



USC
URBAN SPORTS CLUB

FLAG FOOTBALL LEAGUE RULES

Last Updated: May 1st, 2011



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1. RECENT REVISIONS & UPDATES

LAST UPDATED May 1, 2011

2. SPORTSMANSHIP

USC encourages a fun-first, winning-second attitude in all leagues. All players are expected to abide by USC sportsmanship policies, any player or team who does not will be subject to suspensions or league expulsion.

ZERO TOLERANCE POLICY

In order to promote a safe and sportsmanlike environment for its players, USC has clarified its stance on unsportsmanlike behaviour. All players must understand the expectations for playing in USC leagues. Game Coordinators and/or Team Captains are required by USC to ask players to leave the gym/field if they are involved with any of the following acts:

- Swearing directly at another player or the Coordinator.
- Intentionally pushing, shoving or making physical contact with another player.
- Making comments to instigate an altercation with another player.

In addition to being dismissed from the game, a one week suspension (or more) may be assigned by USC to the involved player or team.

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SPORTSMANSHIP RATINGS

In order to encourage sportsmanlike play, each team must choose and report a rating for their opponent. The sportsmanship rating for your opponent gets reported directly to the Game Coordinator at the end of each game.

For a description of how to rate your opponent, see below.

Rating	Explanation
(+1)	The team was a lot of fun and made a genuine attempt to call their fouls.
(0)	The team was OK. There are two scenarios: (1) they were average in both Fun and Accountability; (2) They were strong in one area but weak in the other area.
(-1)	The team was not fun (too intense or aggressive) and generally did not follow the rules and call their own infractions/penalties.

The rating should combine "accountability" and "spirit of the game". Accountability is based on how you felt your opponent took responsibility for calling their own fouls. A team that does well on Accountability either: committed few or no fouls so it was not an issue, or committed several fouls but made a genuine attempt to call most of them. Spirit is based on how fun your opponent was. A high rating would be for a team that appeared to put fun first and winning second and encouraged themselves and/or their opponent in a positive way.

REPORTING SPORTSMANSHIP CONCERNS

- If during the game you have a concern with the other team, address the issue respectfully with the Games Coordinator at the appropriate time (during play on the sidelines or at halftime).
- If at the end of the game you do not feel that the issue has been resolved, report the details of the issue to USC by 5pm the next day by using the online complaint form - [Click here](#).
- If you give a -1 and do not support the rating with a complaint form by 5pm the next day, USC staff cannot properly act on the issue and the rating will be changed to a zero.

Click on the links below for full details on the following topics:

- [Full sportsmanship policy](#)
- [How USC handles complaints](#)

3. WAIVERS

- All players must sign a [waiver](#) every season before playing their first game. The waiver can only be completed online.
- Any player that subs in (even if only for one game) must fill out a waiver prior to playing. Captains are responsible to ensure that this is done.
- The waiver outlines USC's liability and sportsmanship policies.

4. WEATHER POLICY

USC office is not open on weekends so all Saturday and Sunday games are subject to the rain or shine policy!

Weeknight games are played in most weather conditions and are rarely canceled. In the event that USC deems the fields unplayable, the weather update bulletin on USC website will be updated no later than 5:00pm on game day. If games are canceled, We will do our best to re-scheduled. If the weather bulletin states that the games are "on", the rain or shine policy will apply.

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RAIN OR SHINE POLICY

- Teams must report to their field regardless of weather conditions, or be subject to default rules.
- If it is raining or snowing at game time, USC requires teams to wait it out for at least 20 minutes before deciding to call the game.
 - If poor weather or slippery field conditions are still a factor after 20 minutes, you must discuss rescheduling options with your opponent prior to leaving the field.
 - USC will help with rescheduling but the teams must provide two potential dates that both teams can play on. Dates must be on a day other than your regular league night and must be minimum one week prior to the start of playoffs.
- On nights with poor weather, when games have not been canceled by USC, if less than half the teams in a division play their games then USC will automatically reschedule all games from that night via a double-header or a season extension. For games that were played where both teams want their score to count, they will not need to re-play that game.
- If there are multiple rainouts in one season, USC may be required to shorten the season.
- USC may not always be able to reschedule the games (due to field availability and amount of notice time) so teams cancel at their own risk.

