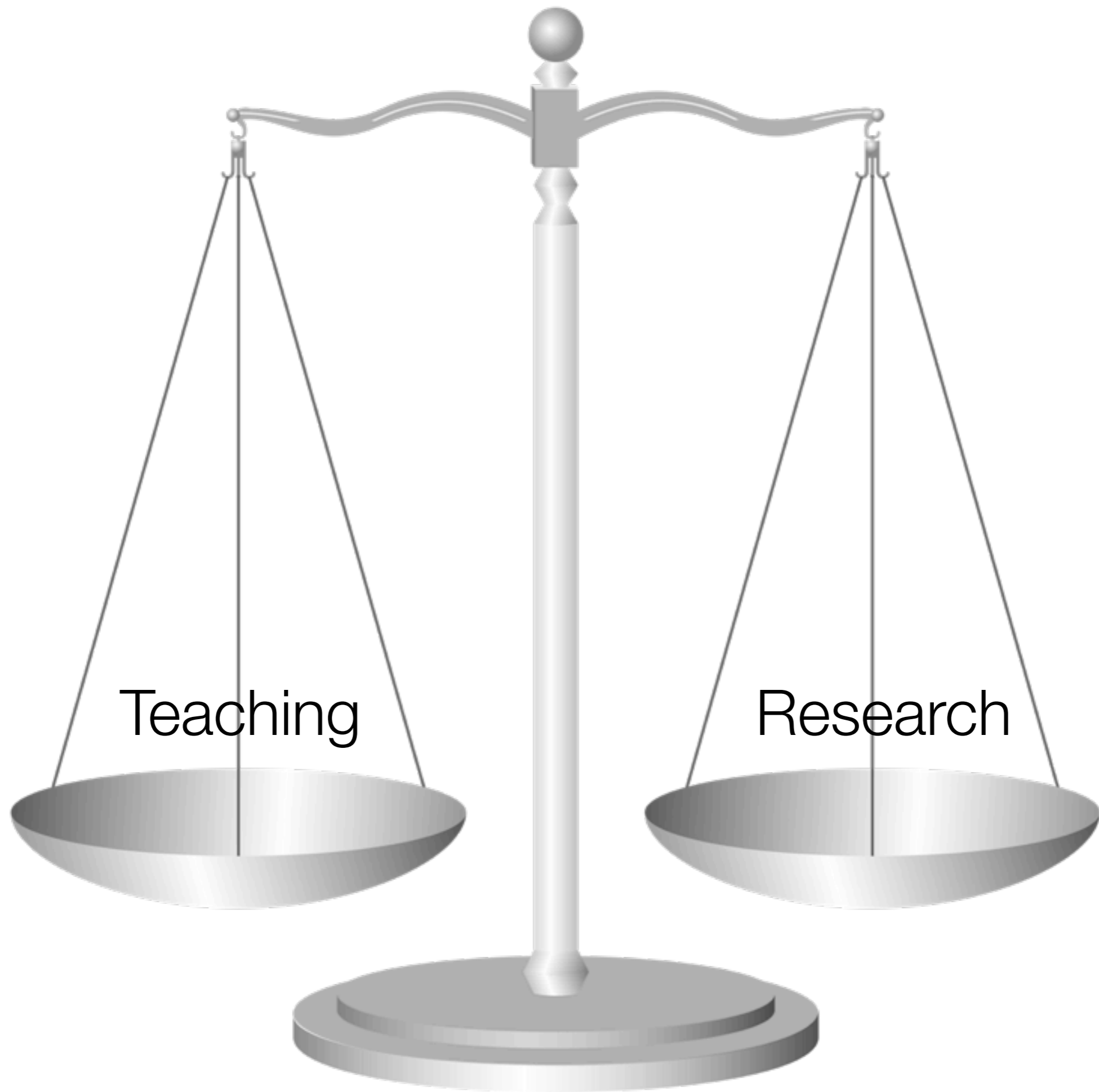


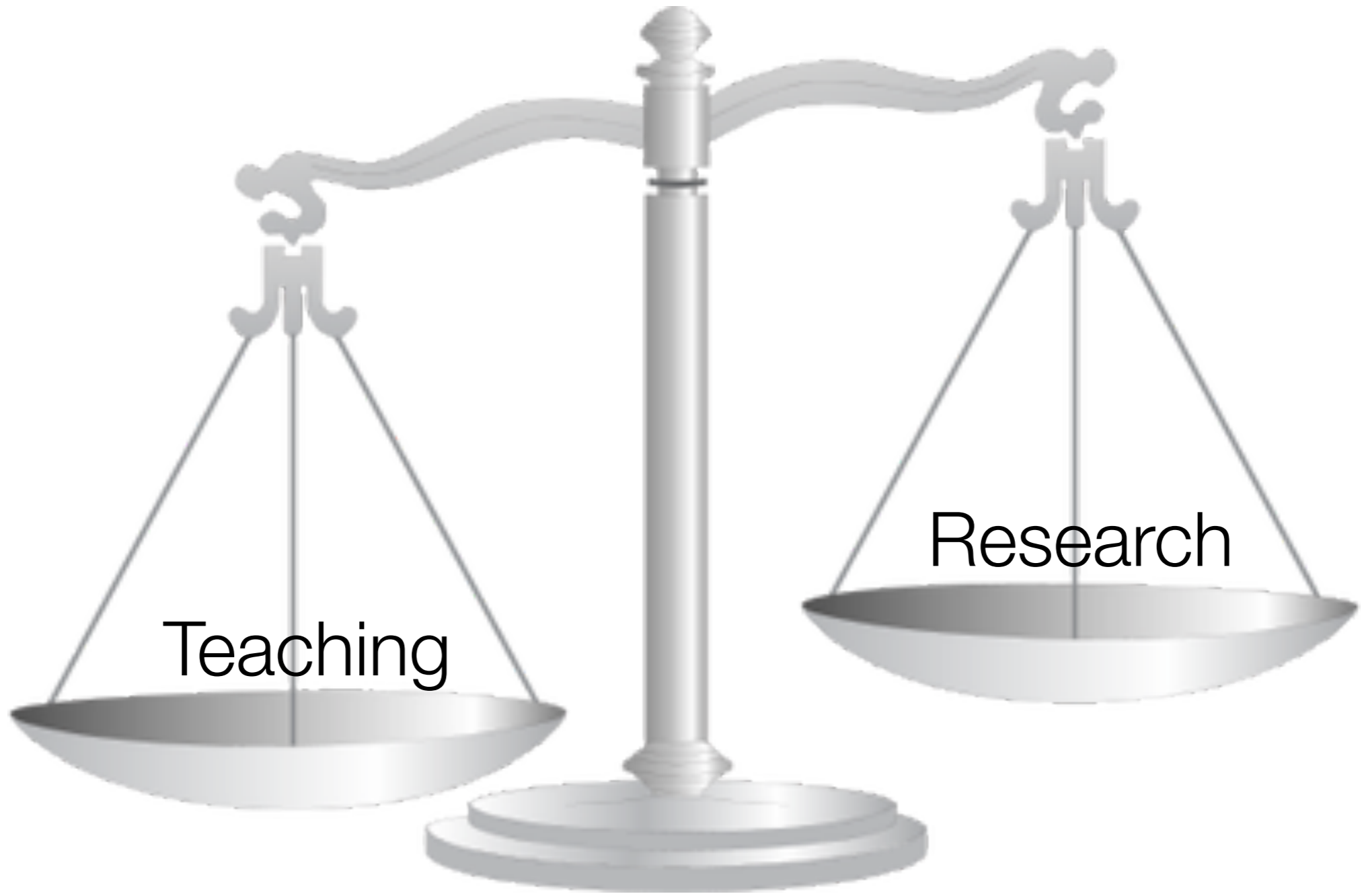
Balancing Teaching and Research

Emily M. Bender

UW Linguistics Autumn 2015 TA Orientation
September 25, 2015



I've been asked to give this talk because of all the TAs who spent so much time on their own research that they didn't put enough time into their TA responsibilities, right (Not!)



