Three Minute Thesis (3MT)

The Three Minute Thesis* (3MT) competition celebrates the exciting research conducted by graduate students around the world. Developed by The University of Queensland (UQ), 3MT cultivates students’ academic, presentation, and research communication skills. The competition supports their capacity to explain their research effectively in three minutes and in a language appropriate for a non-specialist audience. Participants have three minutes to present a compelling oration on their dissertation or thesis and its significance. 3MT is not an exercise in trivializing or “dumbing-down” research; it challenges students to consolidate their ideas and research discoveries and present them concisely to a non-specialist audience.

UTEP’s 2019 3MT Exhibition will include on-campus preliminary competitions followed by a public competition at the El Paso Museum of History:

- **Overview Webinar** (optional) — Monday, February 4, 2019, 10 – 11:00 a.m.
- **Preliminary Competitions**
  - **STEM** — Wednesday, February 27, 2019, 5 – 6:30 p.m.
  - **Humanities & Social Sciences** — Thursday, February 28, 2019, 5 – 6:30 p.m.
- **Practice Session** (optional) — Wednesday, March 14, 2019, 3:30 – 5 p.m.
- **Final Competition** — Thursday, March 28, 2019, 6 – 7:30 p.m.

Eligibility:

- UTEP 3MT is open to post-candidacy PhD & EdD students and post-proposal MA/MS students completing a thesis.
- The UTEP 3MT committee may approve the participation of other advanced students completing major research projects at the request of the faculty advisor.
- Participants will have successfully defended the thesis proposal or attained candidacy by March 27, 2019. In the event a student defends or reaches candidacy after prelims, their invitation to the final exhibition is contingent on their successful defense.

To participate:

Eligible students must first participate in a preliminary competition in order to receive an invitation to the public exhibition. The 3MT application portal will be available at: [https://utep3mt.questionpro.com](https://utep3mt.questionpro.com).

- **Click here** to see winning examples of the 3MT.
- **Click here** to see the 3MT competitor guide.

Prizes:

- Winner—$500
- Runner-up—$250
- People’s Choice—$250

*While “thesis” generally refers to master’s-level research projects in the U.S., the term includes doctoral dissertations in much of the world.

**For the purposes of these preliminary competitions, “STEM” will include students in the natural sciences and engineering. “Humanities & Social Sciences” will include applied health sciences, education, business, and similar fields.
Rules:
- A single static PowerPoint 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:
1. 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?
   - Were the thesis topic, key results, 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?

2. 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?

3. People's choice:
   An important aspect of the competition is the People’s Choice prize. Following all presentations, the audience votes on who they thought gave the most convincing 3MT presentation (based on their understanding of the criteria outlined above). A finalist can be the winner or runner-up and still receive the People’s Choice award.

3MT Official Status:
The University of Queensland’s global 3MT program recognizes UTEP’s 3MT competition. That said, UTEP does not currently feed a regional competition, and some participants would not qualify to advance due to the University’s more inclusive participant rules.

Questions about 3MT may be directed to:
Aaron Waggoner, Ph.D.
Assistant Director for Professional Development & Support
jawaggoner@utep.edu
(915) 747-5777