Questions and Answers about the UO Online 3MT Competition

What is a Three Minute Thesis Competition?
The Three Minute Thesis competition is an annual competition held in over 200 universities worldwide. It is open to all graduate students, and challenges participants to present their research in just 180 seconds, in an engaging form that can be understood by an intelligent audience with no background in the research area. This exercise develops presentation, research and academic communication skills and supports the development of research students' capacity to explain their work effectively.

Who can compete in the University of Oregon Online 3MT competition?
All current UO graduate students can compete.

Why participate in the 3MT competition?
3MT competition cultivates students’ academic, presentation, and research communication skills. Presenting in a 3MT competition increases their capacity to effectively explain their research in three minutes, in a language appropriate to a non-specialist audience. Plus, you can win prize money—up to $1000!

What are the guidelines for a 3MT Presentation?
• 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.
How do I compete in the UO Online 3MT competition?

• Sign up using this submission form
• Create one static PowerPoint slide
• Submit your slide to Jen McNutt-Bloom jenmb@uoregon.edu no later than May 14
• Present at our Virtual 3MT competition on Tuesday, May 25

To complete the form, you will need:

• Your ID number (95-number)
• Name and email of your program and academic advisor
• A title for your presentation
• Brief description of your presentation

What are the prizes?

1st $1000
2nd place $750
3rd place $500
People’s Choice Award $500

How is my presentation judged?

Judges will rate your presentation using this 3MT Judging Criteria

Comprehension and content

• Did the presentation provide an understanding of the background and significance to the research question being addressed, while explaining terminology and avoiding jargon?
• Did the presentation clearly describe the impact and/or results of the research, including conclusions and outcomes?
• Did the presentation follow a clear and logical sequence?
• Was the thesis topic, research significance, results/impact and outcomes communicated in language appropriate to a non-specialist audience?
• 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 and 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?

Can I participate if I don’t want to be on the UO 3MT website?
Absolutely, you do not have to be on the website to participate in the 3MT competition. You will not however be able to participate in the public People’s Choice competition.