, not including the man in motion.

D. **No Direct Snap**: The player who receives the ball must be at least 2 yards behind the offensive scrimmage line.

E. **Passing Plays**:
   1. A forward pass may be made from any point behind the line of scrimmage. Handing the ball forward will not be considered a forward pass.
   2. Only one foot needs to touch in bounds for a pass to be complete.
   3. **Simultaneous Catch**: If a legal forward pass is caught simultaneously by members of opposing teams, the ball becomes dead at the spot of the catch and belongs to the team that snapped the ball. Such catches may not be advanced.

G. **Pass Interference**: During a legal forward pass, contact which interferes with an eligible receiver is pass interference, unless it occurs when two or more eligible receivers make a simultaneous attempt to reach, catch, or bat a pass. It is also pass interference if an eligible receiver is deflagged prior to touching the ball. In addition, if the pass interference by either player is intentional or unsportsmanlike, his/her team shall be penalized an additional 10 yards.

H. **Running Plays**: The ball must be taken from the center and pitched, handed off, or thrown laterally to a running back that may then cross the line of scrimmage. The Quarterback may scramble anywhere behind the line of scrimmage, but cannot cross it.

**Scoring Plays and Touchbacks**

A. **Touchdowns**: A touchdown is worth 6 points.
   a. **PATs**: A team can score 1 point from the three yard line or 2 points from the ten yard line. **Note**: Interceptions of a PAT can be returned. If returned to the end-zone, the intercepting team will be awarded 2 points.
   B. **Safeties**: It is a safety when any player in possession of the ball is downed in his/her end-zone, or when the ball is fumbled or muffed in one’s own end-zone. (Exception: Momentum Rule - When a player intercepts a forward pass or catches a scrimmage kick between their five 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.) **Note**: In the case of any foul for which the penalty is accepted, a measurement is from on or behind its (offensive team’s) goal line, it is a safety (i.e. intentional grounding).

C. **Touchbacks**: It is a touchback when:
   a. Any kick lands on or behind the receiving team’s goal line.
   b. The ball goes out-of-bounds behind the goal line.
   c. A player possessing the ball goes out-of-bounds or is tackled on or behind the player’s own goal line.

**Conduct of Players and Others**

A. **Offensive Blocking**: An offensive blocker is allowed to use his/her hands to block a defensive rusher. No grabbing of defensive player’s jerseys and no chop blocking is allowed at all.
B. **Runner:**
   1. Guarding the flag belt: Runners shall not flag guard by using their hands, shoulders, arms, or the ball to deny opportunity for an opponent to remove a flag.
   2. Spinning is allowed.
   3. A player on the ground may not trip up a ball carrier.
C. **Loss of Flags:** When a runner loses his/her flag belt, inadvertently or intentionally, plays continues and the deflagging reverts to a one-hand tag between the shoulders and knees.

**BLC FLAG FOOTBALL PENALTIES**
Updated 11/6/05

- **Offense**
  - Delay of Game – 5 yards
  - False Start – 5 yards
  - Illegal procedure – 5 yards
  - Illegal Motion – 5 yards
  - Illegal Shift – 5 yards
  - Intentional Grounding – 5 yards (loss of down)
  - Illegal Substitution – 5 yards
  - Not enough players on the line – 5 yards
  - Illegal Forward Pass – 5 yards (spot of the pass, loss of down, if prior to possession change)
  - Pass interference – 10 yards (from line of scrimmage, loss of down)
  - Guarding of the flags – 10 yards (from line of scrimmage, loss of down)
  - Straight Arm – 10 yards
  - Holding – 10 yards
  - Spiking, Kicking, or Throwing Ball During Dead Ball – 10 yards
  - Fake Punt – 10 yards (replay the down)

- **Defense**
  - Encroachment – 5 yards
  - Off sides – 5 yards
  - Holding – 5 yards (automatic first down)
  - Rushing a punt – 10 yards
  - Guarding of the flags – 10 yards (from spot of foul)
  - Straight Arm – 10 yards
  - Roughing the Passer - 10 yards (automatic first down)
  - Pass Interference – 15 yards (from the previous spot and an automatic first down)

- **Neutral**
  - Illegal Substitution – 5 yards
  - Unsportsmanlike Conduct – 10 yards
  - Cursing – 5 yards (first offense), 10 yards (second offense), sidelined for the half (third offense)
  - Unnecessary Roughness – 5 yards (first offense), 10 yards (second offense), sidelined for the half (third offense)
  - Tackling – automatic ejection (1 game suspension)
  - Repeated questioning of an official - sidelined for remainder of the half
  - Inside 2 minutes of the second half, infraction committed by:
    1. Team on offense: First delay of game of game (loss of down).
    2. Team on offense: Second delay of game (loss of possession).
    3. Team on defense: First delay of game (automatic 1st down for offense).
    4. Team on defense: Second delay of game (loss of 1 player/rest of game).