



**3MT**<sup>®</sup> **THREE  
MINUTE  
THESIS**  
FOUNDED BY THE UNIVERSITY OF QUEENSLAND



THE UNIVERSITY *of*  
**NEW ORLEANS**

# THREE-MINUTE THESIS

## Info Session

The Three Minute Thesis (3MT<sup>®</sup>) is an academic competition developed by The University of Queensland (UQ), Australia for research students.

# What is 3MT?

An 80,000-word Ph.D. thesis would take 9 hours to present.

Your time limit... 3 minutes.

Participating in a 3MT competition helps to cultivate academic, presentation, and research communication skills. The goal of a 3MT is to effectively explain your research in three minutes, in a language appropriate to a non-specialist audience.

# Why 3MT?

- Exercise your presentation skills and public speaking
- Practice talking about your research to a non-specialists audience
- Gain perspective about how your research fits into the larger picture
- Showcase your work to prospective employers
- Network with students, faculty, staff, and community
- Receive recognition and prizes!



# Who is 3MT?

## ELIGIBILITY

Active graduate students in good standing who are enrolled in a degree-seeking program are eligible to compete. Contestants must be currently enrolled in credit-bearing coursework at the time of the competition.

# When & Where is 3MT?

Application Deadline	28 October
Decision Notifications	4 November
Materials Due	11 November
Competition: Round 1	18 November 4:30pm
Competition: Finals	20 November 4:30pm
Awards Ceremony	21 November 1:30pm

# ROUND 1

**Monday, 18 November @4:30pm, Library 4<sup>th</sup> Floor**

- All approved applicants compete for finals:
  - Two rooms, random placement
  - Top two scorers from each room selected
  - One wildcard chosen from the highest overall score

# FINAL ROUND

**Wednesday, 20 November @4:30pm, Library 4<sup>th</sup> Floor**

- Top five scorers from Round 1 compete together
  - One room, random order
  - Overall, 2<sup>nd</sup>, and 3<sup>rd</sup> place winners

**Winners announced at the Innovate UNO Awards Ceremony  
Thursday, 21 November**

# RULES

- ✓ Presentations are limited to 3 minutes
- ✓ A single static PowerPoint slide is permitted
- ✓ No additional electronic media (e.g. sound and video files)
- ✓ No additional props (e.g. costumes, musical instruments, laboratory equipment)
- ✓ Presentations are to be spoken word (e.g. no poems, raps or songs)



# JUDGING CRITERIA

## COMPREHENSION & CONTENT

- Presentation provided clear motivation, background, and significance to the research question
- Presentation clearly described the research strategy/design and the results/findings of the research
- Presentation clearly described the conclusions, outcomes, and impact of the research

# JUDGING CRITERIA

## ENGAGEMENT & COMMUNICATION

- The oration was delivered clearly, and the language was appropriate for a non-specialist audience
- The PowerPoint slide was well-defined and enhanced the presentation
- The presenter conveyed enthusiasm for their research and captured and maintained the audience's attention

# DRAFTING

# DRAFT

## DETERMINE YOUR PURPOSE

Explain? Persuade? Entertain? Whatever the purpose, you need to make the audience CARE and to UNDERSTAND what you are saying.

Know what you want your audience to take away from your presentation. Leave them with:

- an understanding of what you're doing
- why it is important
- what you hope to achieve

# DRAFT

## WRITE FOR YOUR AUDIENCE

- What do people **IN** your discipline know that people **OUTSIDE** your discipline don't?
  - Terminology
  - Context (background, why the problem matters, how it has been addressed in the past, etc.)
- Imagine you are explaining your research to a close friend or peer in another discipline
- Write so your audience will **CARE** about your work

# DRAFT

## TELL A STORY

- Consider presenting your 3MT as a narrative with a beginning, middle, and end

### WINNER'S TIPS:

- Focus on the BIG picture of your research
- Ensure that you are using language that the general public can understand
- Be excited about your research! You want people to get as excited about what you're doing as you are.

# DRAFT

## MAKE YOUR RESEARCH RELATABLE, FUNNY, AND/OR UNEXPECTED

A medium-sized movie popcorn contains 37 grams of saturated fat: twice the recommended daily amount of saturated fat.

**VS**

A medium-sized ‘butter’ popcorn at a typical neighborhood movie theater contains more artery-clogging fat than a bacon-and-eggs breakfast, a Big Mac and fries for lunch, and a steak dinner with all the trimmings—combined!

# DRAFT

## PRESENT YOUR RESEARCH AS SIMPLY AS POSSIBLE

Our recent work demonstrates that ALD films are a promising technique to prevent damage from the corrosion process, and subsequent polishing, for silver cultural heritage objects. Our previous results find that 20 nm Al<sub>2</sub>O<sub>3</sub> ALD films protect silver from tarnishing nearly 15 times longer than microns-thick nitrocellulose films: this amounts to a potential ambient effective film lifetime of 150 years.

**VS**

I found that the ceramic ALD films lasted about 15 times longer than the plastic coatings.



