Worksheet: Middle-of-Term Meeting with your Advisor

Wow, halfway done! That went fast. Time to review your research goals with your advisor. You may be feeling uncomfortable about this if you didn’t get as far down your list as you thought you would. But your advisor has been in the same situation. And your willingness to discuss your progress shows you are responsible and determined to do the best job you can. So…

1. Pull out your original list of research goals and the calendar you used to schedule them.

2. If you met your goals, skip down to step 9, otherwise:

3. Why did you fall short? Were you overly optimistic about research that could not have been done in that amount of time? Or did you get distracted by the urgency of other demands of your time?

4. What parts of your research need to be reorganized, rescheduled, or rethought?

5. What parts of your teaching have taken more time than you expected? Choose one solution for each part:
   a. Be less perfectionistic, and stop when the activity/worksheet/quiz is 80% perfect instead of 100%.
   b. Stop the additional student interactions beyond your one office hour and your one daily email response time.
   c. Realize you really DO require that much time to learn the material / create a decent activity / grade those essays.

6. It is possible that during this activity you realize that your TA advisor is requiring more work than your TAship allows. Do your best to meet with this faculty member before you meet with your research advisor so you can adjust your load. If for some reason you cannot resolve the conflict with your TA advisor, speak to your department’s graduate student advisor about how to get support with your problem.

7. Create a new calendar for the remaining half of the term.

8. List your updated research goals

9. Meet with your advisor to discuss what you have learned, and what changes you are going to make, if any.