

UW-Whitewater Intramural Sports Sportsmanship & Conduct Policy

This policy, along with other rules, policies and procedures related to Intramural Sports program structure and facilitation can be found in the IM Sports Participant Handbook

Participation Expectations

Individuals, teams and staff are expected to exhibit positive sportsmanship at all times, regardless of any situations that may arise prior to, during and/or after any intramural activity. Any unfavorable behavior exhibited on and/or off-campus cannot and will not be tolerated and is subject to review by Intramural Sports administrative staff, and in some cases, other campus administrators/resources.

Unsporting Conduct Defined

Unsporting conduct includes, but is not limited to:

- Arguments with any staff personnel, opposing players, spectators and teammates
- Disregard for rules, policies, procedures, equipment and facilities, including the UW-Whitewater Student Code of Conduct
- Flagrant physical contact
- Fighting
- Use of poor language (repetitive, socially unacceptable, directed at individuals, etc.)
- Participating under the suspected influence of alcohol or other substance(s)
- Fraudulent use of HawkCard
- Participating while ineligible
- Team forfeit
- Being overly demonstrative in any scenario

Fighting & Physical Conduct

Fighting will result in immediate ejection of an individual/team and the contest in-question will be ended, with results recorded as deemed appropriate by administrative staff. Any persons identified as having participated in a fight will receive an automatic suspension from Intramural Sports for the remaining duration of the current semester, at minimum (additional suspension length pending review). Fighting will also result in an automatic referral to the Dean of Students Office. Suspension from other programs and services offered by The Office of Recreation Sports & Facilities may also be considered, including the revocation of any membership and facility access.

Fighting is defined as, but not limited to any attempt to strike, punch, kick or physically harm by using a fist, hand(s), arm(s), leg(s) or foot/feet regardless of whether contact or any combative/violent contact outside of the scope of the activity in-question is made.

NOTE: Intramural Sports activities often meet what governing bodies and agencies define as “contact sports,” no matter how often or physical the contact may be. Fouls are, by definition, violations of activity rules resulting from physical contact outside the basic scope of activity engagement. Some fouls may be harder, or more flagrant, than others. While the prevention of fouls and overly physical contact is a goal, it is impossible to achieve with a high level of success. This is why contest officials and on-site staff are present to preside over contests. Participants are asked to understand contact will inevitably happen, and in the event flagrant contact occurs, the offended party is expected to trust and respect officials will penalize the offending party accordingly. In the event flagrant contact goes unpenalized, participants are strongly encouraged to contact administrative staff, who will in turn continue to emphasize appropriate staff intervention in an educational manner.

NOTE: Bench decorum policies are expected to be followed in the event a fight or flagrant contact occurs, no exceptions.

Verbal Abuse & Threats

Verbally abusing or threatening an opponent or staff member will result in immediate ejection of an individual/team for the contest in-question. Sportsmanship and conduct penalties will be applied at the discretion of administrative staff, pending situation review. Cases may be referred to the Dean of Students Office based on severity.

Profane Language & Obscene Gestures

The use of profane language and/or obscene gestures directed toward teammates, opponents or staff member will result in immediate ejection of an individual/team for the contest in-question. Sportsmanship and conduct penalties will be applied at the discretion of administrative staff, pending situation review. Cases may be referred to the Dean of Students Office based on severity.

IMLeagues and UW-W Rec Sports App/Online Chats

Interactive chat features are available online via IMLeagues and in the UW-W Rec Sports app. Sportsmanship and conduct policies are expected to be followed on these platforms. If it is found that any team or individual is violating conduct policies via these platforms, the incident will be treated the same as if it happened in-person at an activity.

This section of the policy also applies to an unsporting behavior that may occur in other campus facilities, at other campus events and/or off-campus in any capacity.

Cheating/Manipulating Staff & Rules

Any individual or team that cheats, bribes or manipulates rules/policies/procedures in any manner will be automatically removed from Intramural Sports participation for at least the remainder of an activity's season. Cases may be referred to the Dean of Students Office based on severity.

Team Names

Team names cannot violate sportsmanship and conduct policies. Repeat violations related to team names are subject to receiving referral to the Dean of Students Office.

