

Softball Rules and Regulations

Eligibility

Below are the guidelines that participants must follow in order to be eligible to enroll or play in UREC intramurals.

1. Undergraduates/Graduate Students

All undergraduate students enrolled in 7 or more hours (6 or more hours for graduate students) at JMU are eligible for intramural competition.

***Note: Undergraduate students enrolled in 1 to 6 hours (1 to 5 hours for graduate students) will be required to pay a recreation fee in order to participate in the program.**

2. Faculty and Staff

All full-time faculty and staff at JMU are eligible for intramural competition. Spouses of full-time faculty and staff are required to obtain a URAC card to participate in the program.

***Note: All part-time faculty/staff can participate in the program; however, their spouses cannot participate.**

3. Alumni

All alumni are ineligible to participate without a proper membership to UREC.

4. Professional Athletes

Students ineligible for varsity competition due to professional rank are prohibited from competition in the intramural sport(s). Those participants with professional rank will be ineligible for five (5) years from the date professional career ended. (This does not include try-outs and cuts from a professional team).

5. Varsity Letter Person

A person who has received a varsity award at any university (4 year college or junior college) within the last academic year is ineligible to compete in the lettered sport or a related sport. They will be allowed to compete one full year after their final varsity season. However, teams may only carry one former varsity player on their roster

6. Student Athletes

Any person whose name appears on a varsity, junior varsity, or freshman roster will be ineligible in that intramural sport during that academic year. This includes all players who are "red shirt" in any sport or anyone who practices with a team regularly but does not participate in intercollegiate competition.

7. Sport Club Members

Sport club members are defined as individuals who meet any **one** of the following criteria:

- Name appears on sport club team roster during the academic year.
- Signed a participation waiver **and** is actively participating in club functions.
- Actively participating with the club during their season.

***Note: Teams are restricted to *two Sports club members* in their related intramural activity. Sport Club members can only compete in Level 2 and Level 3 activities (Level 1 is prohibited).**

***Note: All Eligibility requirements can be located in the [Intramural Handbook](#).**

Valid JACards are required for participation. “No JACard, NO play”

Assumption of Risk

Individuals are highly encouraged to have a physical examination and obtain adequate health and accident insurance **prior to participation** in UREC activities. Individuals that choose to participate in UREC activities do so at their own risk. James Madison University does not provide insurance and is not responsible for any injury that may occur to individuals participating in any UREC activity. Participation is voluntary. Student Health and Accident Insurance information may be obtained at the University Health Center.

UREC strongly discourages the use of alcohol and/or drugs by participants prior to any recreational activity. The use of alcohol and/or drugs by participants during any recreational activity is prohibited. In addition, **food, beverages, and tobacco products (dip, chew, cigarettes, etc) are not allowed** at any intramural activity site. The following rules apply to all participants of University Recreation sponsored programs:

Smoking, drinking, or using smokeless tobacco products at an intramural site will result in removal from facility site and sound.

Leaving the bench area and/or consuming an alcoholic beverage will result in an immediate ejection from the game.

Games may be forfeited if, **IN THE JUDGMENT OF THE INTRAMURAL SITE MANAGER ON DUTY**, the participant’s unsportsmanlike conduct is due to the use of alcoholic substances either before or during the activity.

Facilities

1. Games will be played on the University Park Turf and the UREC Upper Turf.
2. Distance between bases is 65 feet. The pitching distance is 50 feet.
3. Out of Play/Dead Ball territory – any ball reaching the UREC fence will be considered out of play.
4. **Double 1st Base** – the double base is approved for use at first base (orange or white base place next to first base). When using the double base at first, the following rules:
 - a. A batted ball that hits the white base is fair and a batted ball that hits the orange base is foul.
 - b. The orange base at first is for the runner only. No plays can be made by the fielder on this base.