For complete details on the weather policy, please [click here](#).

FLAG FOOTBALL SPECIFIC WEATHER GUIDELINES

- If poor weather causes the game to be stopped before the first half is completed, the teams must wait at least 20 minutes for the weather to pass. If the first half cannot be completed, the game will be rescheduled and replayed at a later date.
- After the first half is completed, the game is eligible for a win or a loss in the standings. If after the first half is completed conditions become unplayable, the captains and the Game Coordinator can meet and decide to:
 - Call the game and the score will stand as is. The team leading when the game is called records a victory. If the score is tied when the game is called, a tie is awarded.
 - Wait out the rain for 20 minutes and then re-evaluate the situation.
 - If the teams are not in agreement on what to do, the team that is losing will have the final say on whether to continue the game (at this point the game cannot be rescheduled and a score must be submitted).

It can be very difficult to reschedule games! Don't call games without good reason. Be prepared to play through some poor weather!

5. DEFAULTS

- All teams are to be at the facility 15 minutes before their scheduled game time.
- At game time any teams not meeting the minimum player requirements will default the game.
- Defaults are recorded as 28-0.

6. THE GAME COORDINATORS (GC)

Game Coordinators (GCs) are players in the club who help coordinate the games. Each facility has one Game Coordinator. The roles of a GC include:

- Bring the equipment to the facility.
- Facilitate the set-up and take-down of the field markers (with help from the players).
- Help manage game times as per USC permits.
- Help the teams to determine if they will play the games during bad weather.
- Inform players on USC updates - please be respectful and listen to the GC while they read the announcements.

If there is no GC present at your game, all games are still to be played and captains will need to report the scores. If you would like to learn more about the benefits of being a GC, [click here](#).

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7. SCHEDULES

- Schedules are posted online 48 hours prior to the first game.
- If the schedules are not posted you may assume the schedule has not been completed. Please do not contact USC regarding your schedule until after it has been posted.
- Games can be played anytime between 6:00pm-11:00pm on weeknights and 8:30am-11:00pm on weekends.
- Singles team names are assigned by USC office staff. All individuals' names will appear on the schedule along with their team name.

8. ROSTERS & SUBS

- When registering a full team, there is no maximum limit to the number of players that you can have on the roster.
- A full team on the field consists of 5 players with a minimum of 2 females.
- The minimum amount of players required in order to not default is: 4 players including at least 1 female.
- A sub-list can be requested from the office. If you recruit a sub, it is your responsibility to ensure they are ready to play (know the rules, will play at the proper level and have submitted a waiver).
- A team may bring in subs that are not listed on the roster. They must fill out a waiver prior to playing.
- In the spirit of sportsmanship, captains are expected to replace players with a person of a similar skill level. Bringing in "ringers" for regular season and particularly playoff games is discouraged.
- If you are playing in a league where there are other USC teams playing before you, your team may borrow players under this condition: to increase your team to a minimum full line-up. USC considers it to be an unfair advantage if a team borrows players to bolster their line-up.
- Individual team rosters will be e-mailed out 48 hours prior to game one.
- Subs in Playoffs:
 - Subs are expected to play at the same skill level of the player that they are replacing.
 - The top 4 teams can only bring in subs that have played at least five games in the regular season.

