3MT THREE MINUTE THESIS COMPETITION

An 80,000 word thesis would take 9 hours to present.
Their time limit... 3 minutes!

About 3MT

Three Minute Thesis (3MT) is a research communication competition which challenges masters and PhD students to present a compelling oration on their thesis topic and its significance in just three minutes. 3MT seeks to enhance the profile of graduate students both within university communities and the wider community.

The 3MT Competition is a dynamic cross-disciplinary event. 3MT develops academic, presentation, and research communication skills and supports the development of research students' capacity to effectively explain their research in language appropriate to a non-specialist audience. 3MT is not designed to trivialize or ‘dumb-down’ research, but rather encourage students to consolidate their ideas and crystalize their research discoveries.

Media coverage: Tuscaloosa News | Radio Clip (.wav, 18MB) | Presentation Tips (.mp4, 241MB)

This year's 3MT Competition:

- Fall 2014 | Program Details | Event Flyer | Prizes | Semi-Finals Heat List

Progression

Each Department selects department winner(s).
Departments have the choice to run their own heats or nominate students.

University Wide Semi-Finals.
All 48 department winners compete against each other.

University-Wide Final Competition.
(Top 15 students from the Semi-Final round advance to the Finals.)
Eligibility for Competition

Anyone who is currently registered and enrolled in a masters or PhD program will be eligible to participate in 3MT. Graduates are not eligible.

Rules for Competition

- A single static PowerPoint slide is permitted. No slide transitions, animations or 'movement' of any description are allowed. The slide is to be presented from the beginning of the oration.
- No additional electronic media (e.g. sound and video files) are permitted.
- No additional props (e.g. costumes, musical instruments, laboratory equipment) are permitted.
- Presentations are limited to 3 minutes maximum and competitors exceeding 3 minutes are disqualified.
- Presentations are to be spoken word (e.g. no poems, raps or songs).
- Presentations are to commence from the stage.
- Presentations are considered to have commenced when a presenter starts their presentation through either movement or speech.
- The decision of the adjudicating panel is final.

Judging Criteria

At both the semi-final competition and final competition hosted by the Graduate School each competitor will be judged on the three judging criteria listed below. Each criterion is equally weighted and has an emphasis on audience. Although departments may use any means they desire to select their winners for the all-University competitions, departments are encouraged to use these judging criteria when selecting their department winner(s).

Comprehension

- Did the presentation provide an understanding of the background to the research question being addressed and its significance?
- Did the presentation clearly describe the key results of the research including conclusions and outcomes?
- Did the presentation follow a clear and logical sequence?

Engagement

- Did the oration make the audience want to know more?
- Was the presenter careful not to trivialize or generalize their research?
- Did the presenter convey enthusiasm for their research?
- Did the presenter capture and maintain their audience's attention?

Communication

- Was the thesis topic, key results and research significance and outcomes communicated in language appropriate to a non-specialist audience?
- Did the speaker avoid scientific jargon, explain terminology and provide adequate background information to illustrate points?
- Did the speaker have sufficient stage presence, eye contact and vocal range; maintain a steady pace; and have a confident stance?
- Did the presenter spend adequate time on each element of their presentation - or did they elaborate too long on one aspect or was the presentation rushed?
- Did the PowerPoint slide enhance the presentation - was it clear, legible and concise?
InterviewStream Practice for students

All students can practice their 3MT presentations online using InterviewStream. Follow these directions:

1. Students login to https://ua.interviewstream.com and create an account using their UA email address.
2. Inside InterviewStream, students click “conduct interview.”
3. Select “Three Minute Thesis” on the list of customized interviews.
4. If students have a computer with a built-in webcam, they can select the 3MT interview and do a trial run of their 3Mt presentation as many times as they would like. If students do not have access to a webcam, students are welcome to go to the career center office and use their InterviewStream room.
5. Students can watch their own recordings as well as submit their recordings to have them critiqued online. This is a great tool we recommend all graduate students to try!

3MT at UA - by Year

- Fall 2015 | Program Details | Event Flyer | Prizes | Semi-Finals Heat List
- Fall 2014 | Program Details | Event Flyer | Prizes | Semi-Finals Heat List
- Fall 2013 | Program Details | Event Flyer | Prizes | Semi-Finals Heat List

Additional Information
Watch three minute presentations by past winners and learn more about 3MT at http://threeminutethesis.org.

Questions
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< GRADUATE SCHOOL EVENTS