

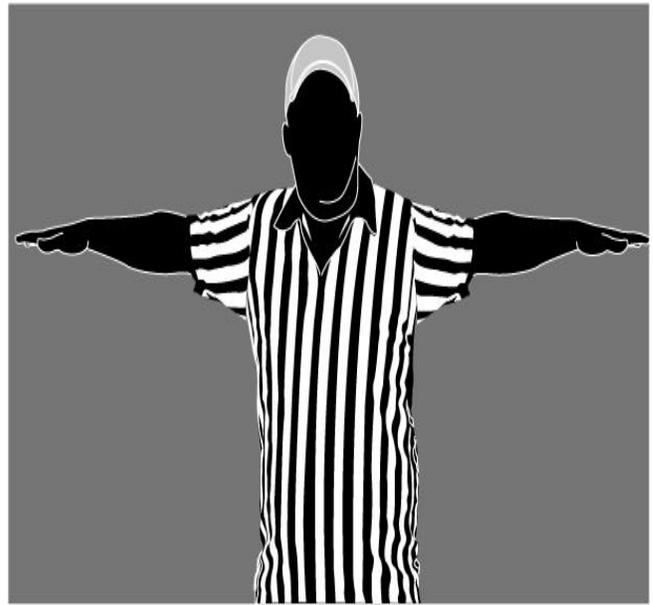
# **FERRIS STATE UNIVERSITY – INTRAMURAL SPORTS**

## **Addressing Unsportsmanlike Behavior and Assessing Unsportsmanlike Conduct (UC) Penalties**

As a result of this training, Supervisors and Officials should be able to demonstrate the ability of identifying and managing unsportsmanlike behavior by:

1. DEFINING unsportsmanlike behavior
2. IDENTIFYING the CHARACTERISTICS of unsportsmanlike behavior
3. RECOGNIZING the modes of occurrence
4. IDENTIFYING the EFFECTS of unsportsmanlike behavior
5. DEMONSTRATING officiating strategies and tools to manage unsportsmanlike behavior.

Sportsmanship is vital to the conduct of every intramural contest. At certain points, the behavior and tactics of an intramural participant may need to be sanctioned by an official. In basketball, the official can give a technical foul, in flag football it's flagged with an unsportsmanlike penalty, and in soccer poor sportsmanship is handled with either a red or yellow card. In order to encourage proper conduct during games, officials, and supervisors shall make decisions on whether to warn, penalize, or eject players or teams for poor sportsmanship. These decisions are final. The Assistant director of Intramurals and Club Sports will rule on further sanctions as a result of unsportsmanlike conduct.



Each sport and its officials have a means and a method for dealing with unacceptable behavior. It is an unfortunate part of the official's job - but one they must perform to ensure good play in each game.

While every situation is different - there are four basic situations that must be considered when giving a UC, regardless of the sport.

1. The player's action that warrants the penalty.
2. How the official assesses the penalty.
3. The player's reaction
4. The remainder of the game



## The Player's Actions

All of our games are governed by the Intramural Code of Conduct. This code clearly lays out what types of behavior and style of play is acceptable and unacceptable. The most common action that requires a UC is a player arguing or dissenting from an official's call. Dissent can be either by word or by action. At every Ferris State intramural event or activity, if a player argues or shows dissent against an official's call, they can be issued an unsportsmanlike penalty (UC). A UC must also be given out if a player's actions endanger an opposing player or their actions can be considered taunting in any form. Dissent or violent actions that are considered over-the-top can result in the player's automatic ejection - instead of just a simple UC.

## The following may be considered as evidence of unsportsmanlike conduct:

- Profanity.
- Unnecessary delay of the game.
- Striking or shoving an opponent.
- Arguing with officials concerning decisions (discussion is allowed as long as it is done in a mature manner by the team captain).
- Any player that verbally questions a call saying, "Where is the call on that stripes?!" can be considered dissent and unsportsmanlike.
- Derogatory and abusive remarks toward an opponent or official.
- Touching an official or any action which shows the intent to physically injure an official.
- Any action which may potentially cause equipment or facility damage.
- Any action which shows disregard for the rules or policies of the intramural program. For example, a player throwing their arms up while undermining an official's call can easily be penalized as unsportsmanlike.
- **Use your judgment when making these calls.**



## Assessing the Penalty

Regardless of what the player getting the UC has said or done, the official cannot be overly emotional in assessing the penalty. Such a display on the part of the referee will only take an already heated situation and make it worse.

Giving a UC should be like calling any other penalty. Blow the whistle, make the call, communicate with the scores table, and get the ball back into play.

Aggressive acts or displays by the calling official will only give the penalized team more reason to argue.

Officials must not be timid in their handling of unsportsmanlike behavior either. A clear message should be sent to all players, "this will not be tolerated". Be confident in this call, just like any other call you make.



## The Player's Reaction



Unsportsmanlike penalties are usually given in the heated moment of a game; after a close or controversial call, following a hard foul or in the midst of a perceived bias. So, you can expect that the UC will not be a welcome call against the probably-already-upset-participant.

If after receiving the penalty the player continues to argue or fails to comply with your instructions - they must be ejected.

The first UC that a player receives should be considered a warning. A statement by the official, "that behavior is not okay - if you keep doing it I will remove you from the game."

## The Remainder of the Game

Ideally, the warning should work - and end any further need to penalize that player or their team. However, as stated above - if the behavior continues or another situation arises, the official will need to continually step in.

It is a rule at all intramural sports that if a team accumulates 4 unsportsmanlike penalties in one game - they will forfeit the match regardless of the score.

Obviously, it is the goal of all the officials and the program that games be decided on the field, without the need to assess UC penalties. However, officials must know when and how to throw a UC when it is warranted for the good of the game and the safety of all participants.