9. FACILITIES

- USC rents facilities from Parks and Recreation or private establishments. As tenants, players must respect the standards and rules of each facility.
- USC uses private Rugby fields and major sized city fields for Flag Football. A typical field is 110 yards long by 70 yards wide and is split lengthwise down the middle to allow for two games to be played concurrently. Cones are used to designate the boundaries for each field.
- Consumption of alcohol is not allowed at the fields; players caught violating this by-law are subject to fines from the City and/or USC.
- Most fields do not have a port-a-potti or washroom. Players must not urinate on public property.
- Any player who causes USC to receive a complaint regarding a field rented by USC will face a \$100 fine and may be ejected from the league. For full details on the Facility Complaint Policy, please [click here](#).
- Players are expected to clean up after themselves, please do not leave any garbage behind.
- Any player who causes USC to receive a complaint regarding a facility may be ejected from the league.
- Facilities are chosen based on quality and location. Some leagues utilize many facilities; USC always tries to ensure a fair distribution of locations throughout the city in each division.
- USC asks all players to arrive 15 minutes prior to the game start time. This 15 minutes should be used to change shoes, stretch, set up fields, and any other pre-game preparations.
- Players are not permitted to wear metal cleats.
- Players are responsible for property damage.

10. EQUIPMENT

- All equipment will be brought to the field by an USC Game Coordinator. This will include Wilson official NFL game balls, flags, belts and field markers.
- Opposing teams should have flags of contrasting colours. Flags MUST be worn at hips/sides and shirts cannot hang over the flags (i.e. tuck your shirt into your shorts/pants).

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- Players are not permitted to bring their own footballs for game play as Wilson is the official USC Football sponsor
- All players are required to bring a light and dark shirt to each game. You may wear a team colour, but you still need to bring an opposite coloured shirt in the event that your opponent wears a similar team colour.

11. REPORTING RESULTS

- After each game both captains must submit the game scores and spirit rating directly to the GC or the score sheet that the GC provides.
- Teams that do not report scores to the GC are subject to a default loss.
- Mercy will be called when one team gains a lead of 28 points. The score will freeze and teams are encouraged to play the rest of the game for fun.

12. STANDINGS

For all USC sports, scores are to be reported by the GC to the office by 5:00pm the day after the game. USC admin staff will process scores and post the updated standings to the website within 72 hours of the games. Each set of USC standings will display notes at the bottom outlining how the standings are calculated.

HOW TEAMS ARE RANKED

Recreational and Intermediate

- 1st criteria: Total Points are derived from 2 points for a win and 1 point for a tie. Actual spirit points are then added to your points earned from wins and ties to result in your Total Points.
- PLS (Points lost due to spirit rating) can negatively affect your Total Points. Each time a team receives a -1 from two opponents over the season, they lose 1 point off their Total Points.
- 2nd criteria: Differential of points scored vs. points allowed (Mercy rule in effect in each game).

13. PLAYOFFS

- All teams are guaranteed 2 playoff games. The top 4 teams will play for the league championship.
- League champs receive t-shirts and need to attend the Season Ending Party to pick them up.
- Sportsmanship during the playoffs is very important – a team that wins their playoff game but has sportsmanship issues may have their win overturned and may not be allowed to play their final game or participate in future seasons.
- For rules regarding subs in playoffs, please see Section 7: Rosters and Subs.
- There are no ties in playoffs.
- If the score is tied at the end of regulation:
 - Each team will get 3 conversion attempts. One of these attempts must involve a female player. Teams can choose which points total to attempt. See section 14 Scoring for additional details.
 - Teams will toss a coin to determine which team will go first. The team who wins the toss gets the choice to go first or second.

14. LEAGUE SPECIFIC RULES

EXPECTATIONS OF PLAYERS

All players participating in USC co-ed leagues are expected to play with respect and a "fun first" attitude. In Flag Football, there is an emphasis on the players to know the rules and manage their own actions on the field. There are no Game Coordinators (GCs) or referees at Flag Football games.

- All players participating in USC leagues are expected to play with respect for everyone at the field and with a "fun first" attitude. Flag Football can be an intense and physical sport however, USC Flag Football leagues must be a fun, non-threatening environment.

