1. **Player Eligibility and Check-In:**
   - All players must first register on the IMLeagues webpage, and join a team to be placed on the team roster. Players MUST be on the team roster to participate in a game. Write-ins are NOT accepted until the player has registered, and approved by the site supervisor or program manager.
   - All participants must be current members of the gym/recreational facilities. Non-members wishing to play intramurals must first purchase a membership. Any non-student members must be 18 years or older.
   - Each player must check-in prior to game time and present their current Duke ID Card.
   - A player must be signed-in and checked off before entering the game on the game sheet.
   - Players are allowed to compete on any one team; regardless of league classification. In addition, players may compete on any one team within the coed league.
   - Roster additions can be made at any time prior to 4:00pm and up until the final date for roster additions. Please check the softball sport page on IMLeagues for this information. Following this date only special requests will be accommodated, but the Intramural office must be contacted.
   - Coaches: Coaches may be recognized for an intramural team, but MUST be on the team roster and also be checked off and identified by the intramural staff and its officials prior to the start of the game.

2. **Number of players:**
   - A team’s roster may include an unlimited number of players.
   - A team, when in the field, may have 10 fielding players. A minimum of 8 players will be allowed to start and finish the game. When fielding 10 players then the 10th player MUST be an outfield player – 4 players in the outfield.
   - A team, when in the field, MUST have a catcher.
   - Any players arriving late must be added to the bottom of the line-up.

3. **Forfeits & Defaults (point differential):**
   - For any forfeits a match differential of 15-0 will be assessed. In addition, the forfeiting team will receive a sportsmanship rating of 3.0.
   - For any defaults a match differential of 5-0 will be assessed. In addition, the defaulting team will receive a sportsmanship rating of 4.0.
     i. When teams give advanced notice within (12) hours of game time that they will not be showing, a default will be given.
   - For further information please review the Forfeits & Defaults Guidelines.

4. **The Game & Time Regulations:**
   - The game sheet will designate the home and away team; who bats first (designated as the Away Team) and which team is in the field first/bats second (designated as the Home Team).
   - Games are seven 7-innings in length or 1-hour in time; whichever occurs first
     i. Any full-inning started before the 1-hour time limit expires will be completed. Both the top and the bottom of the inning will be completed given that the home team is not ahead at the beginning of the bottom half of the inning. If the home team is ahead, then the game is over.
   - **Fifteen-Run-Rule (Mercy Rule):** If one team is leading by 15 or more runs after 5 complete innings (4 ⅓ if the home team is ahead), the game will be over.
     i. This includes teams going ahead by (15) or more runs at any point after the 5 complete innings.
   - **Ten-Run Max Inning Rule:** The batting team can score a maximum of 10-runs per inning. Once the batting team has scored 10-runs in any given inning, the inning is over.
     i. Additional runs scored beyond 10-runs will not count (i.e. batting team has 8 runs and bases loaded; player hits a home run which brings in all 4 runs: team remains with 10-runs and the inning is over.
   - There will be NO extra innings played to resolve tied games at the end of 7-innings; tied games end in ties with the exception of playoffs.
   - **Inclement Weather & Ending a Game:** (4) full innings, or (3 ½) innings if the home team is ahead, will constitute a complete game. The decision to end a game is the sole decision of the Field Supervisor and Officials.

5. **Equipment:**
   a. Players are not required to wear a uniform or numbered jersey. Teams are allowed to wear their own uniforms.
b. Bats, balls and catcher’s masks will be provided if needed. Gloves are provided, but only a limited amount of gloves. Players from opposing teams must share the use of IM gloves, when needed.

c. Bats must be ‘Official Softball’ bats – bats must be labeled as such.

d. Illegal Equipment:
   i. Cleats are allowed; with the exception of metal cleats. Only rubber cleats, tennis or running shoes, or turf shoes are allowed.
   ii. No jewelry such as watches, rings, bracelets, necklaces or any other loose accessories will be allowed.