Use of Drugs & Alcohol

The use of any drugs, alcohol and/or other substances determined to be illegal under Federal or State of Wisconsin laws cannot be present and/or consumed during Intramural Sports events. Intramural Sports staff reserve the right to contact campus police in the event this policy is suspected to be/have been violated. Staff also reserve the right to deny participation to and/or notify campus police when participant appears to be under the influence of any substance at an intramural activity/event.

NOTE: Smoking of any kind (including vaping) is not permitted at any facility occupied by Intramural Sports, even if an activity is being played outdoors.

Activity-Specific Enforcements

Some activities, by nature of their specific rulebooks, have specific enforcements related to how unsporting conduct is to be addressed. Contest officials and intramural staff have the final say in these instances, and unsporting conduct is expected to be documented by on-site supervisors. Intramural Sports will keep track of individual and team conduct history in the event misconduct is documented. Activity-specific conduct enforcements can be referenced in rulebooks, various Intramural Sports documents and on-site with supervisor staff. For questions or concerns related to activity-specific enforcements related to sportsmanship and conduct, please contact imsports@uww.edu.

Disqualifications & Ejections

An individual displaying repeated and/or severe poor sportsmanship is subject to contest ejection. Disqualification may result from an accumulation of too many fouls or penalties, as defined by activity-specific rules.

Any individual ejected for unsporting behavior is required to vacate the playing surface and facility immediately and must meet with administrative staff in order for any reinstatement process to begin. The ejected individual will be considered ineligible for participation until eligibility is reinstated by administrative staff.

It is important to understand the difference between a disqualification and an ejection. For the purpose of Intramural Sports participation, these terms are defined as-follows:

- Disqualification – contest participation must immediately end as a result of accumulating too many common fouls and/or penalties. Subsequent intramural participation is not impacted and participants may stay in a designated team bench area for the remainder of the contest. Bench decorum must be followed
- Ejection – contest participation must immediately end as a result of unsporting behavior, which may include an accumulation of too many unsporting fouls and/or penalties. Subsequent intramural participation is impacted

and the participant is to vacate the facility immediately. Remaining in a designated team area is not permitted and team captains are responsible for ensuring the ejected player leaves in a timely manner

Suspensions

Suspensions may be a result of receiving an ejection or being disqualified from a contest/event. Intramural Sports administrative staff will determine the length of a suspension, although any contest ejection automatically warrants a one-game suspension. Suspensions are to be served across all intramural activities in which the suspended individual currently participates (i.e. individual conduct is not restricted to the activity in-question). Forfeited or canceled contests will not count towards games served during a suspension. Suspensions and their affiliated lengths are subject to appeal. Suspensions may also be rendered in the event a team/individual accumulates too many unsporting penalties/notices in a given timeframe, applied at the discretion of administrative staff.

If a participant is frequently involved in conduct/sportsmanship-related incidents, administrative staff reserves the right to include the Dean of Students Office in disciplinary procedures and decisions.

Reinstatements

Individuals who are ejected or disqualified for violating sportsmanship expectations must schedule a conduct review meeting with Intramural Sports administrative staff. Another Rec Sports representative (not directly affiliated with Intramural Sports) typically sits in on conduct review meetings with the intent to offer an unbiased and neutral perspective and to assist in rendering reinstatement decisions that consistently align with other Rec Sports programs and services.

Reinstatement will be considered either during or immediately following the conduct review meeting. Any pending suspension that may be assessed will not begin until this meeting is held and time/contests missed may not necessarily be retroactively considered.

NOTE AND ADVISEMENT: Everyone makes mistakes, and unsporting behavior tends to be a result of the heat of competition and making an impulse action. Conduct review meetings tend to yield the most favorable results when the individual(s) in-question:

- Show(s) remorse and accepts responsibility for being involved in an unfavorable situation
- Address(es) the situation and any coinciding communication professionally
- Is/are honest and does not fabricate any part of situation occurrences
- Treat(s) and refer(s) to staff members and opponents in a respectful manner (including any event of disagreement or if a situation correction is warranted)
- Can set aside differences and understand perspectives of others involved in the situation and agree to positively advocate for Intramural Sports participation and staff members

Team Sportsmanship Standing

Teams must remain in good standing with the Intramural Sports program as it relates to their general sportsmanship and conduct throughout the course of an activity's season. Individual misconduct also applies to team sportsmanship standing. All sportsmanship and conduct situations are documented by Intramural Sports administrative staff. If, at the discretion of administrative staff, a team does not maintain good sportsmanship and conduct standing, the team in-question can be excluded from playoff consideration (even if other qualification standards are met) or remove from participation in general.