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- All players are expected to know the rules and manage their actions on the field.
- Players are required to call themselves if they commit violations or penalties. Not calling yourself can be considered poor sportsmanship.
- Players should promote fun and safety throughout the game by: calling themselves for fouls and talking to their own teammates who are not following the rules.
- Promote sportsmanship throughout the game. Let the opposing Team Captain know if you are enjoying their team, congratulate your opponent on fun and fair play throughout the game.
- Players that are concerned about a player on the opposing team are required to talk to their Team Captain so he/she can address the issue with the opposing Team Captain at the appropriate time.
- Players are expected to act in a respectful manner if approached by an opposing Team Captain regarding their style of play and to make any requested changes.
- Teams are expected to cheer for their opponents at the end of a game.
- Players can provide constructive feedback to USC as needed, regarding field conditions, unsportsmanlike play, or helpful comments.

GAME PLAY EXPECTATIONS

- Before the game, the Captains will meet to introduce themselves, discuss field specific restrictions and rules or sportsmanship issues that need to be emphasized.
- Team Captains are to communicate their expectations to each other. At the end of the pre-game meeting Team Captains are required to communicate all information with their players.
- At halftime, the Team Captains meet with one another to discuss any issues that arose in the first half. It is the responsibility of each Captain to communicate these issues to their teammates before resuming play.
- At any time during a game, if the Team Captain(s) determines that the play is getting dangerous or too intense, they should call a one minute time-out to cool things down and discuss resolutions with each other. Play must have stopped for a time-out to be called. If a time-out is called with less than 10 minutes left in the game, this time can be added onto the end of the game.
- At the end of the game, all players shake hands and Team Captains meet to discuss any issues with the game.

GAME FORMAT

- Arrive 15 minutes prior to the scheduled game time to allow for warm-up.
- Games consist of two 40 minute halves, with a 5 minute half time.
- The captains should use the half time to discuss any sportsmanship issues in the game. The conversation should be open and friendly with the captains making a commitment to each other to keep playing a sportsmanlike game, or to improve their team's play to make it more fun for the rest of the game.
- In a situation where two divisions are combined and then seeded, during those three weeks of seeding 'A female player must be an integral player in at least 1 play of the 4 downs' in all games.

SCORING

- If the game is tied after regulation, the following will occur:
 - In Regular season: The game is a tie, no extra time is played.
 - In Playoffs: See Section 13 above.
- There are two methods of scoring points: a touchdown or converting a touchdown.
 - **Touchdown:** When the offensive team advances the ball (in bounds) into the opposition's end zone via a running or passing play, they have scored a touchdown and are awarded 6 points. A touchdown is immediately followed by one additional scrimmage play where the offence attempts to 'convert' the touchdown for additional points.
 - **Convert:** The convert play is always a running/passing scrimmage play. The object of the convert is to advance the ball into the opposition's end zone for extra points. If the convert play is successful in scoring, 1 point is awarded for a play originating from the 5-yard line, 2 points are awarded for a play originating from the 10 yard line. The offence chooses which point total to attempt.
- After the convert play has been concluded, the scoring team will kick-off to the non-scoring team.

TIMING AND CHOICE OF RECEIVING

- A person should be selected at the start of the game to keep track of time.
- When there are 5 minutes remaining in a half, it should be announced that the 5 minute rule is now in effect. This means that the team with the ball will complete their series of downs, and then the other team will complete a series of downs, then the half will end, regardless of the time it takes. If the ball is intercepted during the final series, the intercepting team can score on that play, but will not have a new series of downs (this means the team that had possession first during the final 5 minutes does not get a second set of downs).
- Converts and kick-offs are not considered part of a series, if the 5 minute warning occurs during a convert or kick-off both teams will get another series of downs.
- At the start of the game, the team winning the coin toss will have 3 options available to them:
 1. They can choose to kick-off or receive a kick-off from the opposing team.
 2. They can choose an end of the field to defend
 3. They can defer their choice until the start of the second half.
- If they choose option C the loser of the coin toss will have their choice of A or B to start the game, and the coin toss winner will have their first choice of A or B to start the second period. In each case, after the choosing team makes their choice, the opposition then has their choice of the remaining options. The choice process is repeated at the start of the second half. If the team winning the coin toss took first choice to start the game, the loser of the coin toss has first choice to start the second period.

