I. Eligibility

A. Upon participating in one game, all participants are required to pay the quarterly IM Sports Pass – no exceptions. Failure to pay this fee by the end of the regular season will result in a $25/person fine charged to the Team Captain as well as exclusion from playoffs.

B. All participants are subject to Campus Recreation Eligibility Rules that are outlined in the Intramural Sports Participant Handbook.

C. All players must present a valid UCI Student ID OR Driver's license in order to check in for a game.

D. Players may not participate on two or more teams in any division and in the same sport during the Intramural season.

E. A player must have played in a regular season game to be eligible for playoffs. There will be no on-site additions to a team’s roster once playoffs have begun. Please contact the Director of Intramural Sports with any roster questions.

II. Starting the Game, Players, Substitutions and Equipment

A. Nine players shall constitute a team. However, a team may start or continue play with a total of nine players. Teams must always have a catcher. A team must have AT LEAST 8 players present at game time to start the game.

B. Games will start on time. A team with less than the minimum number of players to start the game will be given a forfeit loss. Teams are given a 5-minute grace period to field the minimum number of players required to start a game.

C. Teams have the option of batting up to a maximum of 10 players. The batting order will be established before the game starts.

D. Each team shall designate a captain. The captain shall address the officials on matters of interpretation or to obtain essential information.

E. There is free substitution. A player who has been replaced may return to the defensive lineup. Any substitute must play one full inning (offense and defense) before being replaced.

F. Only bats that bear either the ASA approved 2000 certification mark or the ASA certification mark maybe used during the softball season. The end of the handle must be taped or rubber covered. No wooden bats.

G. No metal or screw-in cleats are allowed. Players may not play in sandals or without shoes on.

III. Gameplay

A. **Game Length:** A game shall consist of seven innings, or 50 minutes, whichever comes first. No new inning will start after the 50-minute time limit, but a half inning can be completed.

B. **Mercy Rule:** If a team is leading by 20 or more runs (after 3 full innings), 15 or more runs (after 4 full innings), or 10 or more runs (after 5 full innings), the game will end.

C. **Tiebreaker:** If a game is tied at the end of 7 innings or 50 minutes, ASA tiebreaker rules will come into effect. For the first extra inning, the final recorded out from the previous inning will be placed on second base. For the second extra inning (if needed), the final recorded out from the previous inning will be placed on third base. The game will continue until the tie has been broken, and both teams have had the opportunity to bat.

D. **160-Foot Outfield Arc:** All outfield players must start the play behind the Outfield Arc, located 160-feet from home plate, until the ball has been contacted by the batter.

E. **Commit Line:** Between third base and home plate is the “commit line,” located 30 feet from third base. Once this line is crossed, the runner is committed to attempt home plate, and may not return to third base.

F. **In all leagues, a team will pitch to their own team. All pitches must be released from an underhand throwing motion and still clear a height of at least six (6) feet.**

G. Batters will only receive three pitches per at bat. If the final pitch is not put into fair play, the batter is out.

H. The diamond shall have 60-foot base lines.

I. Team members and spectators must remain behind the out-of-play lines.

J. A base extension will be used at first base and home plate.
   1. Players must touch the safety base at first base when there is a close play at first. This base is not required to be touched when rounding the base towards second.
   2. Runners MUST ALWAYS touch the safety base at home plate when scoring.
K. A **courtesy runner** is allowed in the case of an injured player. The courtesy runner must be announced prior to the next batter entering the batter’s box, and the substituting runner must be the last recorded out (of the same gender), or a player who has not yet entered the game.

1. In order to be granted the courtesy runner, the batter must achieve first base.

L. **No bunting is allowed.** All swings must be taken with full effort. Any bunted ball will result in the batter being declared “out,” and all base runners will return back to their previously occupied base.

M. **No leading off or stealing bases is allowed.** Any base runner attempting to do so will be immediately called “out.”

III. Definitions

A. An **APPEAL PLAY** is a play upon which an umpire cannot make a decision until requested by a player. The appeal must be made before the next pitch. (examples: A runner leaving early on a tag-up, a runner missing a base, batting out of order, etc... These must be appealed to the umpire by the defensive team before the next pitch.)

B. An **INFIELD FLY** is a batted fair fly ball (not including a line drive) which can be caught by an infielder with ordinary effort, with runners occupying first and second base, or first, second and third base, with one out or less.

   **NOTE:** When it seems apparent that a batted ball will be an infield fly, the umpire shall immediately declare "INFIELD FLY" for the benefit of the runners. If the ball is near the foul lines, the umpire shall declare "infield fly, if fair".

   a. The ball is alive and runners may advance at the risk of the ball being caught, or retouch and advance after the ball is touched, the same as on any fly ball. If the hit becomes a foul ball, it is treated the same as any foul.

   b. If a declared infield fly is allowed to fall untouched to the ground, and bounces foul before passing first or third base, it is a foul ball. If a declared infield fly falls untouched to the ground outside the baseline, and bounces fair before passing first or third base, it is an infield fly.