6. Player Substitutions/Batting Order:
   • Batting Order is Unlimited (**everyone bats**): When a team has more than (10) players, it may list all players on the batting order and each player will bat in order as their name appears; this lineup must be followed throughout the game. Late players will be added to the end of the batting order.
     • Teams can fill the field with whichever players they choose prior to each inning.
     • When in the field, players cannot be substituted for by bench players, unless due to injury. Pitchers may be replaced by another player in the field only, and will remain in the field at a new position. Players in the field are permitted to switch positions.
     • Pinch-runners cannot be used unless an injury is involved.
   • The next batter or batting order for each inning will be announced by the supervisor/scorekeeper. If an error is discovered while the incorrect batter is at bat, the correct batter may take their place legally assuming the current pitching count (balls/strikes). Any runs scored or bases gained while the incorrect batter was at bat shall be legal.

7. Batting:
   • Each batter will begin an at-bat with a count of 1-ball and 1-strike. Batters will have 5-pitches to hit the ball (3-balls, 2-strikes).
     i. If the batters 3rd strike is fouled off, the batter is out.
   • Bunting is NOT allowed; the batter must take a full swing at the ball – if a player bunts the ball it is declared “dead” and a strike is assessed to the player; if on the 3rd strike, the player is out.
     i. A full swing where the ball goes a short distance is not considered a bunt; full swings in this case constitute a legal hit of the ball.
     ii. Base runners may not advance on any bunted ball.
     iii. This rule includes any bunted ball that is “popped-up” – the ball is considered dead in all cases whether caught in the air or not.
   • When a player unintentionally throws their bat they and the team will be given a warning on the 1st and 2nd instances. Starting with the 3rd instance and each subsequent offense will result in the batter being called out, and all runners returning to the base they occupied prior to the at-bat. This rule pertains to the team as a whole.
   • Hit by pitch situations: Batters must make an attempt to get out of the way during a hit-by-pitch situation. If, at the discretion of the umpire, the batter makes no attempt at moving to avoid the ball then a ball will be called and the base runner not awarded the base. If a batter does make an attempt to move from being hit-by-pitch, and at the discretion of the official, then the batter is awarded 1st base.

8. Pitching:
   • Teams will pitch to the opposing team.
   • Pitchers can be replaced at any point during an inning, but only by another field player. The pitcher will obtain a new position within the field.
   • Pitches must be a slow to moderate pitch and have a minimum arc of (6) feet; Maximum arc is (12) feet. Any pitch that fails to reach an arc of (6) feet, or exceeds the (12) foot limit, or is thrown with excessive speed, will be declared an illegal pitch. This will count as a “ball”.
   • A pitched ball must hit home plate or its extension to be called a strike for a non-hit pitch. If the ball strikes anywhere outside of home plate or its extension then the pitch is declared a “ball”. The ball must not be thrown lower that the batter’s knees nor higher than the batter’s shoulders while passing over home plate.
   • Pitching MUST be an underhand motion. Pitches not underhand will be declared “dead” and be retaken.
   • For any pitch where the ball slips from the pitcher’s hand during their back swing will be declared “no pitch” and be retaken.
• Wild Pitches: Base runners may NOT advance on any wild pitches.
  i. Stealing is also NOT allowed.
• The batter must be in the batter’s box before a pitch can be attempted.

9. Infield Fly:
• A fair fly ball (not to include line drives) which can be caught by an infielder with ordinary effort.
  i. There are 0 or 1 out in the inning.
  ii. There are runners on 1st and 2nd OR the bases are loaded.
• When all three conditions are met, the umpire will declare an infield fly and rule the batter out, despite whether or not the fly ball is caught. If “infield fly” is called and the fly ball is caught, it is treated exactly as an ordinary fly ball; the batter is out, there is no force, and the runners must tag up. On the other hand, if “infield fly” is called and the ball lands fair without being caught, the batter is still out, and there is still no force, but the runners are not required to tag up. In either case, the ball is live, and the runners may advance on the play as their own discretion.

