Flag Football Rules and Regulations
*Updated as of 9/15/11

1. Eligibility
   - Only currently enrolled students may participate

2. Teams
   - There will be men’s, women’s and co-ed divisions (subject to change depending on sufficient entries)
   - Each team will consist of a minimum of 5 players and a maximum of 9 *(5 players are on the field)*
   - Each co-ed team will have 2 female playing at all times (must establish rosters accordingly)
     - The only time when the gender rule is not required is if the only 2 females or males on the team are injured (if both are ejected, the team will forfeit the game regardless of the score)
   - If at any time during a game a team is not able to maintain the minimum 5 players, that team will forfeit the game regardless of the score
   - Players may be added or deleted only by the team captain(s) throughout the tournament. Once the tournament reaches the final 4, team rosters are frozen. Each player must be on the roster prior to playing in the final 4 matchup. A player not on the team roster, but listed on the game score sheet is considered an illegal player and his/her team will forfeit the game, regardless of the result.

3. Tournament
   - The tournament bracket/schedule will be released to all players within the week after the sign-up deadline
   - Players can obtain game schedule from the ARB or viewing on the university athletic website
   - The number of games needed to be eliminated from the tournament will be established after the sign up deadline (there will be a separate bracket made for teams that wish to keep competing after being eliminated)

4. Equipment
   - Sneakers and rubber spikes are permitted (no bare feet or metal spikes)
   - No jewelry is to be worn during play

5. Field Dimensions
   - The size of the field will be 60 yards by 40 yards, with 10 yard end-zones
   - The field will be divided into 3 20 yard zones
   - A team has 4 downs to cross each consecutive line (1st down every 20 yard marker)
   - If a penalty pushes the offensive team behind the previous 20 yard marker, the offense must still advance the ball past the original 20 yard marker

6. Officiating/Scorer-Time Keeper
   - There will be two officials at each game (subject to change)
   - The officials will monitor all rules, make penalty calls while keeping track of score and time during the course of the game
   - The official keeping time must always notify the teams of remaining time
   - All officials must control the game and emphasize (using their whistle/voice) when making a call
   - The official shall penalize any player who displays unsportsmanlike conduct by immediate ejection
7. Start of the Game
   - The referee will use a coin toss to determine which team will start with the possession
   - The referee will designate which team will call the toss
   - The winner of the toss will have first choice of the option to start with the ball in the 1st or 2nd half
   - The loser of the toss will have the option of which goal line they would like to defend in the first half
   - Possession and goal lines switch after first half

8. Game Time and Time-Outs
   - Game will be two 15 minute halves with running time (the last 2 minutes of each half will be stopped for all dead-ball situations like change of possessions, incomplete passes, out-of-bounds, penalties, time-outs and scores)
   - There will be a play clock of 10 seconds which will begin when the offense lines up
   - Half-time will be 2 minutes
   - A half or game cannot end on a defensive penalty (unless the penalty is refused by the offensive team)
   - Each team will have one timeout per half

9. Passing
   - All offensive players are eligible to receive a pass
   - The quarterback hikes the ball to themselves and must yell to signal the play has begun (exp. “hike”)
   - Only one forward pass is allowed per down (either over or under-handed)
   - At the time of a pass reception, the receiver must be in complete control of the ball and have at least one foot inbounds for it to be a completed pass
   - Any number of backwards or lateral passes are permitted (must be underhanded)

10. Fumbles
    - All fumbled balls touching the ground are dead immediately and the ball is played at that spot
    - The team that fumbled the ball retains possession of the ball (except on 4th down)
    - All incomplete laterals or passes behind the line of scrimmage will be spotted where the ball lands
    - An player catching a passed or fumbled ball that does not touch the ball can advance the ball (interception)
    - A fumbled ball by the offensive team in their end zone constitutes a safety

