

Competitor Guide: On-Campus Students

Deadlines: *Deadlines are firm.*

Abstract & Slide Due: Friday, September 19th by 5:00 p.m. CST

Competition Disclaimer:

Official 3-Minute Thesis Competition rules outlined by the University of the Queensland exclude master's students from participating in the 3-Minute Thesis Competition. As a partner institution, we are required to abide by all rules set forth by The University of the Queensland. The official rules can be found [here](#) for reference. Texas Tech is committed to allowing all graduate students to participate in our university's research competitions. In an effort to abide by official competition rules and accommodate master's students, the Texas Tech competition will have a Master's division and a Ph.D. division for this competition.

Both master's and Ph.D. participants will compete on Thursday, October 2nd. The master's and Ph.D. students with the highest scores from the preliminary round will advance to the final on Friday, October 3rd. In the final, we will have a 1st, 2nd, and 3rd, place winner in the Master's division and a 1st, 2nd, and 3rd, place winner in the Ph.D. division. **The winner from the Ph.D. division is the only winner who is eligible to advance to the regional competition as outlined by official competition rules.**

Registration Information:

1. Complete a registration form [here](#).
2. Submit an abstract describing your research on the registration form linked above. Abstracts **cannot** exceed 250 words.
3. Submit your static slide on the registration page linked above. Please save your slide as a pdf, ppt, or pptx. The maximum file size for your slide is 1 MB.

On-Campus Competition Rules:

- Presentations are limited to 3 minutes, and competitors exceeding 3 minutes are disqualified.
- 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 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 speech.
- The decision of the adjudicating panel is final.

Preliminary Event Overview: Thursday, October 2nd

Final details for the event will be sent to all competitors by Tuesday, September 30th.

- An introduction slide will be displayed before each presentation begins. The slide will include your name, academic information, and the title of your presentation.
- When you see your name appear on the screen, please make your way to the front of the room, take the clicker from the moderator, and begin the presentation whenever you are ready.
- A full-screen image of your static slide will appear on the screen.
- The moderator in your room will have a timer that will be visible for your reference.
- Once your presentation is complete, please advance to the next slide and hand the clicker to the moderator in your room.
- Judges will have 3 minutes to score your presentation.
- If you are advancing to the final, you will be notified by 5:00 p.m. on Thursday, October 2nd, via email from our staff.



GRADUATE SCHOOL

TEXAS TECH

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.
- The moderator will have a copy of each slide and will display them individually to allow judges and competitors to discuss the research.
- After the Q&A session, everyone is dismissed.

Final Event Overview: Friday, October 3rd

- The final heat will begin at 12:00 p.m. on Friday, October 3rd.
- The format for the final heat will be the same as the preliminary round; however, all presentations will take place LIVE in the Red Raider Ballroom.
- There will be a 1st, 2nd, and 3rd place winner for the Masters division, and a 1st, 2nd, and 3rd place winner for the Ph.D. division. The 1st place winner of the Ph.D. division will advance to the regional competition. Only the winner of the doctoral division will advance to the regional competition.
- Guests will have the opportunity to select a competitor for the People's Choice Award during the final heat. Only competitors in the final are eligible for the People's Choice Award.
- Lunch will be provided to all competitors and guests who attend the final round. All competitors are invited to join us.

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:

- **Will participating in this competition count as an excused absence?**
Yes. All Graduate School research competitions are university-sanctioned activities and therefore constitute an excused absence. If you need an excuse note, please email studentlife.gradschool@ttu.edu to request one.
- **I made an error on my slide; can I update it before the competition?**
All competitors are required to submit a slide by Friday, September 19th. However, if you made an error on your submitted slide, we will accept slide edits until Monday, September 29th. The slide in the program will be the original slide you submitted with your application. After Monday, September 29th, 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 for the competition?**
We highly recommend business professional attire.
- **I don't have professional business attire. What should I do?**
We recommend visiting the University Career Center for information on their career closet. They have a variety of business professional attire for all individuals.
- **I can't stay the entire time. How will I know if I advanced to the final?**
Please notify Graduate Student Life at studentlife.gradschool@ttu.edu as soon as possible. If you advance, we will call, text, or email you (your preference).
- **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. Additionally, adhering to the rules helps students prepare for the regional, national, and international competition, should they advance.
- **My information is wrong on the intro slide/program.**
Our staff used the information you entered on your application for the intro slide and program.
- **Can I invite my professors/friends/peers to the event?**
Yes. Please share your heat number with guests so we can place them in the appropriate room when they arrive. Your heat number will be sent on or before September 30th.
- **How many winners will there be in the final?**
There will be a first, second, and third-place winner in each division. Only the first-place winner from the Ph.D division 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 February 18th-20th, 2026, at the Conference of Southern Graduate Schools in Baton Rouge, Louisiana.
- **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. We will not release rubrics to anyone except 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 6th.