GENERAL SCRIMMAGE RULES

- The offensive team consists of a quarterback and 4 receivers.
- The defensive team consists of 5 defenders.
- The offence has 4 'downs' or scrimmage plays in which to score a touchdown. If a touchdown is not scored in the 4 plays, the ball is turned over to the defence, the defence then becomes the offence.
- **A FEMALE player must be an integral player in at least 1 play of the 4 downs.**
 - If a team on offence uses all 4 downs then one of the plays must have used a female player as an integral part of the play. If a team scores on the first, second or third down and has not used a female player in an integral role, the touchdown counts. However, if the team has not had a female player in an integral role on downs 1 to 3 (and haven't scored) then they must use a female in one of the integral positions on 4th down regardless of field position or play choice.
 - If a team does not use a female player in their 4 downs, the defence gets the ball from where the last play occurred and if the offence scored points, they do not count.
 - An integral part of the play or position includes:
 1. Being the quarterback on a forward passing play.
 2. Being the receiver on a passing play.
 3. Being the punter on a 4th down punting play.
- On each down, the ball should be put in play at the center point on whichever yard line the teams are positioned.
- The offensive team has the choice to put the ball into play by either having the quarterback 'snap' the ball to him/herself or using an eligible receiver to snap the ball to the quarterback (direct or shotgun).
- A player is considered 'down' when:
 - One or more flags is missing from his/her belt.
 - The player's body touches the ground anywhere from the knee up (hands are excluded).
 - The player goes out of bounds. A player is out of bounds when any part of the player's body touches the ground on the out of bounds line or beyond.
- If a player inadvertently loses a flag during the course of a play, the following will apply:
 - If the player was in the act of carrying the ball, the play is dead when and where the flag came off.
 - If the player did not have the ball and subsequently catches a pass, the pass is complete, but the play is dead at the spot of reception.
 - If the player does not have the ball, the play is not affected in any way.
- If an offensive player is flagged in their own endzone, the down is complete and the next play will be scrimmaged from the one yard line; no points are awarded to the defence (no points for a Safety).

Play Clock

- The offence must put the ball into play within 30 SECONDS of starting their huddle. Huddles need to be kept short to keep the play moving; teams may politely intervene if their opponent is not abiding by this rule. If this is mentioned by your opponent, make an effort to speed up. Teams that do not abide by this rule can likely expect to have their sportsmanship rating negatively affected.
- The use of play cards is encouraged as they help keep huddles short.

Steamboat Counting

- The quarterback/offence has only 10 "STEAMBOATS" to make a play (this should equal 10 seconds). If the quarterback has not been rushed (so they can't run) then they must have made a pass within 10 steamboats.
 - Only defensive players on the field can call steamboats unless both teams mutually agree at the start of the game that defensive players on the sidelines may also call steamboats.
 - If a player on the sideline is calling steamboats, they must move with the line of scrimmage and must count loud enough for all players on the field to hear.
 - For the defensive team to take advantage of this rule, a player must be counting the 10 steamboats out loud for all to hear. If the defence forgets or starts counting late, the offence has until the defence gets to 10 by counting the steamboats properly.
 - At 10 steamboats if a pass has not been thrown by the quarterback, the play is dead and the next down is started. This rule has been instituted to keep the game moving.
 - The defence must count 5 steamboats before they can rush across the line of scrimmage into the offensive backfield (any defensive player can call the steamboats but please call the steamboats loud enough for everyone to hear).
 - The offence is not allowed to run the ball across the line of scrimmage until a defensive player has counted 5 steamboats and has crossed the line of scrimmage.
 - If the defence rushes the quarterback after 5 steamboats then the steamboat count no longer applies and the play will continue until the offence is stopped.
- A team can run a 'hurry up' offence. If the defence wants to call for a sub it is up to them to do it in an appropriate time frame.

