



McAda Graduate School  
Competition Guide

### Drafting Your 3MT

- ▶ Write for the audience.
  - Avoid jargon and academic language.
  - Explain concepts and people important to your research.
  - Highlight the outcomes of your research, as well as the desired outcome.
  - Imagine that you are explaining your research to a close friend or a fellow student from a different major or discipline.
  - Convey your excitement and enthusiasm for your research.
- ▶ Tell a story.
  - Consider delivering your presentation as a narrative with a beginning, middle, and end.
  - To help with the challenge of condensing your research into three minutes, break down your presentation into smaller sections.
  - Try to write an opener that will capture the attention of the audience, then highlight your different points and finish with a summary to restate the importance of your research.
- ▶ Have a clear outcome.
  - Know what you want the audience to gain or take from your presentation.
  - 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...
  - Do not write your presentation like an academic paper.
  - Do not use big words, long sentences, or long paragraphs.
  - Do not devalue your presentation by using too much humor.
- ▶ Revise.
  - Proof your presentation by reading it aloud to yourself and to a test audience of friends or family.
  - Ask your test audience for feedback.
  - Ask your test audience if your presentation clearly highlights the purpose of your research and its importance.

### Your 3MT Slide

- ▶ Rules

- A single, static PowerPoint slide is required in the presentation.
  - No slide transitions, animations, or movements are permitted.
  - The slide can be visible for the entire presentation in the top right corner or on the right side, or the presenter can cut to the slide for a maximum of one minute.
  - No electronic media (e.g. sound and video files) are permitted.
  - If a reference is needed for any content within the slide, it can be shown at the bottom of the slide in a small box.
- ▶ Suggestions
- Less is more. Text and complicated graphics can distract the audience. You don't want them to read your slide instead of listening to your presentation.
  - Using personal touches can allow the audience to understand the impact of your research.
  - Creativity drives interest. Do not rely on your slide to convey your message. Your slide should complement your presentation.
  - Work your message. How can your slide assist with the format and delivery of your presentation? Is there a metaphor that helps to explain your research?
  - An engaging visual aid can make or break any presentation, so make sure that your slide is legible, clear, and concise.

### Your 3MT Presentation

- ▶ Delivery
- Speak clearly and use variety in your voice (pacing, inflection, and volume).
  - Do not rush; find your rhythm.
  - Remember to pause at key points to give the audience time to think about what you are saying.
- ▶ Body Language
- Stand straight and confidently.
  - Maintain eye contact with the camera lens.
  - Practice how you will use your hands.
  - Stay in a static position. Avoid rolling back and forth on your heels or shifting your weight from side to side.
- ▶ Dress Code
- There is no dress code. If you are unsure how to dress, consider dressing as you would for a job interview or important meeting.
  - It is important that you feel comfortable during your presentation.
  - Costumes are not permitted.

### Recording Your 3MT

- ▶ Device and Program Options
- You can record your presentation using a camera, handheld video recorder, phone, tablet, or computer with inbuilt recording programs.

- Inbuilt recording programs for Windows include Windows Camera and Microsoft Photos. Inbuilt programs for Mac include QuickTime and iMovie.
  - Zoom can be used for recording, as well. The feature is available to free subscribers.
- ▶ Recording at Home
- Use good lighting, whether it be natural or artificial. If you use natural light from a window, face the window so the light falls directly on you.
  - Choose a very quiet environment where you can control the sound. Close doors and windows and turn off noisy electronics. (Fans and air conditioners can be louder in video than you may think.)
  - Be aware of audible interruptions over which you have no control, such as airplanes, lawn mowers, and cars. Consider recording during a quiet time of day, such as early morning.
  - Use a clean, plain wall as your background, completely free of visual distractions.
- ▶ Recording Setup
- Ensure that your device has adequate storage.
  - Connect your device to a tripod or secure it on a stable surface. Do not have someone hold the device for you.
  - Record in landscape or horizontal orientation.
  - Position the camera lens in line with your eye level.
  - Use one of the framing options below.

