

Competitors Guide for Distance Students

Full-time distance students or students in online programs are eligible to participate in the 2024 3-Minute Thesis Competition. Instructions for participation and video recordings are listed below.

Deadlines:

Deadlines are firm.

- **Abstract & Slide Due:** **Friday, September 20th by 5:00 p.m. CST**
- **Video Due** **Friday, September 27th by 5:00 p.m. CST**

Event Overview:

Final details for the event will be sent to all competitors by Tuesday, October 1st. This will include location, check-in, and competition room information.

- Distance students will not be joining the competition live via Zoom or any other platform. Distance students will provide a pre-recorded video that will be played for the judges at the competition. Your TTU email address will be provided to the judges if they have any questions about the presentation.
- Video presentations will be scored exactly like the live presentations on campus.
- An introduction slide will be displayed before each video presentation begins. The slide will include your name, academic information, and the title of your presentation.
- A full-screen image of your video will appear on the screen and will be played for the judges.
- Once your video presentation is complete, judges will have 3 minutes to score your video presentation
- If you are advancing to the final, you will be notified via email by our staff. Your video presentation will be played in the final heat as outlined above. If you win the competition and advance to the regional competition, you will be notified via email immediately following the competition. If you do not receive an email immediately following the competition, you did not advance to the regional competition.
- Graduate Student Life will provide competitors with a copy of their rubrics if requested the week of October 7th.

Virtual Submission Rules

- Presentations are limited to 3 minutes and competitors exceeding 3 minutes are disqualified.
- Presentations are considered to have commenced when a presenter starts their presentation through speech (timing does not include the 3MT title slide and commences from when the competitor starts speaking).
- Videos **must** meet the following criteria:
 - Filmed on the horizontal;
 - Filmed on a plain background;
 - Filmed from a static position;
 - Filmed from one camera angle;
- A single static slide is permitted in the presentation (absolutely no slide transitions, pointer, cursor, laser, animation, or ‘movement’ of any description).
- The 3-minute audio must be continuous – no sound edits or breaks.

- No additional props are permitted within the recording (e.g. costumes, musical instruments, laboratory equipment and animated backgrounds).
- Presentations are to be spoken word (e.g. no poems, raps or songs).
- No additional electronic media are permitted within the video recording (e.g. sound and video files).
- The slide must be visible throughout the entire presentation.
- The viewer must be able to see the presenter and the slide simultaneously in the video recording.
- The decision of the adjudicating panel is final.

Q&A Session:

- Due to the fast-paced nature of this competition, we will ask guests and judges to hold all questions for the competitors until the Q&A session. Each room will have 20-30 minutes for questions after all the presentations have been displayed. Since you are participating virtually, judges will be given your TTU email address to email you with any questions they may have.
- The moderator will have a copy of each slide and will display them individually if the judges would like a 2nd look at your slide.
- After the Q&A session, everyone will be dismissed for the day.

Final Heat

- The competitor with the highest score from each morning heat will advance to the final heat. If there is a tie in the morning heat, or, if the highest score and the second highest score are within 5 points, two competitors will advance to final.
- The final heat will begin at 12:00 p.m. on Friday, October 4th.
- The format for the final heat will be the same as the preliminary session.
- Guests will have the opportunity to select a competitor for the People's Choice Award during the final heat. Only competitors in the final heat are eligible for the People's Choice Award.

Tips & Suggestions:

- Practice, practice, practice! Practicing helps you gauge the timing of your presentation, so you don't exceed the time limit on the day of the competition.
- Record yourself. Watching yourself is incredibly beneficial as it helps you identify issues with your vocal range, rhythm, and body language.
- Avoid jargon and academic language. Remember, your research must be clear to a non-specialist audience. Imagine that you are explaining your research to a close friend or fellow student from another field.
- Explain concepts important to your research.
- Highlight the outcomes of your research and the desired outcome.
- Convey your excitement and enthusiasm for your subject.
- Write an opener to catch the attention of the audience, highlight your different points, and have a summary to restate the importance of your work.
- Try to leave the audience with an understanding of what you are doing, why it is important, and what you hope to achieve.
- Do not use your 3-minute presentation time to introduce yourself or thank faculty, mentors, etc. From the moment you start speaking until you stop speaking, the timer will continue to run and that will count towards your overall 3-minute time limit.
- We highly recommend ending your presentation with brief "thank you" to stop the timer.