PASSING

- All players on the field are eligible to catch a pass.
- If a legal forward pass goes incomplete, the next play will start at the original line of scrimmage.
- If the defence catches (intercepts) a pass, they become the offence after that play has ended.
- A forward pass may not be thrown if the ball has been advanced across the line of scrimmage.
- Only one forward pass may be thrown on each play. The pass can be underhand or traditionally thrown as long as it goes forward over the line of scrimmage.
- On any play, any number of 'laterals' (directly sideways or backwards passes) may be thrown from any point on the field but eventually the ball must be passed over the line of scrimmage. If the defensive team does not cross the line of scrimmage the ball must be thrown - offensive teams can not run the ball if the defensive team has not crossed the line of scrimmage.

Pick Plays

- 'Pick Plays' are illegal by the offensive team. A pick play is when one receiver/offensive player runs interference on the defensive player that is covering another receiver.
 - For a play to be considered a pick an imminent collision or actual physical contact must be made.
 - An imminent collision would be if a defensive player had to stop running because an offensive player got directly in their route and there was no way to get around them without colliding.
 - A good rule of thumb is that when two offensive players cross within 1 yard of each other they are attempting a pick play if a defender is affected by their actions.
 - Crossing Patterns are **NOT** permitted if there is no threat of contact with a defender - the defender must be within 3 yards for it to be considered a Pick Play.
- If the ball has been advanced across the line of scrimmage, a pass in a forward direction is illegal. The play is dead and the ball should be scrimmaged from where the forward pass originated.

- For a pass to be complete, the receiving player must have control of the ball and have at least one foot in bounds before any other part of his/her body lands out of bounds.
- Defensive players should avoid screening (waving hands in front of a receiver's face) or contacting a receiver.
- If the defence intercepts a pass in their own end zone and subsequently fails to advance the ball out of the end zone, they will scrimmage the ball (1st down) on their own 10 yard line (a modified Touchback).

GENERAL KICKING RULES

- All kicks are to be of a 'punt' style.
- There are two types of kicks:
 - Kick-off: to start a half, or after a touchdown.
 - Punts: a play from scrimmage - ONLY on the 4th down.
- If the ball goes out of bounds through the receiving team's end-zone (side or end), the receiving team shall scrimmage the ball (1st down) at their 10 yard line. There is no point awarded to the kicking team.
- Return kicks by the defence or receiving team are not allowed.
- On all kicks and punts, the players of the kicking team should be even with, or behind the kicker when the ball is kicked.

KICK-OFFS

- A kick-off shall will take place from the kicking team's 20-yard line.
- If the ball goes out of bounds prior to reaching the receiving team's end-zone, whether or not it lands inbounds before going out, the kick-off will be repeated 5 yards back from the prior kick-off location.
- Once a ball has been kicked, the kicking team is not allowed to recover the ball; it has been given away to the defending/receiving team.
- If the kick-off has not been touched by the receiving team, the kicking team must stay 5 yards away from the receiving team until someone touches it.
- Loose Balls on Kick-off:
 - If a player receiving a kick fails to initially control the ball (but has touched it) and it hits the ground, that player may still attempt to control and advance the ball. In this situation the kicking team does not have to give the player a 5-yard buffer (the ball has been touched), but the kicking team cannot recover the ball.
 - If a player fails to initially control the ball, his/her team mates cannot recover the ball.
 - Laterals are allowed on a kick-off return.
 - In the unlikely event that a lateral is picked off after receiving a kick, it is a "live play" and the ball will change possession.
 - Once the player has control of the ball, the regular rules for determining when the play is dead apply.