11. Flag Belts and Legal “Tackles”
    - Each player must wear a flag belt
    - Each player must have their shirt tucked into their pants
    - A legal “tackle” is made when a defensive player detaches the flag belt from the ball carrier
    - If a player loses their flag belt (without being ripped off) and has possession of the ball, the defense must touch them with one hand between the shoulder and knees to make a legal “tackle”
    - A shielding infraction will be called if a ball carrier uses their arms, the ball, clothing or hands to hide or prevent an opponent from pulling the flag belt
    - The ball is dead when any part of the ball carrier other than the feet or hands touches the ground at any point

12. Throw Offs
    - Throw offs will occur to start each half, after each touchdown and/or if a team chooses not to go for it on 4th down
    - For the throw off to start each half and after each touchdown, all players must start in the end-zone
- The referee will ask the offensive team on each 4th down if they intend to go for it or throw it off
- Fakes are not allowed (opposing team will automatically get the throw off ball)
- Defensive players may put their hands up and or jump to attempt to block the throw as long as they do not cross the line of scrimmage
- On a bad snap, the ball is dead where it first touches the ground
- A member of the return team can call for a fair catch by waiving their hand over their head
- Once the ball is thrown, if a member of the thrown team touches the ball the ball is dead at that spot to yell “hike”
- The only type of blocking allows is screen blocking (2 players at the line of scrimmage protecting the quarterback) – if quarterback is hiking to himself, this is irrelevant
- All blocking must be made upright with 2 hands behind the back or directly at the sides
- No body (elbows out) or shoulder blocks are allowed at any time

13. Defense
- The defense can blitz the quarterback after counting out-loud to “4” (the quarterback can only run when being blitzed)

14. Safety and Touchbacks
- A fumbled ball by an offensive team in their end zone results in a safety
- If the defense team intercepts a pass in their end zone and does not advance the ball out of the end zone, it is a touchback (the ball is put in play at the 10 yard line)
- If a team receives a punt in their end zone and does not advance it out of the end zone, it is a touch back (the ball is put in play at the 10 yard line)
- Following a safety, the ball should be placed at the 10 yard line of the team credited with the safety

15. Substitutions and Play
- Free substitutions are allowed after the ball is ready for play, but before the quarterback picks up the ball to yell “hike”
- Each player entering the game can be lined up anywhere behind the line of scrimmage
- There will be a one yard “neutral zone” between the offensive and defensive teams while in any formation
- Any ONE player may be in motion parallel to the line at any one time before the ball is snapped

16. Scoring
- Touchdown = 7 points
- Safety = 2 points

17. Ties and Overtime Games
- If there is a tie at the end of regulation play, each team will receive 4 downs from the 20 yard line to score (whichever team scores in the fewest amount of downs wins)
- Shall both teams score in the same amount of down, this is repeated until a winner is established

18. Penalties
- 5 yard loss
  - Delay of game or illegal substitution (whistle blown to end play)
- Throw off infractions
- Interference with an opponent or ball before snap (encroachment)
- **False start**
- **Off-sides**
  - Player illegally in motion
  - Illegal handing or passing the ball forward
  - Illegal contact where a defender impedes the progress of an eligible offensive receiver before a pass is thrown

- **10 yard loss**
  - Delaying start of either half
  - **Offensive pass interference (and loss of down)**
  - **Holding, illegal block or blocking below the waist**
  - **Clipping, tripping, striking, kicking, kneeing or pushing (also results in disqualification)**
  - **Unsportsmanlike conduct by player, coach or attendant**
    - Unsportsmanlike conduct includes, but is not limited to: cursing, obscene gestures, yelling at officials
  - **Illegal use of hands or arms**
  - Roughing the passer (automatic first down)
  - **Defensive pass interference (automatic first down)**
  - **Holding ball carrier to remove flag**
  - **Runner guarding the flag or stiff arming**

- Measurement for half the distance to the goal line is done inside the 10 yard line for 5 yard penalties and inside the 20 yard line on 10 yard penalties

- **Any penalty not noted will be a 5 yard penalty (please discuss with AD any penalty not covered in rules)**