Game Time and Timing Regulations

1. Regulation Game – All games will be limited to 7 innings or 50 minutes in duration. If a team fails to appear at the scheduled location within ten minutes of the scheduled time, the official will declare the contest a forfeit. A game will be considered regulation after 3 complete innings. The Mercy Rule will come into effect during the following situations:

- a. When a team is ahead 20 runs after the completion of the 3rd inning
- b. When a team is ahead 15 runs after the completion of the 4th inning
- c. When a team is ahead 10 runs after the completion of the 5th or 6th inning

The Team

1. Ten (10) players constitute a team. Eight (8) are required to begin a game and avoid a forfeit. Teams will take one (1) out for not having the full 10 players present after the 8th batter bats, then the batting order will resume at the top with batter #1. If a team is playing with nine (9), they will also need to take one (1) out for not having the full 10 players present, then the batting order will resume at the top with batter #1. *(Essentially, teams will take 1 out at the end of the order if they do not have 10 players)*
2. If eight players are not present at the allotted game time, the opposing team will lose .2 sportsmanship points for every minute they are late, plus loss of game time. After 10 minutes the game will be deemed a forfeit.
3. Extra Player – A team may bat eleven players using the extra player rule. Players arriving late can only be added to the batting order if the team has not gone through the order once.
4. Substitutions/Re-entry – Free substitution provided an individual bats and fields at least one inning. If the team is unable to maintain nine players, the official's judgment will determine if the game is to continue. Players lost due to injury may be replaced with a legal substitute. If no substitute is available, the team takes an automatic out for that slot in the batting order. At no time can a team batting 11, go to 10 and not have an out recorded.

Player Equipment

1. Only UREC bats will be allowed. Any player using a non-UREC bat will be called out.
2. Game balls will be provided by University Recreation. 12" balls will be used in all games.
3. **No metal cleats and jewelry are allowed.**

Rules Section

Pitching Regulations

1. New pitchers are allowed 8 warm-up pitches to begin a game and one warm-up pitch for each inning thereafter.
2. A ball must be delivered from a starting point below the hip, with a perceptible arc of 6 to 12 feet, with one foot in contact with the rubber at all times.

3. Any pitch not meeting the legal delivery requirements shall be called an “illegal pitch” by the umpire. The pitch is still live and will act as a normal pitch if swung at or contacted by the batter.
4. No pitch shall be declared when the pitcher pitches during the following:
 - a. Suspension of play.
 - b. The runner is called out for leaving the base too soon.
 - c. The pitcher pitches before a base runner has retouched his base after a foul ball and the ball is dead.
 - d. When the ball slips from the pitcher’s hand during his windup or during the back-swing.

Batting

1. Out of Order:
 - a. If a batter bats out of order and it is detected while the incorrect batter is at bat, the correct batter assumes the count and all plays made will stand.
 - b. If it is detected while the incorrect batter has completed their turn at bat and before the next pitch, the batter who should have batted is OUT; the ball is dead and all the runners return.
 - c. If it is detected AFTER the next pitch, it is too late and no one can be called out. No runner shall be removed from the base occupied to bat in their proper place
2. Strike Zone – Any pitched ball that crosses the plate and between the batter’s back shoulder and knees in normal batting stance.
3. **Third Strike – First Foul on the third strike is a courtesy foul. Second Foul on third strike is an out.**
4. A Batter-runner is a player who has finished his/her turn at bat but has not yet been put out or reached base safely.
5. Multiple contact – the batter is out when he/she hits a fair ball with the bat a second time in fair territory.
 - a. EXCPETION: If the batter is standing in the batter’s box and contact is made while the bat is in the batter’s hands, a foul ball is ruled even if the ball is hit a second time over fair territory.
NOTE: If the batter drops the bat and the ball rolls against the bat in fair territory, and, in the umpires judgment, there was no intention to interfere with the course of the ball, the batter is not out and the ball is in play.
6. Bunting or chopping the ball is an out.
7. **The infield fly rule is in effect.** A fair fly ball (not line drive) which can be caught by an infielder with ordinary effort when 1st and 2nd or 1st, 2nd, and 3rd are occupied before two are out. The batter is automatically out and the ball is live.
8. The batting team is responsible for retrieving all balls hit out of the playing area (over the fence, foul territory, etc.)

Fair Ball

A ball is said to be fair when it:

1. Settles or is touched on or over fair territory between home and first base or between home and third base.
2. Bounces over or past first or third base, which is in fair territory, regardless of where the ball hits after going over the base.
3. While on or over fair territory, touches the person, attached equipment, or clothing of a player or umpire.
4. Touches first, second, or third base.
5. Falls to the ground or is touched on or over fair territory beyond first, second, or third base.
6. While over fair territory, passes out of the playing field beyond the outfield fence.