PUNTING

- A punt is a kick that occurs during a scrimmage play.
- A team can only punt on the 4th down and they must inform the defending team if they plan to do so. (There are NO fake punts).
- Defensive teams cannot block a punt.
- The punting team can 'down' a punt. If the receiving team chooses not to play a ball that is on the ground or if the punting team gets to a ball on the ground first, then the punting team can touch the ball and the receiving team will begin its series of downs from where the ball is touched.
- If the ball goes out of bounds prior to reaching the receiving team's end-zone, regardless of whether it first lands inbounds, the receiving team will scrimmage the ball (1st down) from the yard line where the ball went out of bounds.
- Loose Balls on a Punt:
 - The same rules apply as above for 'Loose Balls on Kick-off', with one exception: there is no 5-yard buffer on punts as there is with kick-offs.

LOOSE BALLS (NON KICKING)

- On a non-kick scrimmage play, if the ball touches the ground, it is immediately dead. The ball is retained by the team who was last in possession of the ball (exception: the offence gambles on 4th down and fails to score a

touchdown on the play – the ball is turned over on downs). The next play will start at the yard line where the player fumbled the ball.

BLOCKING

- This is a non-contact league; all physical blocking is illegal.
- A player is entitled to his/her stationary position or immediate path on the field, and physical contact is to be avoided.
- On a kick off, the offensive players without the ball must not block for the runner - they must either stand still or get behind the runner for a lateral pass.
- On any play, the ball carrier is allowed to use their stationary team mates as blocks, as long as they were ahead of the ball carrier before the ball was advanced, and do not move during the play.

FOULS AND PENALTIES

There are no officials monitoring USC Flag Football games, so it is up to individual players and teams to point out when they feel they have been fouled. Teams are encouraged to discuss these incidents amongst themselves and take whatever action they feel is fair. Most often, the team committing the foul is simply warned about the foul and asked to watch their actions more closely.

- Listing of USC Flag Football fouls:
 - Blocking and physical contact (includes pushing out of bounds) MUST be avoided at all times.
 - Picks: all pick plays (unintentional included) are to be avoided, and should be penalized when identified. Picks are clearly defined in the 'Passing' section of the rules. Note: not all crossing patterns are picks.
 - Offensive players should not cross the line of scrimmage before their quarterback puts the ball into play.
 - A ball carrier cannot guard his/her flag with his/her hands.
 - Defenders cannot screen or touch a receiver while the receiver is attempting to catch the ball (a defender legitimately attempting to intercept the ball may end up screening the intended receiver - this is OK if contact was minor and incidental.)
 - Holding of any kind is illegal.
 - A defender is not allowed to prematurely take the flags off of an offensive player's belt.
 - A defensive player may not slow an opponent by grabbing their clothes or body.
 - Offensive charging is a foul: a ball carrier cannot aggressively run through the outstretched arms of a stationary defender - they should make an attempt to go around the defender and avoid contact.
- In the case of a perceived foul, if the teams cannot agree that a foul occurred, there is only one option:
 - Replay the down from the original line of scrimmage
- In the case of a perceived foul, if the teams do agree that a foul occurred, there are 4 options. The team that was fouled against gets to choose the option that is most beneficial to them:
 - Replay the down from the original line of scrimmage
 - Play the next down from the spot where the foul occurred (e.g. a team intercepts a ball and during the runback an illegal block occurs – in this case, the intercepting team takes over on offence at the point of the foul).
 - Decline the penalty but talk to the other team (e.g. if a player scores a touchdown after being fouled, the scoring play counts. Then talk to the other Captain or the fouling player after the play to help avoid further incidents).
 - Pass Interference: if both the offence and defence agree that the defender committed pass interference, then the offence can choose to either replay the down from the original line of scrimmage or the next play will start from the point of the foul.