# DRAFT

## REVISE! REVISE! REVISE!

- Proof your 3MT presentation by reading it aloud to yourself and to an audience of friends and family
- Ask for feedback
- Ask your audience repeat the highlights of your research back to you—is it what you hoped they would glean?
- Time yourself

# CREATE THE SLIDE

# SLIDE

## REMEMBER THE RULES

- ✓ One single static PowerPoint slide is permitted
- ✓ No slide transitions, animations or 'movement' of any description are permitted
- ✓ Your slide is to be presented from the beginning of your oration
- ✓ No additional electronic media (e.g. sound and video files) are permitted

# SLIDE

## LESS IS MORE

Text boxes and complicated graphics can distract your audience – you don't want them to read your slide instead of listening to your 3MT.

- Persuade with an image: what do you need to explain that your words can't fully convey?
- Illustrate a process
- Offer visual data or graphic representation of your results
- Go for shock value

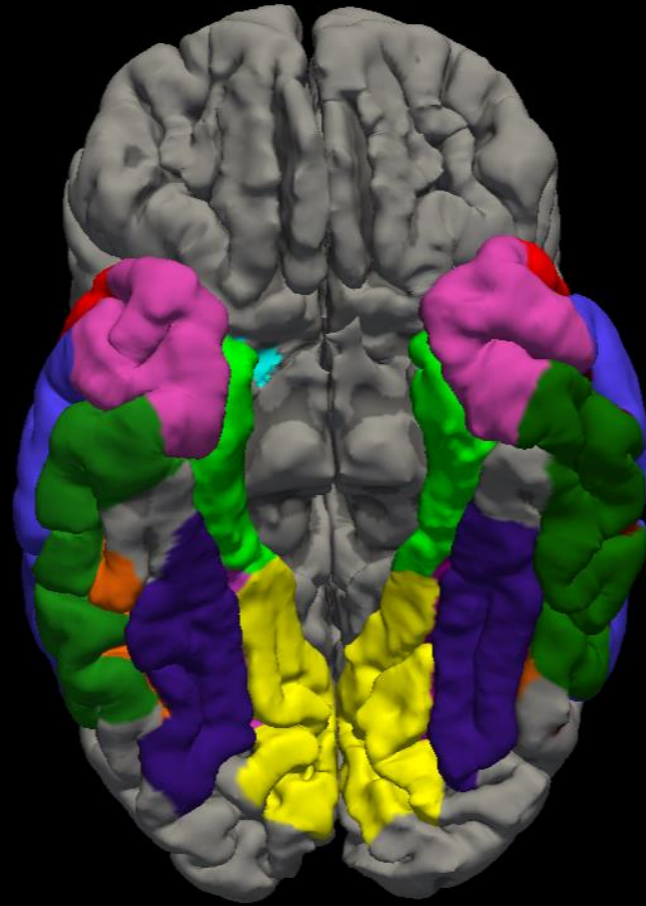
# SLIDE

## LESS IS MORE

Do not rely on your slide to convey your message—it should complement your speech.

### WINNER'S TIP:

- Utilize a picture that appeals to emotion, excitement, and/or provides a good visual to help in your explanation of your work.



***Auditory Cortical  
Differences  
Associated with  
22q11.2 Deletion  
Syndrome***

Amanda Rowan

Psychology  
Department

2023





# DOPELORACE

SCIENCE FICTION / DRAMA / THRILLER



# PRESENTATION



# PRESENTATION

## PRACTICE, PRACTICE, PRACTICE

- Feeling nervous is natural and can be beneficial
- Practice builds confidence and clarity
- Time yourself each time you practice

# PRESENTATION

## VOCALS

- Speak clearly and use variety in your voice (fast/slow, loud/ soft)
- Do not rush – find your rhythm
- Practice pausing at key points to give the audience time to think—build this into your speech timing
- TIP: talk SLOWER than you think you should—your nerves will naturally cause you to speak faster than you think

# PRESENTATION

## BODY LANGUAGE

- Stand straight and confidently
- Hold your head up and make eye contact
- Never turn your back to the audience
- Decide on and practice whether you want to move around or stand still—either way be consistent and intentional

# PRESENTATION

## RECORD YOURSELF

Record and listen to your presentation to hear where you pause, speak too quickly or get it just right

Then, adjust and PRACTICE SOME MORE!

Still worried? [Watch presentations online by previous 3MT finalists.](#)

# PRESENTATION

## DRESS CODE

There is no dress code, however...

- If you are unsure of how to dress, you may choose to dress for a job interview or an important meeting
- Comfort is key so you can focus on your presentation
- Be aware of the noise your footwear might make
- Do not wear a costume of any kind as this is against the rules (as is the use of props)

# ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

# RESOURCES

[UNO Writing Center](#)

IELP: Intensive English Language Program @UNO

- Tip sheet (email me or IELP)

[3MT Competitor Guide](#)

[FAQS for 3MT Competitors](#)

# Application Closes

**OCTOBER 28**

Link in email

OR

<https://www.uno.edu/academics/grad/3mt-competition>