3MT Competition 2019

Background

Three Minute Thesis (3MT®) is a research communication competition originally developed by The University of Queensland in 2008, and now has been widely adopted at universities around the world. The exercise challenges masters and doctoral students to present a compelling talk on their Thesis/Dissertation topic and its significance. Many theses and dissertations can be over 80,000 words and take hours to present, but students in this competition have just three minutes and one slide to convey their often highly-technical research to a lay audience. Judging criteria is focused on two core competencies:

- **Comprehension & Content**: did the presentation help the audience understand the research?
- **Engagement**: did the oration make the audience want to know more?

Eligibility of Participants

All participants who are preparing a master's thesis, doctoral dissertation, or who play a major role in research-based projects (including case studies) are eligible to apply and be selected to participate in the 3MT presentations. The final selection of the 3MT participants in each college will be determined by that college in a manner suitable for the faculty time and resources.

Rules

- A single static image or slide is permitted (no slide transitions, animations or 'movement' of any description, 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 movement or speech.
- The decision of the adjudicating panel is final.

Judging Criteria

The following are the criteria to be used by judges to evaluate the 3MT presentations:

Comprehension & Content

- 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?
- 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 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?

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?
- 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?

Competition

In an effort to make the competition as equal as possible among all of the colleges and interdisciplinary programs, each will be assigned a maximum number of presenters that can participate in the campus wide semi-final competitions. With the possibility that any college may not identify the maximum number of participants, we should fall within the range of 36-48 semi-finalists.

The following are the maximum numbers assigned to each college or interdisciplinary program:

College/Program	Maximum Participants
College of Agricultural Sciences and Natural Resources	2
College of Architecture and Design	2
College of Arts and Sciences	10
Haslam College of Business	4
College of Communication and Information	2
College of Education, Health and Human Sciences	6
Tickle College of Engineering and Bredesen Center	10
College of Law	3
College of Nursing	2
College of Social Work	4
Veterinary Medicine/Comparative and Experimental Medicine	3

The determination of these college/program representatives is at the discretion of the individual colleges or programs. The college or program may choose to hold their own internal competitions, solicit faculty nominations, or engage in any other decision-making process.

Semi-Finals

The representatives from each college or program will compete in the semi-final competition, which will occur in the weeks preceding Graduate and Professional Student Appreciation Week. Assuming that all colleges or programs provide the maximum number of participants, there will be four semi-final competitions, with twelve participants in each. Each semi-final will choose 3 winners who will compete in a final competition. This will provide a total of 12 finalists. The finalists will compete during Graduate and Professional Student Appreciation Week. Coordination of each semi-final competition will be the responsibility of groups of colleges/programs as outlined below:

Semi-Final 1

- College of Arts and Sciences
- College of Social Work

Semi-Final 2

- CASNR
- CEHHS
- College of Law

Semi-Final 3

- College of Veterinary Medicine
- Tickle College of Engineering & Bredesen
- College of Nursing

Semi-Final 4

- College of Communication and Information
- College of Architecture and Design
- Haslam College of Business

Each group will be responsible for the following tasks:

- Coordinating judges for the semi-final competition. Drawing from judges who have already participated in internal competitions is valid and encouraged, but not required.
- Finding and securing a venue for the competition
- Ensuring that proper technology is available for the competition. This includes a projector, screen, laptop/computer, and microphone. If the group would like to video-record the competition, video technology will be required, as well. Such video-recordings would be beneficial for promotions on college, program, and Graduate School websites.

The Graduate School will be available to assist in these tasks, as necessary.

Final Competition

The winners of the semi-final competitions will compete in the final competition, which will take place during Graduate and Professional Student Appreciation Week. The Graduate School will secure a venue and ensure proper technology will be available. The Graduate School will also coordinate judges for the final competition. Participation of external reviewers for the final competition is encouraged, and suggestions are welcome.

All individuals who compete in the 3MT final will receive a monetary award. Prizes will also be given for those recognized by the judges as the 1st, 2nd and 3rd place winners. There is NO expectation for colleges to contribute to these awards.