Three Minute Thesis (3MT) Competitor Workshop: Preparing Your 3MT Presentation

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Overview

- Rules
- Judging Criteria
- Preparing Your Oration
- Slide Development
- How to Prepare: Pre-Production
- How to Prepare: Performance
- Practice Appointments
- Resources
- Important Dates
- Questions
What is the 3MT Competition?

- Three Minute Thesis (3MT™) is a research communication competition developed by The University of Queensland in Australia in 2008.

- The premise of the competition is to develop academic, presentation, and research communication skills. It supports the development of students’ capacities to effectively explain their research in language appropriate to an intelligent but non-specialist audience.

- Graduate students have three minutes to present compelling orations on their thesis or dissertation topics and their significance.

- 3MT™ is not an exercise in “watering down” research but forces students to consolidate their ideas and concisely explain their research discoveries.
A single static PowerPoint slide is permitted.

- No additional electronic media (e.g. sound and video files) are 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 props (e.g. costumes, musical instruments, laboratory equipment) are permitted.

Presentations are limited to a maximum of 3 minutes. 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 or front of room.
- Presentations are considered to have commenced when a presenter starts their presentation through either movement or speech.

The decision of the judging panel is final.
Judging Criteria:

- Comprehension
- Content
- Communication
- Engagement
Judging Criteria: Comprehension & Content

- Did the presentation help the audience understand the research?
- Did the presenter clearly outline the nature and aims of research?
- Did the speaker avoid scientific jargon, explain terminology and provide adequate background information to illustrate points?
- Do you know what is significant about this research?
- Did the presenter spend adequate time on each element of their presentation – or did they elaborate for too long on one aspect or was the presentation rushed?
- Did the presentation follow a logical sequence?
Judging Criteria: Engagement & Communication

- 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?
- Did the speaker have sufficient stage presence, eye contact and vocal range; maintain a steady pace, and have a confident stance?
- Did the PowerPoint slide enhance the presentation – was it clear, legible, and concise?
Judging Tips

- Impact
  - Why should people care?
  - What’s the bigger picture?
  - How does your work, no matter how small the piece is, fit into the entire puzzle?

- If possible, mention:
  - Methods
  - Procedures
  - Data
  - Results
Preparing Your Oration:
A Good Oration

- Doesn't try to say too much
- Is delivered slowly
- Has expression (pauses, rises, falls and stresses)
- Includes a story, metaphor or emotional element
- Gives concrete examples
- Doesn't ‘telegraph’
- Tells you things you didn't expect to hear about the topic
A Not So Good Oration

- Too technical
- Too much on each slide
- No structure to talk
- Reading from notes
- Unclear speech
- Nervous speaker
- Too simple
- Weird body language
- Small font / wacky fonts / yellow font on white background
- Busy backgrounds
# Make your Topic Manageable

**Outline**
- Divide it into sections or stages of thought
- Label each section
- Create a brief outline

**Read**
- Read what you’ve written so far
- Underline the main ideas
- Circle key terms
- Identify the Main Points

**Rough Draft**
- Combine the information from the outline
- Make sure you include all important ideas and key words
- Be Concise. Eliminate needless words, repetitions, jargon or acronyms.
- Compare the rough draft to the original

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Adapted from material developed by the University of Idaho, and Writing Across the Curriculum 4th edition, L. Behrens and L. Rosen, eds., 1991, Harper/Collins, pp. 6-7
How Many Words to Write

As a measurement, words per minute is generally standardized to five characters—so for example “sound” counts as one word, but "accounting" counts as two.

A comfortable level to speak at is 400 words per five minutes, so approximately 80 words per minute.

You should be aiming for approximately **200–250** written words for your Three Minute Thesis summary, depending on how fast you speak.

Example:

“It is important to realize that due to the highly ruminant nature of giraffes there exists an opportunity for deleterious or unpredicted results. Some results may include: a) generation of unreasonable and/or potentially unviable offspring, b) depletion of the natural environment of foliage, and c) desecration/obliteration of migrational pathways.” (49 WORDS)
Example (Improved):

“Highly ruminant giraffes may produce harmful or unexpected results, such as generation of unreasonable or otherwise unviable offspring, depletion of foliage, and desecration or obliteration of migrational pathways.” (28 WORDS)
Example (More Improved):

“Ruminant giraffes may generate unreasonable or otherwise unviable offspring, deplete foliage, and desecrate or obliterate migrational pathways.” (17 WORDS)
Find Your Story

Emotion
In research writing we are told not to resort to emotional arguments, but in the 3MT it is essential.
Convey passion for your work, but careful not to go over the top.