Administrative staff reserves the right to refer to archived sportsmanship and conduct situations when considering a team's standing in the event the team has the same captain and/or same/similar roster compositions from season-to-season. Same/similar roster compositions are defined as rosters with at least 50% returning members, but this definition may be applied differently at the discretion of administrative staff based on affiliated team participation timelines and/or levels of situation severity.

Intramural Sports and the [Dean of Students Office](#) collaboratively follow & enforce UW System Non-Academic Compliance and Disciplinary Procedures, as outlined in [Chapter UWS 17](#). All participants are expected to engage in conduct that is “good for the game” and follows the “spirit and intent” of the activity being played. This includes acting in a mature, ethical and professional manner at all times and respecting the rules staff members are asked to apply as part of their position description.

Appeals

Teams (preferably captains) and individual participants are welcome to appeal any decisions rendered that may be related to sportsmanship and conduct. While an appeal is being reviewed, the eligibility of the individuals involved in the appeal will be considered on a case-by-case basis, based on the severity of the situation and campus personnel who may also be involved in external capacities. Continuing participation in Intramural Sports and general Recreation Sports programs and services may all come in to question and receive consideration during the appeal process.

BENCH DECORUM & SPECTATORS

Any team player that is not actively participating in a contest is to be considered “bench personnel.” All bench personnel are expected to adhere to “bench decorum” policies at all times, regardless of the situation present during a contest/event. More details and information are included in this section of the handbook, however, to put it simply, the best way to comply to bench decorum policies is to simply act in a sporting manner that is “good for game” and remain in your designated team area/bench when not actively participating in a contest permitted by activity-specific rule.

Bench Decorum Defined

Bench decorum is defined as practicing appropriate/suitable treatment and sporting conduct while on the bench or in a designated team area. Decorum expectations also apply to team players participating on/in the playing surface area. Please be advised that given how certain facility spaces are utilized by Intramural Sports, spaces that are designated as “team benches” or “team areas” may have altered dimensions and/or locations and may also include the presence of additional personal items including (but not limited to) as backpacks, jackets and other clothing items.

Teams are expected to follow bench decorum policies regardless of the space available, which may vary from contest to contest. Individuals are also encouraged to use locker room facilities, when available, to secure personal items in an effort to increase the size of available space designated to each team. It is very possible one team may have more designated space available to them, however if that is the case, it is likely because of how teams place personal items. Intramural Sports will ensure each team is afforded equitable designated team spaces.

Intramural Sports takes bench decorum very seriously. Decorum policies play a large role in determining a team and/or individual’s sportsmanship standing with the program. Violating decorum policies and expectations may also be considered violations of the UW-Whitewater Student Code of Conduct and [UW System Chapter 17](#) policies as they relate to Student Non-Academic Compliance.

Spectators & Affiliated Policies

Spectators are very much welcome to attend and can often play a fun/vital role in Intramural Sports operations and its environment. When attending Intramural Sports events, spectators are also expected to follow certain decorum policies. Spectators do not need to be on a team roster and do not need to check in with Intramural Sports staff. Spectators do, however, need to abide by Intramural Sports policies during periods of intramural activity.

Spectators ABSOLUTELY CANNOT:

- Sit or stand within the immediate confines of a team bench or designated area
- Physically enter a contest playing surface during period where a contest is considered “live” by activity-specific rule
- Throw/kick/project any physical object onto a playing surface or at any individual
- Simulate noises or actions related to contest facilitation (blowing whistles, using other noisemakers)
- Taunt or disrespectfully address/treat any participating players or other spectators
- Disrespectfully address any Intramural Sports staff members in any manner, both directly and indirectly
- Bring, consume or distribute any alcohol or prohibited substance(s)

- Play music or make noise that is determined to overpower a contest's environment or violate public music streaming laws
- Disregard any UW-Whitewater facility or Student Code of Conduct policy
- Engage in any other activity determined to be inappropriate and/or unnecessary by any Rec Sports staff member

NOTE: Intramural Sports teams and participants who are not currently involved in active contests and watching other contests elsewhere at the site of competition are to be considered spectators. Individuals meeting these classification standards are expected to adhere to all spectator policies.