10. Base Running:
• NO Stealing is allowed. Base runners may leave the base only when the pitch is hit. If a runner is off the base before the pitch reaches the plate, the runner will be called out, and a “no pitch” will be called.
• Base runners may overrun 1st base ONLY.
  i. Once a base runner has ran through 1st base, if that base runner makes an attempt or arcing motion to gain 2nd base, then the runner can be tagged out.
  ii. Please note that at 1st base there will be a “fielder’s base” and a “runner’s base”. The fielder must have their foot on the “fielder’s base” for the force out.
• Sliding is NOT allowed.
• The base path for runners is the direct line between the player and the base to which he/she is advancing, and about 3-feet to either side of that direct path. Any player who runs outside this base path in an attempt to avoid a tag shall be called out.
• A fielder has absolute right to any position on the field when fielding a ball and it is the responsibility of all runners to avoid a fielder during these circumstances. If a fielder not in possession of the ball or not in the act of fielding a batted ball impedes the progress of a runner, obstruction will be ruled. In this event, a delayed dead ball will occur; when the play has ended, the umpire shall award the runner, and each other runner affected by the obstruction the bases they would have (in the umpire’s opinion) reached had there been no obstruction.
• On any tag plays, the fielder must be in possession of the ball before attempting to block a base. Blocking a base without the ball is considered obstruction.
• Any runner in fair territory, and not in contact with a base that is struck by a fair batted ball is out except when (a) the ball has passed an infielder, and in the judgment of the umpire, no other fielder had a chance to make an out, (b) when a runner is touched with a fair batted ball after it is touched by any fielder, including the pitcher. In the event of either of these circumstances, the play is live.
• In the case of a double play opportunity, the base runner must avoid contact with the fielder or the thrown ball. The base runner interfering with the play will automatically be called out, as well as, result in the batter being called out, and if, in the opinion of the umpire, interference occurred.
• Any base runners deliberately attempting to crash into a fielding player, whether in possession of the ball or not, will be called out and automatically be ejected from the game. The ball will be declared dead and all runners will return to their previously occupied base.
• The ball remains alive until the pitcher has possession of the ball in the infield and all immediate play has apparently completed. Runners not advancing return to the last base legally touched. Umpires have the authority to grant timeout when the ball is in possession of another fielder and all immediate play has apparently ended.
• “Force Out” at Home Plate:
  i. Between 3rd base and home plate a marker will distinguish the point of a “force out” at home plate. In these situations, if a runner is making an attempt at home plate and passes this marker, then the player is subject to the “force out”. A “force out” occurs when there is a thrown ball or attempt at home plate to get the runner out, the runner has passed the marker, and the ball is caught by the receiving player; the receiving player only needs to touch home plate to “force out” the runner (no tag needs to be applied).
ii. Once the running player has crossed the “force out” marker they cannot make an attempt to return back to 3rd base; since this is a “force out” the runner is declared out as long as the fielding player has touched home plate after catching the ball.

iii. The player catching the ball must have their foot on the “fielder’s plate” and not the “runner’s plate”. Tagging the player for the out is still acceptable.

- Courtesy, or pinch-runners, may be used only in the event of an injury, and must be the player who recorded the last out.
- Any close calls or ties will go to the runner, and be awarded the base.

11. Base Advancement:

- Base runner CANNOT advance on any wild pitches or passed balls on a pitch.
- NO steals are allowed.
- NO lead-offs are allowed.
- NO sliding is allowed.
- The ball is considered live at all times unless called dead by the official(s), unless passing over the fence or in a position which the official feels the ball cannot be retrieved.

Coed Softball Rules

1. Player Requirements:
   a. A team can start and finish a game with (8) players. Less than (8) players before or during the game will constitute a forfeit. A team may have a minimum of (3) females or males to start and finish the game as long as the (8) player minimum is met.
   b. When fielding, a team must adhere to the following ratios:
      i. Using (10) players of which at least (5) must be female, (5) must be male.
      ii. Using (9) players can be a 4:5 or 5:4 ratio.
      iii. Using (8) players of which a team may have a 4:4 female to male ratio, or a 5:3 ratio female to male, or a 5:3 male to female.
   **At no point can a team exceed more than (5) of any player gender when fielding