The Story
Including a compelling story can help with the emotional angle.
Slide Development

Judging Criteria:

Did the PowerPoint slide enhance the presentation?

Was the PowerPoint slide clear, legible, and concise?
Design: Don't neglect the design of your presentation. Beautifully designed slides can make or break you!

Content: Keep your written content short! Your audience wants to hear you. However, make sure it's intriguing and relevant.

Story: Let the information you present tell a story that your audience can follow and relate to.

Humor: Humor can go a long way and can really engage an audience. Regardless of the subject of your presentation, throw in a joke or two!

Source: https://www.powtoon.com/blog/youre-no-longer-allowed-to-present/
Bad Perceptual Differences

Example 1: What to Avoid

When two properties must differ use fonts or colors to make the difference obvious. Backgrounds should not interfere.
Too busy. Font is too small to read.
Access to space must be a national priority

Good use of imagery
Duke Biber

**Thesis Title:** The Effect of a Mindful Self-Compassion Intervention on University Physical Activity Motivation and Behavior

**Program:** Kinesiology (Ph.D.)

**College/School:** College of Education and Human Development

**Advisor:** Rebecca Ellis, Ph.D.
TALK TO
yourself
like you would
TO SOMEONE
you love
Brittani Carter

**Thesis Title:** Rates of Smoking and Visitations to Healthcare Facilities Among People Living with HIV in Higher-Risk vs. Lower-Risk Areas in Atlanta, Georgia

**Program:** Masters of Public Health

**College/School:** School of Public Health

**Advisor:** Claire Adams Spears, Ph.D.
The five high-burden zip codes reported 30% of cumulative AIDS cases reported in Fulton County, GA. The five low-burden zip codes reported 3% of AIDS cases.
Robert Lloyd

Thesis Title: “...Next Time”: Gulf Coast Residents’ Relationship To and Preparation For Hurricanes

Program: Anthropology
College/School: College of Arts and Sciences
Advisor: Katherine Kozaitis, Ph.D.
How do Gulf Coast residents prepare for, respond to, and recover from the threat of hurricanes?

- Experience is key: watch the weather; be prepared for impacts and to evacuate

- Wealth of local knowledge must be shared and built on

- Religious faith gives many hope, drives recovery volunteers, and connects relief groups

- Hurricanes are made part of the identity of the places and the people

- Life on the Gulf Coast is worth a risk that can be managed

ROBERT LLOYD   GSU   ANTHROPOLOGY MA
Michelle P. D’Amico

**Thesis Title:** Examining Associations between Availability of Paid Sick Leave and Preventive Health Behaviors in a National Sample of Older Adults

**Institution:** Georgia State University, School of Public Health

**Program:** Master of Public Health

**Advisor:** Dr. Matthew Hayat
Paid Sick Leave

Preventive Health Behaviors

Older workers

Cholesterol test

Flu vaccination

Dental visit
Ramesh B. Manyam

**Thesis Title:** Deep Learning Model for Predicting Readmissions Following Cardiac Surgery

**Institution:** Georgia State University, College of Arts and Sciences

**Program:** Computer Science

**Advisor:** Dr. Yanqing Zhang

2nd Place Doctoral Winner
Problem

Readmissions within 30 days after discharge

Solution

Predictive Analytics Model

✓ Readmission Rates
✓ Prediction Accuracy
✓ Discharge Decision

Conclusion
Beena Meena

Thesis Title: Role of Supermassive Black Holes Winds in Galaxy Evolution

Program: Physics & Astronomy (Ph.D.)
College: College of Arts and Sciences
Advisor: Dr. D. Michael Crenshaw
Active Galaxy

Hubble’s Deep Field Image

Center of Active Galaxy

Supermassive Black Hole Winds

Credits: Event Horizon Telescope Collaboration

Credits: Hubble Space Telescope/ Judy Schmidt
Vignesh Varadarajan

Thesis Title: Intelligent Vehicular Perception of Non-Line-of-Sight Environment using Visible Light Communication with Stereo Cameras

Program: Computer Science (M.S.)
College: College of Arts and Sciences
Advisor: Dr. Ashwin Ashok
Intelligent Perception for ‘Non Line of sight’ Vehicle to Vehicle Signalling