Foul Ball

A ball is considered foul when it:

1. Settles or is touched on or over foul territory between home and first base or between home and third base.
2. Bounces or rolls past first or third base on or over foul territory
3. While over foul territory, is touched by a player, attached equipment or clothing of a player or an umpire, or any object foreign to the natural ground.
4. First hits the ground or is first touched over foul territory beyond first or third base. A caught fly ball in foul territory is an out.
5. Touches the batter or the bat in the batter's hand(s) a second time while the batter is within the batter's box.

Base Running

1. Sliding is legal, but you **MUST SLIDE DIRECTLY** to the base. Any base runner who goes out of the base path and interferes with the defense will be ejected. Example: to break up a double play. **SLIDING ON THE TURF IS NOT RECOMMENDED.**
2. Interference – any player who runs over a defensive player in legal position to play a ball will be called out and immediately ejected. The ball becomes dead immediately.
3. Obstruction – the act of:
 - a. A defensive players or team member who hinders or prevents a batter from striking or hitting a pitched ball.
 - b. A fielder, who is not in possession of the ball, in the act of fielding a batter ball, nor about to receive a thrown ball, which impedes the progress of a runner or batter-runner who is legally running bases.
4. Faking a tag will result in immediate ejection.
5. Any overthrow from the infield or outfield which goes out of play will result in two bases awarded from the position or runners at the time of the release. A batted ball which is knocked or carried out of play by the defense will result in bases being awarded from positions at the time of play (intentional – 2, unintentional-1)
6. **Stealing IS NOT ALLOWED.**

CoRecreational Rules

1. Ten (10) players constitute a team. Eight (8) are required to begin a game and avoid a forfeit. At least four individuals of each gender are required to begin a game. Teams may bat 8, 9, 10 or 12.
2. Males and females must alternate in the batting order.
3. **If a male batter is walked with 2 outs ONLY, the following situation will happen: the male that was walked gets second base and the female has the option of hitting or taking first base.**
4. If a team bats eight, there will be **one** out recorded for not having 10 and the next person to bat will return to the top of the batting order.

Definitions

1. **DEAD BALL-** A ball that touches any player or object located out of play, that becomes lodged in an umpire's gear or in an offensive player's clothing, or that the umpire rules dead. A line that marks a dead ball is considered in play.
2. **FOUL TIP-** A batted ball that travels directly from the bat to the catcher's hands, glove, or mitt and not higher than the batter's head, and is legally caught by the catcher. A foul tip is a strike. The batter is out if the foul tip occurs when the batter has two strikes. A foul tip is a dead ball.

3. ILLEGAL PITCH- A pitch that does not meet the stipulations of a fairly delivered pitch.

Sportsmanship

Philosophy

Sportsmanship is individuals or teams doing unto others as they would have others do unto them. Sportsmanship is individuals containing an understanding and appreciation of the rules developed for sport. Players enjoying the recreational experience and encouraging others to participate regardless of skill level will help enhance the integrity of the program. All participants will take responsibility for his/her own actions regardless of the repercussions, which involves not blaming others for mistakes made or making excuses for wrong doings. Sportsmanship is recognizing and acknowledging character and honor among team members and opponents while practicing such characteristics themselves. Participants will respect officials, supervisors, and opponents during, before, and after a contest. Finally, sportsmanship will portray an overall respect and passion for the sport and recreation.

Sportsmanship Mission

UREC and the Intramural Sports program are dedicated to promote and enforce positive sportsmanship among all JMU participants. Through each contest participants must portray fair play, respect for opponents, and intramural staff, as well as, graciousness in winning or losing. In order to encourage proper conduct during games, officials, supervisors, and administrative personnel will make decisions to warn, penalize and/or eject players, coaches, teams, and/or spectators for poor sportsmanship. The decisions made by these individuals are final and will be reviewed by the Coordinator of Intramural Sports. In the instance teams challenge their rating, only the captain will meet with the Coordinator of Intramural Sports to discuss the issue. **All captains are responsible for the conduct of their teams during an intramural contest.** The sportsmanship rating can be affected by actions occurring before or after a contest.

Sportsmanship Criteria and Ratings

Based on this philosophy the following system will be used to evaluate a team's sportsmanship during each contest in which they participate:

Teams will receive a rating each week that will create an average at the end of the season. Teams in **Level I** must have an average of 3.0 at the end of their fourth week to continue play. Teams in **Level II** and **Level III** must have an average of 3.0 to be eligible for playoffs.

Example:

Week 1: 3.0

Week 2: 3.0

Week 3: 2.5

Week 4: 3.0

Total 11.5

Average Conversion: $11.5 / 4 = 2.875$. This team would not be eligible for continued play or playoffs.