Teaching

Research

Keeping Teaching from Taking All of Your Time

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In a nutshell

- Procrastinate teaching
- Track your hours
- Don't give teaching your best hours



Why does teaching tend to take over?

- The pressure of people counting on you
- Lots of small definite tasks
- The desire to appear knowledgeable

→ How to mitigate each of these?

People counting on you

- Set & advertise specific times for responding to student email/GoPost
 - Then stick to it
- Answer questions publicly as much as possible (to reduce repeat questions)
- Make commitments to yourself/your advisor/peers/writing buddies regarding specific goals

Lots of small definite tasks

- Set quarterly big picture goals
- Create todo list of subtasks of the big picture goals
 - Item #1: create todo list
 - Item #2: run todo list past your advisor
- Check in with your todo list at the start of each workday/work week
- Bookmark trick: When you put research projects down, leave yourself a note of what you were most recently doing, to make it easier to pick back up

The desire to appear knowledgeable

- It's not possible to prepare for every conceivable question ahead of time, and in fact is better not to try.
- The magic words are “I don't know”:
 - “I don't know. I'll get back to you on that. (Please post the question on GoPost to remind me.)”
 - “I don't know. What do you think?”
 - “I don't know. Let me turn that question back to the class.”
 - “I don't know. Let's talk about how we could go about finding out.”
- Every “I don't know” is an opportunity to model scholarship.

Instead, there are three magic words you can use to handle any question you don't have the answer for.

The magic is in what comes next, after “I don't know”.

ASE positions are 20 hours/week

- ... including time spent attending lecture, going to meetings, answering student questions over email, holding office hours, etc.
- ... but not necessarily your best 20 hours
 - Learn when the best time is for you for reading for research, writing, coding, etc. and *save* that time for those tasks
- Track your hours, but not down to the minute
- If you find it's taking >20 hours/week, talk with the instructor/your advisor

Time management tips

- Match tasks to time available. I have to leave in 10 minutes, so now I'll...
 - Annotating your todo list with this info & then consulting it when you have little bits of time is a good plan.
 - Don't always fit teaching tasks into these little bits of time
- Grade efficiently:
 - By paper, or by problem? (Might depend on the class)
 - Use (and ask for!) a rubric
 - Write down judgment calls for easy look-up the next time they come up

