UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN MILWAUKEE | Graduate School

3MT® THREE MINUTE THESIS
FOUNDED BY THE UNIVERSITY OF QUEENSLAND

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UWM's 3MT Competition – Selection through to Finals on February 4, 2027:

The University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee's Graduate School is hosting a university-wide 3-minute thesis (3MT™) competition on February 4, 2027. The 3MT competition originated at the University of Queensland in 2008 for doctoral students to learn and demonstrate communication of scholarship to non-specialist audiences. The event also showcases the excellent scholarship by graduate students, both to UWM and to external audiences.

Students are encouraged to participate to learn how to develop skills in public communication, which will serve them well in applying their scholarship to stakeholders outside of their own disciplines –an increasingly critical skill to obtain in higher education. To that end, students are judged on both content and engagement of the scholarship. This presentation style is distinct from how one presents at a professional conference; it is a unique skill students prepare for, refine, and deliver as their 3MTs in this competition.

The UWM public competition (the finals) will consist of 12 doctoral students representing the breadth of the university's scholarship chosen from an internal preliminary competition. The winner represents UWM at the Midwest Association of Graduate Schools regional competition on March 23-27, 2027. The winner, 2nd place student, and "people's choice" will receive financial prizes as well. Additionally, all finalists receive multiple opportunities for professional development training in public communication as they prepare for the main competition.

To arrive at 12 finalists, UWM has the following eligibility and responsibility requirements:

Who is eligible to compete?

(1) PhD and Professional Doctorate students who are in at least their 2nd year are invited to compete (Professional Doctorate students must have a culminating research requirement for their ultimate degree, as the dissertation is required of a PhD student). Those who do not will be eligible in a following competition year.

(2) Interested students are *strongly encouraged* to attend one of the informational workshops on 3MT hosted by the Graduate School (which began in September 2026) to learn the basic rules and obligations of competing, as well as initial tips for successful 3MTs. While attending a workshop is not required to enter the competition, doing so increases chances for success. If you missed a workshop, a recorded version can be found on the Graduate School's 3MT page.

How are the 12 finalists selected?

(3) Students will submit videos of their 3MT to the Graduate School by **November 20, 2026**. Instructions about 3MT production expectations and video creation will be given in a separate announcement. Videos will be categorized by the four scholarly divisions: Arts & Humanities; Professions; Natural Sciences; and Social Sciences. Students will be judged within divisions for preliminaries, but not across divisions, to assure equitable divisional representation.

(4) The first-place winners of each division in preliminaries will become a finalist. The remaining eight will be selected from 2nd and even 3rd place winners of a division depending on the division's proportional representation of the total number of preliminary competitors. The 12 finalists will be selected by a date TBD in November.

What must finalists commit to?

(5) Each finalist (to remain a finalist) must commit to attending the regionals event on March 23-27, 2027 in person in Minneapolis if they win the UWM competition (UWM Graduate School will cover expenses to compete). If they cannot commit (beyond facing unexpected events and barriers that arise for anyone), then they will be replaced by the next eligible finalist.

(6) The 12 finalists will be required to commit to periodic workshops and trainings from December through to competition night in February to refine their 3MTs and practice performance and engagement. Attendance at these meetings may be in person or online except when noted in a schedule. Note: there will be more opportunities to practice or meet with coaches than will be expected for complete attendance. Treat these like open, preparation office hours unless the sessions are announced mandatory for full attendance.

(7) There is a mandatory dress rehearsal on February 3, 2027 (late afternoon times TBD). The finals will be on February 4, 2027 from 5 – 8 pm (students report no later than 5:00 pm; the competition begins at 6:00 pm). Finalists must attend the dress rehearsal and finals night in person at the assigned on-campus theater. Not being able to do so will result in a disqualification to compete.

Can I compete again in a future year?

(8) Finalists may not be eligible to compete in future university-wide 3MTs pending each year's participant pool. Students who participate in the preliminary event, but are not chosen as finalists, are strongly encouraged to continue practicing their skills and preparing for next year's competition if they are still a student entering that academic year.

Questions about UWM's 3MT:

Bookmark the Graduate School's 3MT page for updates as they become available. Also, email questions can be sent to 3mt-gradschool@uwm.edu.