There is a collision ahead

Quickly get to Safety!!
PowerPoint Tips

**DO**

- Relevant Information
- Quality Imagery that compliments your information
- Use backgrounds that match your theme and are not the same color as the text
- Use fonts that are uniform in size and easy to read

**Avoid**

- Overcrowding
- Backgrounds that are too busy or distract from your message
- Distracting fonts
Think about assembling a pit crew—a group of friends who will give you honest and critical feedback ("great opening line, but the purple floral shirt is not working") as you progress through the competition.
# How to Prepare: Pre-Production
*(Clews, n.d.)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Venue:</th>
<th>WebEx - <a href="https://technology.gsu.edu/technology-services/it-services/collaboration-tools/webex/">https://technology.gsu.edu/technology-services/it-services/collaboration-tools/webex/</a></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Technology:</td>
<td>Test your technology.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Audience:</td>
<td>Knowing who is in the audience is part of feeling totally comfortable with the situation when you make your presentation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appearance:</td>
<td>Your appearance can convey positive or negative messages about you and your sense of professionalism.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sound:</td>
<td>Pronounce your words clearly, talk slower than you would in normal conversation, use appropriate pauses, use inflection.</td>
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Important Dates

Preliminary Round
Monday, March 8th
Live WebEx

Order of Proceedings
1:00 – 1:10
Welcome, Introduction of Judges, Review Rules

1:10 - 2:30
Group 1: 3MT Presentations

2:35 – 3:00 Break

3:00 - 4:35pm
Group 2: 3MT Presentations

*Finalist announced via email later that evening

Prelim Slide due by March 3rd
Send to dneptune@gsu.edu

Sign-up:
https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1EmUYeGhahmeedOl2yZH6Fs3pEQlxn-dKPICIP-VxMdQ/edit?usp=sharing
Important Dates

**Final Round**
**Monday, March 29th**
Time: 4 pm (EST)
Virtual

Judging and People’s Choice Voting opens March 25th, with winners announced on March 29th

**Format:** Live viewing of finalists pre-recorded presentations and awards ceremony.

**Moderated by:** Dean Lisa Armistead, The Graduate School

Prizes awarded separately to Master’s & Doctoral Participants

- Winner: $500
- Runner-Up: $250
- Third Place: $150
- People’s Choice: $100

Peoples’ choice is determined by audience
Virtual Coaching Appointments

Available: February 15-26
Online Sign-up:
https://outlook.office365.com/owa/calendar/GSUGraduateSchool3MTCoaching@mygsu.onmicrosoft.com/bookings/

- Practice your oral presentation
- Talk through your presentation
- Get Slide Advice
Description: Whether you’re presenting a research paper at a conference or defending your research at your thesis/dissertation defense, drawing on basic visual communication principles will improve the delivery of your next research presentation. This workshop will help you plot your escape from the PowerPoint wasteland and develop engaging presentations with functional design, good flow, and meaningful graphics.

Facilitator: Myra Oviatt, Director of Marketing and Communications for Undergraduate and Graduate Admissions, Georgia State University.
Resources

- **https://readability-score.com/text/**  
  A readability score is a computer-calculated index which can tell you roughly what level of education someone will need to be able to read a piece of text easily.

**PREPARATION: HOW-TO VIDEOS**

- 3MT: The three most common mistakes  
  [http://youtu.be/nr9yRkqYNQs](http://youtu.be/nr9yRkqYNQs)
- 3MT: Three tips to help you prepare a winning presentation  
- Three Minute Theatre: research pitch meets dramatic monologue  
- Three Minute Theatre pitch in the style of Three Minute Thesis  
  [http://vimeo.com/121091057](http://vimeo.com/121091057)
Resources: GSU 3MT Videos

https://graduate.gsu.edu/professional-development/3mtatgsu/
Resources: 3MT Winner Videos

- 2016 University of Waterloo 3MT first prize winner: Gah-Jone Won

- 2016 University of Minnesota 3MT Competition - First Prize Winner
  Michelle Brown [https://youtu.be/Elt_0P8_iZE](https://youtu.be/Elt_0P8_iZE)

- Ubong Peters Dalhousie 3MT 2016 Winner
  [https://youtu.be/naiPOSBzrIY](https://youtu.be/naiPOSBzrIY)

- Three Minute Thesis (3MT) 2013 QUT winner - Megan Pozzi
  [https://youtu.be/0K9iYUBCG_o](https://youtu.be/0K9iYUBCG_o)
Questions:
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