

Best Practices for Departments



The Graduate College suggests the following points as best practices for departments in selecting their contestant for the 3MT competition.

1. 3MT is a **communication** competition. Keep in mind that the audience for these presentations are not specialists in your field, and will be unable to evaluate the presentations for content per se. Looking at the rubric provided by 3MT (attached) one can see this emphasis in its simple criteria:

- **Comprehension & Content:** did the presentation help the audience understand the research & was the thesis topic and its significance communicated in language appropriate to an intelligent but non-specialist audience?
- **Engagement & Communication:** did the oration make the audience want to know more?

Therefore, a student with a 'better' thesis will not necessarily win the competition; a student with a better presentation will win.

2. Additionally, not being themselves experts in all fields, the judges and Graduate College are relying on departments to ensure that the presentation made by their contestant is in fact representative of the contestant's research, i.e. that it accurately summarizes and describes a dissertation that has been or is expected to be approved.

Note – The final competition will be filmed and the presentations may be available online for promotional purposes. Inaccuracies in the presentation would reflect poorly all around.

3. Because this is a competition, practice can be an essential part of a good performance. We hope that departments are able to accommodate practice sessions and / or a practice competition as part of regular colloquia or other events.
4. The official 3MT rubric is included as part of this document. Using it to evaluate students along with feedback and discussion among judges and students
5. Resources are available for students to learn how to prepare the text of their presentation and how to present it. Visit the Graduate College Professional development page for more details: <http://www.grad.uiowa.edu/professional-development>.