Aside from the basic act of attending an intramural event, bringing signs, additional friends/family members outside of UW-Whitewater campus community members and being positive advocates for individuals/teams are all absolutely permitted.

When spectators are clearly identifiable as being affiliated with a specific team or individual, the team captain is responsible for spectator conduct, whether the captain is actively participating in a contest or not. Because a team captain is responsible for spectators clearly affiliated with their team, spectator misconduct is subject to in-game penalties and team sportsmanship standing with the Intramural Sports program.

In some cases, spectators may not be known to a team or may not be clearly affiliated with a team/individual. No matter what the situation may be, when a request to cease certain behaviors/actions is made to a spectator or group spectators, all individuals involved in the request are expected to adhere to the request in a professional manner.

NOTE: Spectators must adhere to facility policies related to persons classified as a minor. Other than minors who have proper, approved participation documents filed with The Office of Recreation Sports & Facilities, persons under the age of 18 are subject to being asked to vacate a premises.

Infractions & Penalties

Any persons found to be in violation of bench or general decorum are subject to immediate, retroactive and/or future penalty (or penalties) as determined appropriate by Intramural Sports administrative staff. When necessary, administrative staff reserves the right to include the UW-Whitewater Dean of Students Office and its staff on situations involving infractions/violations of decorum that are considered especially egregious and beyond the scope of basic practice/enforcement as outlined by activity-specific rulebooks.

Common infractions/violations related to bench and other decorum that may result in penalties and/or referral to campus authorities/resources include, but are not limited to:

- Leaving a designated team area or bench. Some examples may include (but are not limited to):
 - Engaging in on-court behaviors (getting into faces of opponents, officials, interfering with contest action)
 - Leaving the site of competition in an unsporting or unapproved manner as outlined by activity-specific rules
 - Removing a uniform in an unsporting manner
 - Distracting contest staff
 - Questioning scorebooks without following activity-specific procedure to make appropriate inquiries
 - Stepping over boundary lines to interact with/talk at contest officials, opponents and teammates
 - A non-captain coming to the aid of a teammate in an inappropriate manner (see statement at the end of this section)
- Inappropriate language and other actions/behaviors directed to any staff member and opponent(s)
- Using language or references not socially acceptable/tolerated in public spaces given common public sense
- Simulating noises or actions related to contest facilitation by staff (i.e. blowing whistles, other noisemakers)
- Taunting any individual(s) in any manner
- Throwing equipment/other objects or items/treating items disrespectfully

- Engaging with spectators in unnecessary and/or unsporting manner

When other campus resources, such as the Dean of Student Office and Campus Police, are involved in situations where sportsmanship, decorum or conduct violations occur, Intramural Sports will defer to the decisions rendered and/or outcomes determined necessary by those resources, who are determined to be the subject matter experts in misconduct and whose actions/decisions supersede those made by representatives of The Office of Recreation Sports & Facilities.

Statement on Team Camaraderie and Supporting Teammates

It is very common, in athletic settings, for teammates and friends to support one another and “have each other’s backs.” While Intramural Sports administration appreciates the intentions individuals may have to support and advocate for their teammates and friends, all participants MUST understand it is considered a severe violation of decorum for any bench personnel to leave a team bench or designated area for any reason without receiving authorization from an activity official or supervisor.

In the event of any altercations that may take place on the playing surface, bench personnel are expected to remain in their designated team area, trust their on-floor/court teammates and staff to address the situation in a professional, positive, sporting manner, and to refrain from engaging in/instigating additional misconduct with other contest personnel and/or spectators.

Leaving designated areas in these situations, when properly documented, will result in disciplinary action being taken by Intramural Sports and include automatic referrals to the Dean of Students Office.

In the event Intramural Sports staff must conduct an internal review of situations related to unsporting conduct and/or decorum violations, it is very likely a team captain will be contacted and asked to share information or knowledge of the situation. In the event the captain elects to keep information to themselves or to refrain from sharing names of individuals involved in a situation, Intramural Sports reserves the right to impose penalties on the captain. Outcomes and subsequent proceeding actions/situations may vary and are to be considered circumstantial.