Superior: 4.0 “Win with class – lose with dignity”

1. Teams must display absolute respect for opponents, officials, supervisors, and administrative staff.
2. Teams respect all decisions made by the intramural staff.
3. All questions to the sport official must be respectful and reasonable. *Statements are not questions and will not be recognized.*
4. Teams are responsible for their actions and spectators they bring to the event.
5. Teams state positive comments of encouragement towards teammates and opponents.
6. Teams accept a loss and congratulate the opponent on their success.
7. Teams receive absolutely no warnings, ejections, yellow cards, unsportsmanlike penalties or technical fouls.

Excellent: 3.5

1. Teams must display absolute respect for opponents, officials, supervisors, and administrative staff.
2. **Teams will ask questions and make statements in regard to the game.**
3. Teams are responsible for their actions and spectators they bring to the event.
4. Teams state positive comments of encouragement towards teammates and opponents.
5. Teams accept a loss and congratulate the opponent on their success.
6. Teams receive absolutely no warnings, ejections, yellow cards, unsportsmanlike penalties or technical fouls.

**Note: All teams that request to cancel within 24 hours of their next contest will receive a 3.5 rating. The opposing team will also receive a 3.5 rating.*

Good: 3.0

1. Teams must display absolute respect for opponents, officials, supervisors, and administrative staff.
2. **Teams will ask questions and make statements in regard to the game.**
3. Teams are responsible for their actions and spectators they bring to the event.
4. Teams state positive comments of encouragement towards teammates and opponents.
5. Teams accept a loss and congratulate the opponent on their success.
6. **Teams receive and adhere to verbal warnings, but receive no ejections, yellow cards, unsportsmanlike penalties or technical fouls.**

Average: 2.5

1. Teams must display absolute respect for opponents, officials, supervisors, and administrative staff.
2. **Teams will ask questions and make statements in regard to the game.**
3. Teams are responsible for their actions and spectators they bring to the event.
4. Teams state positive comments of encouragement towards teammates and opponents.
5. Teams accept a loss and congratulate the opponent on their success.
6. **Teams receive a technical foul, yellow card, or unsportsmanlike conduct, but receive no ejections.**

Below Average: 2.0

1. Teams must display absolute respect for opponents, officials, supervisors, and administrative staff.
2. **Teams will ask questions and make statements in regard to the game.**
3. Teams are responsible for their actions and spectators they bring to the event.
4. Teams state positive comments of encouragement towards teammates and opponents.
5. Teams accept a loss and congratulate the opponent on their success.
6. **Teams receive two technical fouls, yellow cards, or unsportsmanlike conducts, but receive no ejections.**

**Note: Teams that forfeit through a no show will automatically receive a 2.0.*

Poor Conduct: 1.0

1. Teams must display absolute respect for opponents, officials, supervisors, and administrative staff.
2. **Teams will ask questions and make statements in regard to the game.**
3. Teams are responsible for their actions and spectators they bring to the event.
4. Teams state positive comments of encouragement towards teammates and opponents.
5. Teams accept a loss and congratulate the opponent on their success.
6. **Teams receive an ejection.**

Unacceptable: 0

1. Teams must display absolute respect for opponents, officials, supervisors, and administrative staff.
2. **Teams will ask questions and make statements in regard to the game.**
3. Teams are responsible for their actions and spectators they bring to the event.
4. Teams state positive comments of encouragement towards teammates and opponents.
5. Teams accept a loss and congratulate the opponent on their success.
6. **Teams receive multiple ejections or the game is forfeited by intramural staff.**

Sportsmanship Sanctions

The intramural program contains the right to address all issues that pertain to sportsmanship issues. Players that are ejected from an event will receive an automatic one game suspension and will have to meet with the Assistant Director or Coordinator of Intramural Sports. The captain of the team will have to attend this meeting to discuss the sportsmanship issue and the rating system. The intramural program also reserves the right to contact Judicial Affairs to resolve extreme disciplinary situations. All situations will be handling individually and sanctions may vary.

Blood Borne Pathogen Policies

Any player, who sustains an injury where bleeding or oozing occurs, or where blood has saturated the uniform, must leave or be removed from the contest. The bleeding must be stopped and the area completely covered before the individual is allowed to reenter the game. An Intramural staff member must clear the individual before the participant can resume play. If the uniform has become contaminated with blood, it must be changed before the player reenters the game.