C. **INTERFERENCE** is the act of a defensive player which hinders or prevents a batter from striking or hitting a pitched ball, or the act of an offensive player, which impedes, hinders or confuses a defensive player while attempting to execute a play.

D. **OBSTRUCTION** is the act of a fielder, while not in possession of the ball or in the act of fielding a batted ball, which impedes the progress of the base runner who is legally running bases.

E. The **ROVER** is an outfield player who is allowed to move to any position outside of the infield but in front of the Outfield Arc in order to gain an advantage. **Note:** A Rover may not be used in Coed or Housing Softball leagues.

IV. Ball in Play/Calling "Time"

A. The ball remains alive until the umpire calls "time," which should be done when the ball is held by a player in the infield area and, in the opinion of the umpire, all further play has ceased.

V. Pitching

A. **In all leagues, a team will pitch to their own team.** All pitches must be released from an underhand throwing motion and still clear a height of at least six (6) feet.

B. Batters will only receive three pitches per at bat. If the final pitch is not put into fair play, the batter is out.

C. If a pitch does not clear a height of six (6) feet, it will be deemed illegal by the umpire and the ball will become dead. Any hit will be declared as a dead ball by the umpire, and will count as one of the batters three allotted pitches.

D. **Pitch Height Arc:** A pitched ball must be thrown over the legal Pitch Height Arc. This height is a minimum of 6’. Any pitch not thrown over this arc will be called an illegal pitch.

E. Any batted ball that contacts the pitcher will result in the batter being called "out.”

VI. Batting

A. The batter shall not have his/her entire foot touching the ground completely outside the lines of the batter's box or touching home plate when the ball is hit.

B. The batter shall not step the other side of the plate while the pitcher is in position to pitch.

C. The batter will be called out if, at the time of contact, his/her foot is touching any part of home plate.

D. The batter cannot contact the pitcher with a batted ball.

   **EFFECT:** The ball is dead, the batter is out, and any base runners will return to their previously held base.

E. The batter shall not hit the ball with an illegal bat.

   **EFFECT:** The ball is dead, the batter is out, and any base runners will return to their previously held base.

F. The batting order must be on the score sheet and must be submitted to the umpire before the game.

G. The batting order must be followed throughout the game unless a player is substituted for another.

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EFFECT: Batting out of order is an appeal play, which may be made by the defensive team only and while the ball is dead. Once the batter has entered the batter’s box, he/she is subject to batting out of order.

I. The batter shall not hinder the catcher from fielding or throwing the ball.
   EFFECT: The batter is out. The ball is dead and base runners must return to the last base that was touched at the time of the interference. (With less than two outs and a runner on third base and the batter interferes with a play being made at home plate, the batter is not out because the runner is out.)

J. Members of the team at bat shall not interfere with a player attempting to field a foul fly ball.
   EFFECT: The ball is dead and the batter is out and base runners must return to the base legally held at the time of the pitch.

K. The batter shall not hit a fair ball with the bat a second time in fair territory.
   EFFECT: The ball is dead, the batter is out, and base runners may not advance.
   (NOTE: If the batter drops the bat and the ball accidentally rolls against it in fair territory, the batter is not out and the ball is in play).

VIII. Base Running

A. A run shall not score if the third out of the inning is the result of:
   1. The batter being put out before legally touching first base.
   2. A base runner being forced out due to the batter becoming a base runner.

B. The base runner must touch each base in order and must touch the safety base at home plate for the run to count.
   1. Commit Line: Between third base and home plate is the "commit line," located 30 feet from third base. Once this line is crossed, the runner is committed to attempt home plate, and may not return to third base.

C. When a base runner must return to a base while the ball is in play, he/she must touch the bases in reverse order.

D. SLIDING: Sliding in all forms is allowed EXCEPT INTO FIRST BASE (coming from home plate on a batted ball). Sliding may not be done with the intent of interfering with a fielder or breaking up a play. In such cases, the runner is out. If clearly done in a double play opportunity, both runners are out.

E. Ball Thrown Out of Play: When a ball is thrown into an area deemed "out of play," the base runner will receive the attempted base plus one additional base from the time the throw was made.

F. When a base runner dislodges a base from its proper position, the runner or succeeding runners on the same play are not compelled to follow a base unreasonably out of position. (The runner should be near the spot of the base.

G. Two base runners may not occupy the same base simultaneously.
   EFFECT: The runner who first legally occupied the base shall be entitled to it; the other base runner may be put out by being touched with the ball.

H. No runner may return to touch a missed base if the base was left illegally, after a following runner has scored. After the ball becomes dead, no runner may return to touch a missed base or one that was left after he/she has advanced to and touched a base or base left illegally.

