Return to Learn Policies for Sport Related Concussions

Jennie Boisvert, Katelyn Christian, Lindsey Spitz

Personal Experience by Jennie Boisvert
"I suffered a severe concussion in high school and had much assistance from my teachers. Once I was feeling better, I did half days which allowed me to catch up on work I missed while my brain was still recovering. I wish there was a better protocol in place for college students with concussions and hope professors are more flexible with these students in the future."

Return-to-Play Policies:
The NCAA states that athletes who are suspected of having a concussion based on experienced symptoms and observed signs must be removed from play and examined by an experienced physician or athletic trainer. If a concussion diagnosis is given, the athlete is not permitted to return to competition or practice for the remainder of that day and further evaluation is required to determine the extent of the injury (7).

Return to Learn Policies?
In a 2015 study, surveys were sent to 327 NCAA universities regarding their policies surrounding concussion management for their student-athletes.

• 96.6% of these schools implemented return-to-play policies (8)
• 63.3% implemented return-to-learn policies (8)
• 3.1% of those universities included academic support in their concussion management protocols (8)

Standardized return-to-learn policies are difficult to enforce because of how each concussed athlete’s situation varies.

Ways to Accommodate
• Lowering the lights in the classroom
• Giving extensions for assignments and exams
• Excusing the student from class if their symptoms begin to increase
• The NCAA recommends a multi-disciplinary team of coaches, athletic trainers, neuropsychologists, instructors, counselors, deans, academic advisors, and peers (7)

References:
5. (FDS) Incidence, Clinical Course, and Predictors of Prolonged Recovery Time Following Sport-Related Concussion in High School and College Athletes. ResearchGate. dx.doi.org/10.1016/S1531-7117(11)700872