



The Biggest Mistake We See In Return To Learn Plans Related to Short-Term Memory Problems

The biggest mistake we see educators, parents and healthcare providers make with finals and end of the semester grades is to give the student with a concussion the “gift” of making-up work over winter/summer break and taking all finals in January or August. This intervention comes from a place of good intentions but it tends to backfire in the case of concussion. We know that the supportive adults are thinking:

*“After you are better from your concussion”,
you can make-up all your work”
“Or after you are better from your concussion,
you can take all your finals”.*

We often call those “incompletes” on a report card and “float” a grade into the new semester. However, incompletes tend to be detrimental for students with a concussion for a number of reasons:

- When all the other students are off having a relaxing winter or summer vacation, the student with a concussion is having to “tax” their brain on academics. This is 1.) not fair, but moreover 2.) this does not usually allow the student with the concussion the “down time” they need for rest and rehabilitation. Winter and summer breaks provide the time students and healthcare providers need to maximize rest and recovery to (potentially and hopefully) get to full resolution of the concussion. A student with a concussion often feels quite stressed by carrying over “incompletes” into school vacation and it backfires on recovery.
- If memory is compromised before the final and/or if exposure to learning was spotty at best due to physical and cognitive unavailability prior to the school vacation, then having the student “teach” him/herself (or inefficiently study) during the break is not usually very effective. In fact, it is usually quite overwhelming for the student and tends to lead to anxiety which may delay recovery.

Most teachers and students need a “reset” over winter/summer breaks, most especially a student with a concussion. It’s better to lock down as many, or ALL grades, however creatively, before the winter or summer break begins!

If you want the concussion to have the best chance to resolve before the start of yet another academic semester, you have to allow the “gift” of time, rest, rehabilitation and recovery during the breaks from school.

View Ending The Semester (Finals and Grades) Acute Concussion and Protracted Concussion