I. No runner may return to touch a missed base or one left illegally once he/she entered the team area.

J. Bases left too early on a caught fly ball must be retouched prior to advancing.

K. The base runners are entitled to advance with liability to be put out under the following circumstances:
   1. When the ball is hit fair.
   2. When a legally caught fly ball is first touched.
   3. When the ball is overthrown into fair territory.

L. If after overrunning first base the base runner makes, in the opinion of the umpire, a legitimate move towards second base, he/she is liable to be put out.

M. Base runners are entitled to advance without liability to be put out:
   1. When a fielder obstructs the base runner from taking a base unless the fielder is trying to field a batted ball or has the ball ready to tag the base runner.

   EFFECT: When obstruction occurs, the umpire shall call and signal "obstruction".
   a. If a play is being made on the obstructed runner, or if the batter-runner is obstructed before he/she touches first base, the ball is dead and all runners shall advance, without liability to be put out, to the bases they would have reached, in the umpire's judgment, if there had been no obstruction. The obstructed runner shall be awarded at least one base beyond the base he/she had last legally touched before the obstruction. Any preceding runners, forced to advance by the award of bases as the penalty for obstruction, shall advance without liability to be put out.
   b. If no play is being made on the obstructed runner, the play shall proceed until no further action is possible. The umpire shall then call "time" and impose such penalties, if any, that in his/her judgment will nullify the act of obstruction.
   c. When a defensive player first base the base runner makes, in the opinion of the umpire, a legitimate move towards second base, he/she is liable to be put out.

   EFFECT: When a fielder contacts or catches a fair batted or thrown ball with his/her cap, glove, or any part of his/her clothing while it is detached from its proper place or his/her person.

   EFFECT: The base runners shall be entitled to three bases if a batted ball, or two bases if a thrown ball, and in either case the base runners may advance further at their own risk.

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N. Base runners must return to their bases when a batter or base runner is called out for interference. Other base runners shall return to the last base which was, in the judgment of the umpire, legally touched at the time of the interference.

O. Under no circumstance is a runner permitted to lead-off or steal a base. (Base runners may leave their base only when the ball is hit).

P. The base runner is out:
1. When, in running to any base, he/she runs more than three feet from a direct line between bases in an effort to avoid a tag.
2. When, while the ball is in play, he/she is legally touched with the ball in the hand or glove of a fielder while not in contact with a base.
3. When on a force-out, a fielder holds the ball on the base to which the base runner is forced to advance before the runner reaches the base.
4. When a base runner physically passes a preceding base runner before that runner has been put out.
5. When the base runner leaves his/her base to advance to another base before a caught fly ball has touched a fielder, provided the play is appealed.
6. When the base runner fails to touch a base and the play is appealed.

**NOTE:** On appeal plays, the appeal must be made before the next pitch or before the defensive team has left the field.
7. When the base runner interferes with a fielder attempting to field a batted ball or intentionally interferes with a thrown ball. If this interference, in the judgment of the umpire, is an obvious attempt to prevent a double play, the immediate succeeding runner shall also be called out.
8. When a base runner is struck with a fair batted ball while off base.
9. When the base coach touches or holds the runner physically to assist this runner in returning or leaving the base. The runner is not out if a play is not being made on him/her.
10. When the base runner leaves the base before the pitched ball is hit.

IX. Ejections

A. A player will be ejected from a game for unsportsmanlike misconduct, serious foul play, using abusive language, or if he or she persists in misconduct, with or without receiving a caution.

B. The player receiving the ejection must leave the premises, and, along with his/her team captain, must meet with the Director of Intramural Sports prior to participating in the next game. Any unsportsmanlike ejection will be penalized by AT LEAST a one-game suspension, and potentially more depending on the nature of the offense.

C. A player ejected twice during the course of the season will be suspended for the remainder of the season.

D. If a team has a total of three or more players ejected during the season, the team will be removed from the league.

E. In the case of unruly spectators, warnings and ejections may be administered to the team captain.

X. Playoff Requirements and Seeding – Summer Softball TBD (based on total teams)

A. In order to determine playoff qualification, the intramural sports staff will use the following guidelines:
1. Win/loss record will determine final regular season standings. The top-4 teams in each division will qualify for playoffs. Playoffs will be Single Elimination format.
   a. Any game that is defaulted by a team will count worse than a loss for that defaulting team’s record for seeding purposes.
   b. Any game that is forfeited will count worse than a default for that forfeiting team’s record for seeding purposes.
2. An average sportsmanship rating of **2.5** or better by the end of the season. This average must be maintained throughout playoffs. If a team has worse than a 2.5 average, they cannot make playoffs.
3. Tiebreaker procedures are outlined in the Intramural Participant Handbook.

B. A player must have played in a regular season game to be eligible for playoffs. There will be no on-site additions to a team’s roster once playoffs have begun.