2. Batting Order:
   a. Teams must bat in alternating format of male/female (the 1st batter in the line-up may be male or female). If a team does not have equal numbers of males and females then the batting order will restart with that gender in the order to meet the alternating format. For example, if a team only has 4 females present, but 8 males:
      i. Male1, Female1, Male2, Female2, Male3, Female3, Male4, Female4, Male5, Female1, Male6, Female2, Male7, Female3, Male8, Female4

3. Substitutions:
   a. Female players may only be subbed for female players and male players for male players in any fielding situations where a substitution or position switch is occurring.
   b. Fielding Positions: Once positions have been established for the fielding team prior to the first batter, teams must continue to play the same-sex player at that position for the entire inning. Male players and female players cannot switch positions in response to certain batters.
   c. Any courtesy runners used (in the event of an injury) must be of the same gender that recorded the last out.
      i. If a team cannot replace an injured player with a player of the same gender, then the opposing team may grant them the use of an opposite gender pinch-runner. If the opposing team wishes to not grant this, then the runner will be declared out.

Sportsmanship Guidelines & Cancellations

I. Sportsmanship Rating:
   • The Sportsmanship Rating System is designed and intended to be an objective scale by which a team’s overall sportsmanship (which includes attitude and behavior) can be assessed during an intramural game and throughout a team’s season, which includes playoffs. Behavior before, during and after an intramural game is included in this
rating. The team captain(s) is/are responsible for educating and informing all players and spectators associated with their team about this rating system.

II. Team/Individual misconduct:
- Profanity and/or any other forms of derogatory or abusive language towards officials, site supervisors, administrative staff, other participants, and spectators are unacceptable actions during participation in Intramural sports, events, and tournaments.
  - Furthermore, physical misbehavior, such as fighting, will not be tolerated when participating in Intramural sports, events, and tournaments. All participants, thus, acknowledge that they are subject to both removal from the team/league and disciplinary action from Duke University on any such occasion.

III. Sportsmanship:
- The goal of Duke Intramural Sports is to provide recreational environments for its participants who are safe, fun, and inclusive and further promotes teamwork, communication, integrity and healthy lifestyles. While the game environment can be competitive, ensuring player safety, providing a fun atmosphere, and promoting sportsmanlike behavior for participants, spectators, and staff are the program’s primary concerns and are the sole responsibility of its participants, spectators, and staff.
  - Participants and spectators are expected to maintain good sportsmanship throughout their participation in Duke Intramural Sports as it applies to Intramural Staff, fellow participants, team followers, and spectators.
- The team and captain(s) are responsible for the actions of the individual team members and spectators or team followers. Coaches may be recognized for an intramural team, but MUST be on the team roster and also be checked off and identified by the intramural staff and its officials prior to the start of the game.
  - Only the recognized head team captain (1) and/or coach are permitted to speak to the officials regarding administrative matters such as protests, ejections, rule clarifications, etc. Intramural staff will only recognize these persons when communicating matters in an intramural game, and only when addressed in a civil, good-natured manner.
  - Furthermore, it is expected of team captains and/or coaches to assist the intramural staff and its officials to calm difficult situations, restrain troubled teammates, and assist in other administrative matters as asked by the intramural staff and its officials.

IV. Cancellations (Weather or Unforeseen Circumstances):
- For any game that is cancelled due to hazardous conditions (weather or facility) and not played or rescheduled, a tie will be assessed to both teams with a score of (0-0). In addition, both teams will receive a sportsmanship rating of 5.0.
- If a cancellation to a game in play is made due to hazardous conditions, the game will count if (4) full innings, or (3 ⅓) innings if the home team is ahead, have been completed. The decision to end a game is the sole decision of the Field Supervisor and Officials.
- The game score at any time thereafter will be the score. A team’s sportsmanship rating will be assessed up until the point of cancellation.
- For any and all sightings of lighting teams must be removed from the field, and play will be suspended immediately; a 30-minute time limit will be implemented form the first sight of lighting and will reset each time if seen again.
- Officials and other staff have final say over rain related suspension of play or cancellations.