



## 2020 SIUC Local 3MT Competition

Sponsored by the Graduate School,  
Office of Vice Chancellor for Research, and  
Office of Provost and Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs



## 2020 SIUC Local 3MT Competition Announcement

The SIUC Graduate School, Office of Vice Chancellor for Research, and Office of Provost and Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs would like to invite SIUC's active Ph.D. and Professional (research) doctoral graduate students to participate in the **2020 SIUC Local Three-Minute-Thesis (3MT) Competition**.

### Important Dates:

- Submit the SIUC Local 3MT Competition Form with one Powerpoint slide to Mr. John Russell at [johnprussell@siu.edu](mailto:johnprussell@siu.edu) by 4 pm, January 24, 2020 (Friday).
- Students will make presentations on January 31, 2020 (time and location TBD).
- Winners announcement will be made on February 14, 2020. The 1<sup>st</sup> place winner is to represent SIUC to compete in the Midwestern Association of Graduate Schools (MAGS) regional 3MT competition on April 3, 2020.

## Awards

Three awards will be given:

- The first-place award: \$700 for travel to MAGS Annual Meeting plus \$500 in cash.
- The second-place award: \$500 in cash.
- The third-place award: \$300 in cash.

## WHAT IS 3MT?

This research communication competition originally developed by The University of Queensland (UQ) in 2008. Over time the contest has exploded in popularity, and 3MT contests now occur worldwide at over 600 universities/institutions across 65 countries. SIU Carbondale is one of the participating institutions.

<https://threeminutethesis.uq.edu.au/>

The 3MT competition challenges students to summarize their research or scholarship for a non-specialist audience using only three minutes of speech using pre-determined guidelines and a single PowerPoint slide. A panel of judges scores each student to determine a winner.

## Eligibility

Active PhD and Professional Doctorate (Research) candidates who have successfully passed their confirmation milestone (including candidates whose dissertation is under submission) by the date of their first presentation are eligible to participate in 3MT competition. Graduates are not eligible.

Participants must be an enrolled student at some point during the academic year in which the MAGS competition (April 3, 2020).

## Competition Rules

- 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 the adjudicating panel is final.

### **Judging Criteria**

All presentations will be evaluated and scored using the following criteria, as established by the international competition.

#### **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 trivialise or generalise 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?

\*Last updated February 2018

## **WATCH 3MT PRESENTATIONS FROM AROUND THE WORLD**

<https://threeminutethesis.uq.edu.au/watch-3mt>

## **3MT Competitor Guide**

### **3MT Drafting**

#### **Write for your audience**

- Avoid jargon and academic language.
- Explain concepts and people important to your research - you may know all about Professor Smith's theories but your audience may not.
- Highlight the outcomes of your research, and the desired outcome.
- Imagine that you are explaining your research to a close friend or fellow student from another field.
- Convey your excitement and enthusiasm for your subject.

#### **Tell a story**

- You may like to present your 3MT as a narrative, with a beginning, middle and end.
- It's not easy to condense your research into three minutes, so you may find it easier to break your presentation down into smaller sections.
- Try writing an opener to catch the attention of the audience, then highlight your different points, and finally have a summary to restate the importance of your work.

## **Have a clear outcome in mind**

- Know what you want your audience to take away from your presentation.
- Try to leave the audience with an understanding of what you're doing, why it is important, and what you hope to achieve.

## **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 if your presentation clearly highlights what your research is about and why it is important.

## **3MT Slide**

### **Rules**

Before you start work on your slide, you should take the following rules into account:

- 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; and
- No additional electronic media (e.g. sound and video files) are permitted.

### **Suggestions**

You may like to consider some of the following suggestions.

- Less is more: text and complicated graphics can distract your audience – you don't want them to read your slide instead of listening to your 3MT.
- Personal touches: personal touches can allow your audience to understand the impact of your research.
- Creativity drives interest: do not rely on your slide to convey your message – it should simply complement your oration.
- Work your message: think about how your slide might be able to assist with the format and delivery of your presentation – is there a metaphor that helps explain your research?

- An engaging visual presentation can make or break any oration, so make sure your slide is legible, clear and concise.

## **3MT Presentation**

### **Practice, practice, practice**

- Feeling nervous before you present is natural, and a little nervousness can even be beneficial to your overall speech. Nonetheless, it is important to practice so you can present with confidence and clarity. Practicing will also help you gauge the timing of your 3MT so that you keep within the time limit.

### **Vocal range**

- Speak clearly and use variety in your voice (fast/slow, loud/ soft).
- Do not rush – find your rhythm.
- Remember to pause at key points as it gives the audience time to think about what you are saying.

### **Body language**

- Stand straight and confidently.
- Hold your head up and make eye contact.
- Never turn your back to the audience.
- Practise how you will use your hands and move around the stage. It is okay to move around energetically if that is your personality, however it is also appropriate for a 3MT presentation to be delivered from a single spot on stage.
- Do not make the common mistakes of rolling back and forth on your heels, pacing for no reason or playing with your hair as these habits are distracting for the audience.

### **Record yourself**

- Record and listen to your presentation to hear where you pause, speak too quickly or get it just right.
- Then work on your weaknesses and exploit your strengths.

### **Look to the stars!**

- Watch your role models such as academics, politicians and journalists, and break down their strengths and weaknesses.
- Analyze how they engage with their audience.

- View presentations by [previous 3MT finalists](#).

## **Dress**

- There is no dress code, if you are unsure of how to dress you may like to dress for a job interview or an important meeting. It is important that you feel comfortable so you can focus on your presentation.
- If you are presenting on a stage that has a wooden floor, 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).