FAQ:

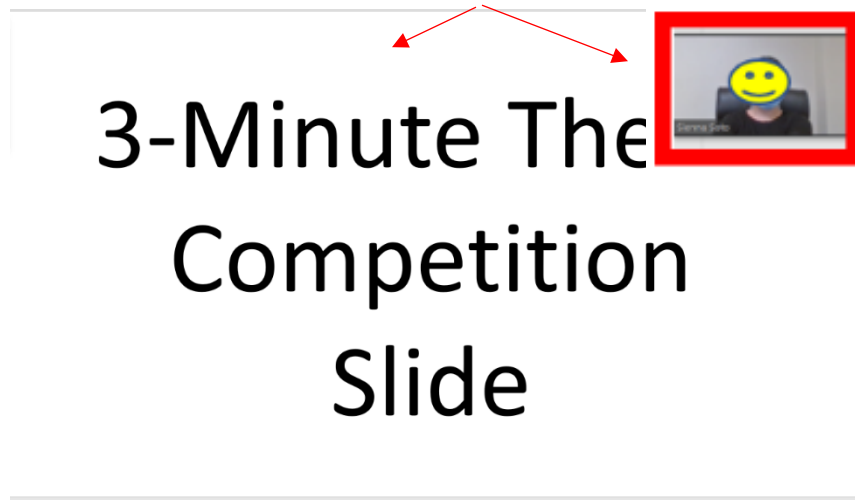
- **How and where do I send my pre-recorded video?**
Please email your video to studentlife.gradschool@ttu.edu.
- **Which format is required for my video?**
You can send your video as an MP4 file or as a OneDrive link to the email address listed above.
- **What program do I use to record my video?**
Competitors are welcome to use any video recording software they prefer. Please ensure that your video includes your 3MT slide in the background and a video of you speaking in the frame. An example can be found in the “additional notes” section below.
- **I made an error on my slide, can I update it before the competition?**
All competitors (including distance participants) are required to submit a slide by Friday, September 20th. However, if you made an error on your submitted slide, we will accept slide edits until Monday, September 30th. The slide in the program will be the original slide you submitted with your application. After Monday, September 30th, we will not accept edits. This includes the day of the competition. Email revised slides to studentlife.gradschool@ttu.edu.
- **Can I use a laser pointer during my presentation?**
No. Movement of any kind on the screen or slide will constitute a disqualification.
- **What should I wear in the video?**
We highly recommend business professional attire.
- **Can you send me a Zoom link to join my competition room/heat?**
Official 3MT rules specify that virtual participants MUST submit a pre-recorded video for the competition. This prevents technical and audio issues the day of the competition. For this reason, we cannot provide distance students with a Zoom link to join virtually.
- **If I make it to the final, how will I know?**
If a distance student wins their preliminary heat and advances to final, our staff email the student and will play their pre-recorded video during the final heat.
- **My presentation was only 1-2 seconds over 3 minutes...why was I disqualified?**
Official rules indicate that students **cannot exceed 3 minutes**. If you exceed 3 minutes under any circumstances, you will be disqualified and will not advance to the final. Please do not use your 3-minute time limit to introduce yourself or thank faculty, mentors, etc. From the moment you start speaking until you stop speaking, the timer will run and count toward your overall 3-minute time limit.
- **Why are you so strict with the 3-minute time limit rule? Can't you give me a chance?**
The 3-Minute Thesis Competition is an international competition. Because the official organization cannot host the competition at all participating universities around the globe, as a host site, we are mandated to follow the rules set forth by the organization. If we do not follow the official rules of the organization, we could lose the opportunity to host this competition in the future. Additionally, adhering to the rules helps students prepare for the regional, national, and international competition should they advance.
- **I want a copy of the event program. How do I get one?**
Graduate Student Life will send distance students a digital copy of the program if requested
- **My information is wrong in the program.**
Our staff used the information you entered on your application for the program.
- **How many winners will there be in the final?**
There will be a first, second, and third-place winner in the finals. Only the first-place winner will advance to the regional competition. Additionally, there will be one People's Choice Award in the final. Only competitors in the final are eligible for the People's Choice Award.

- **What happens if I win?**
The winner of the Texas Tech competition will advance to the regional competition held March 19th - 21st, 2025, at the Conference of Southern Graduate Schools in Dallas, Texas.
- **I would like a copy of my rubrics from the competition. How do I get them?**
Graduate Student Life will provide competitors with a digital copy of their rubrics if requested via email by the competitor. To request a digital copy of your rubrics, please email studentlife.gradschool@ttu.edu. Please note that your rubrics will not be available immediately following the competition. We will begin sending scanned copies the week of October 7th.

Additional Notes:

- Competitors **will not** be judged on video/recording quality or editing capabilities. Judging will focus on the presentation, ability to communicate research to a non-specialist audience, and 3MT PowerPoint slide.
- You are welcome to use any video recording program or application for this presentation. Please be sure that the slide and presenter are visible in the frame. See example below.

The slide and presenter **MUST** be visible throughout the entire presentation.



- Videos can be sent as an MP4 file or as a OneDrive link to studentlife.gradschool@ttu.edu. All videos are due by 5:00 p.m. CST on Friday, September 20th.