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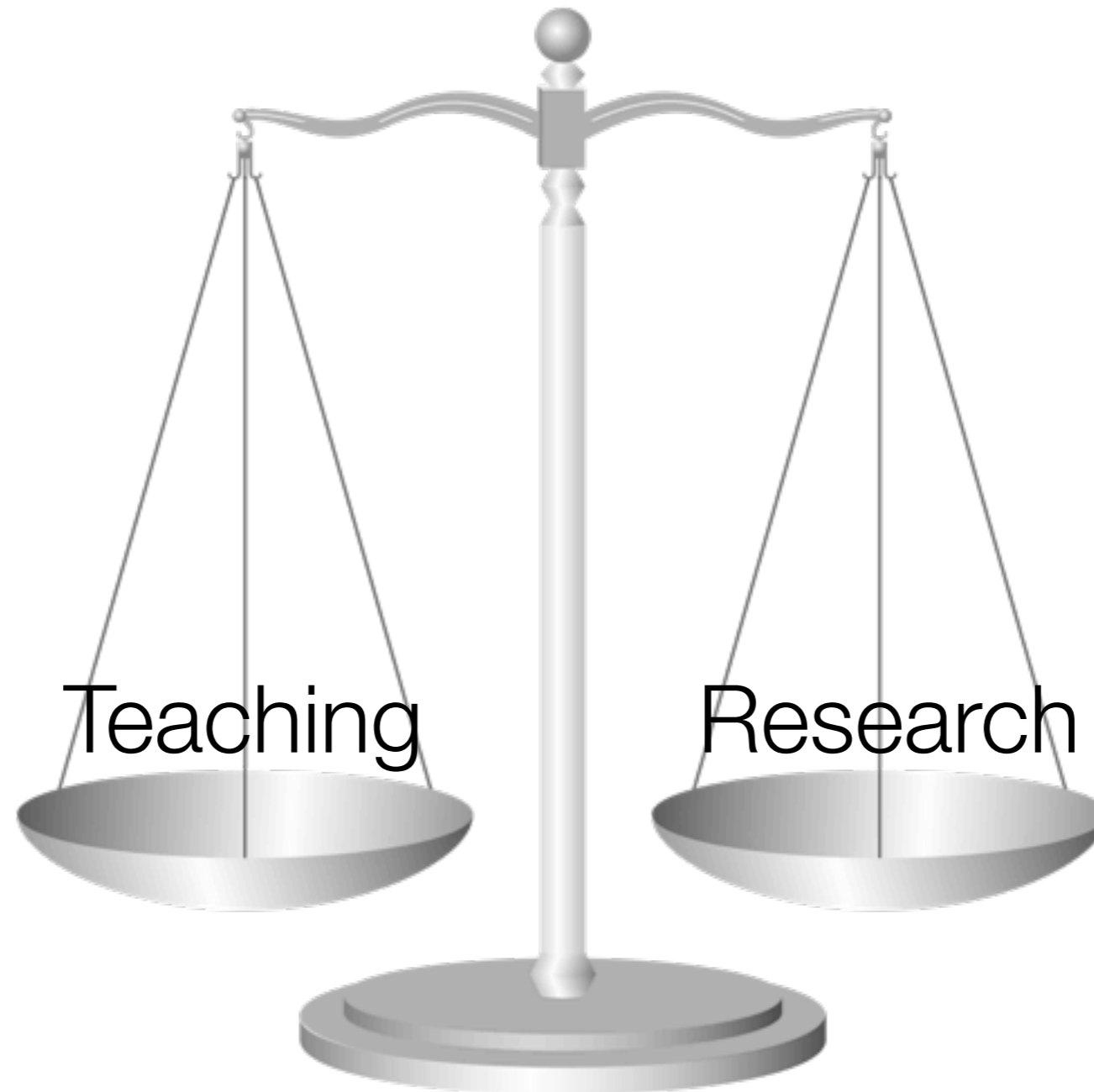
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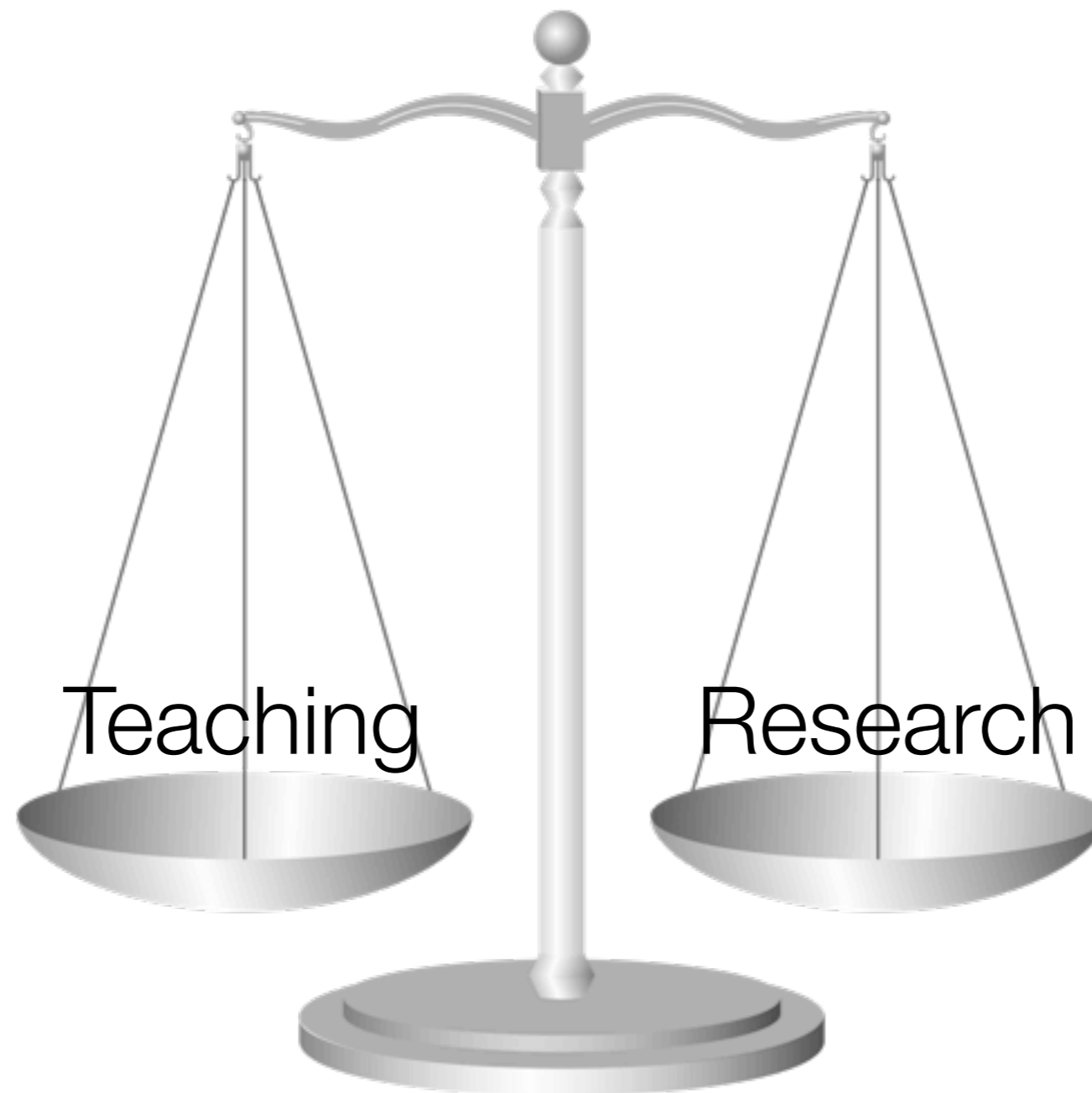
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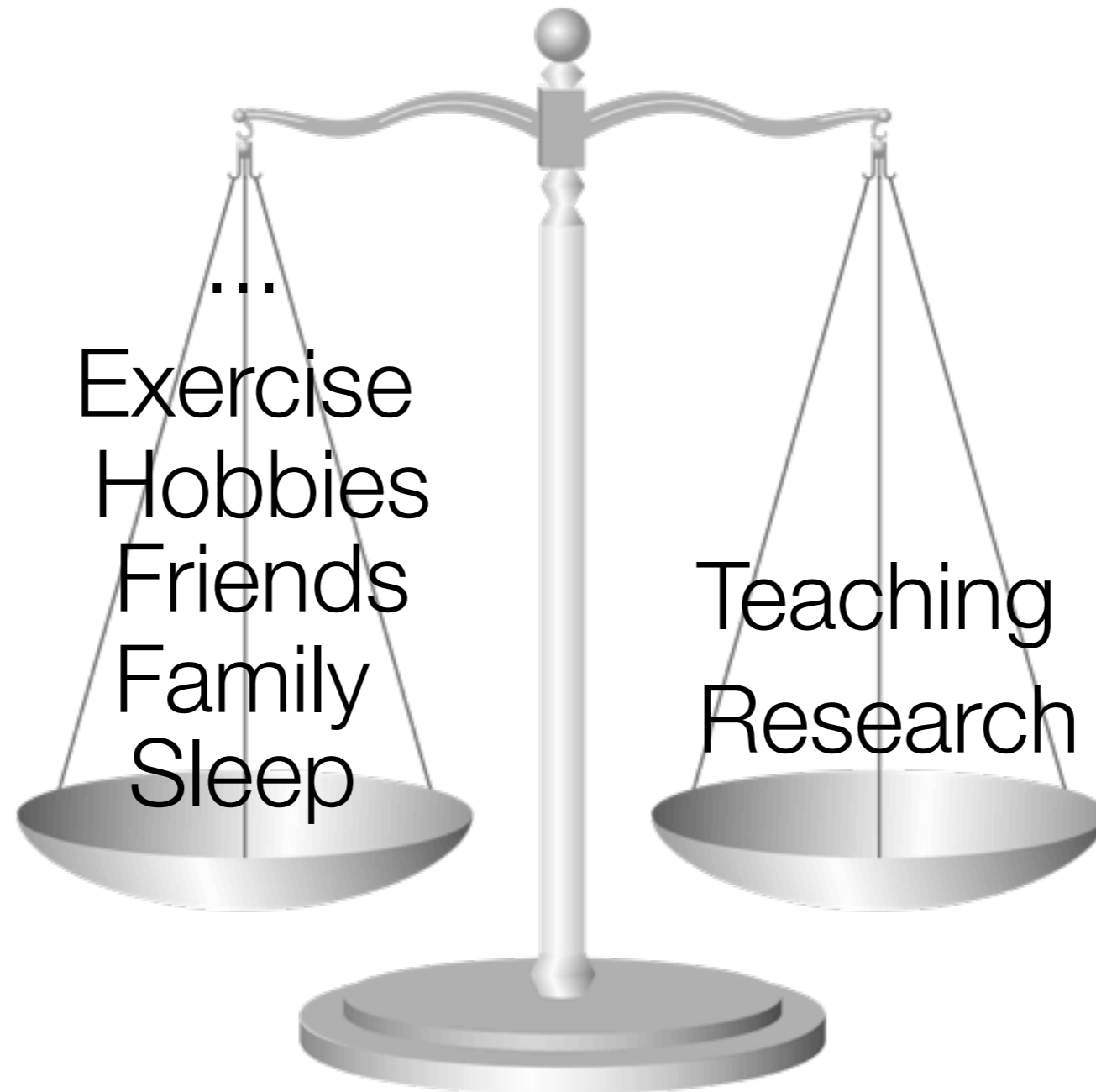
All good right?



What's wrong with this picture?



You are entitled to a life!



Fact check

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But these ones are true

- Daily writing leads to greater productivity than binge-and-bust writing.
- Perfectionist professors publish less (not more) than their colleagues.
- Sleeping eight hours a night leads to greater (not less) productivity.
- Taking the weekends off, getting regular exercise and eating a healthy diet lead to greater productivity than working all the time and sacrificing physical and dietary health.

Source: <https://www.insidehighered.com/advice/2013/08/12/essay-how-be-good-faculty-mentor-junior-professors>

But these ones are true

- Time management is not about working longer and harder to get everything done, it's about realizing there will always be more work than time and prioritizing the truly important over the seemingly urgent.
- Greater time on course prep and grading does not necessarily lead to better learning outcomes.
- Gratitude leads to joy and it occurs when we choose to focus on the vast majority of things that are going well every day (instead of fixating on miniscule errors and what didn't get done).

Source: <https://www.insidehighered.com/advice/2013/08/12/essay-how-be-good-faculty-mentor-junior-professors>

Questions?
