



November 7th, 2024

2:00 p.m.

Tulane University

Freeman Auditorium, Woldenberg Art Center

An 80,000-word thesis would take 9 hours to present.

Their time limit?

3 minutes.

Special Thanks

Michael Cunningham, Associate Provost for Graduate Studies and Research and Professor of Psychology; Jennifer O'Brien-Brown, Assistant Director of the Office of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies; Lauren Lukkarila, Academic Support Specialist of the Office of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies; Ryan Stivers, Senior Academic and Career Advisor of the Office of Graduate and Postdoctoral studies; Nha Nguyen, Administrative Program Coordinator of the Office of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies; Shannah Boucher, Graduate Assistant; Alex McNally, Graduate Assistant; Mary Schulz, Graduate Assistant; GSSA Executive Board: Shreya Bavishi, Chassidy Simmons, Chase Richard, Kierstin Cousin, and the GSSA Departmental Representatives; 3MT Judges: Gary Dohanich, Michael Farley, Desiree Packard, Lawrence Smith, and Catherine Tyner; Professor Ashley Keller Nelson, Department of Management Communication; Office of Academic Affairs and Provost; and the University of Queensland.

History of 3MT

Three Minute Thesis (3MT®) celebrates the exciting research conducted by PhD students. Developed by The University of Queensland (UQ), the exercise cultivates students' academic, presentation, and research communication skills. The competition supports their capacity to effectively explain their research in three minutes, in a language appropriate to a non-specialist audience.

The first 3MT was held at UQ in 2008 with 160 RHD students competing. In 2009 and 2010, the 3MT competition was promoted to other Australian and New Zealand universities and enthusiasm for the concept grew. Due to its adoption in numerous universities, a multi-national event was developed, and the Inaugural Trans-Tasman 3MT competition was held at UQ in 2010.

Since 2011 the popularity of the competition has increased and 3MT competitions are now held in over 200 universities across more than 18 countries worldwide.

Judges

GARY DOHANICH is a *Professor Emeritus* at Tulane University. He retired in 2022 after serving for 37 years on the faculties of the Psychology Department and the Neuroscience Program. Dr. Dohanich received his BS from Lehigh University, his MS from Villanova University, and his PhD from Michigan State University. Following postdoctoral training at Rockefeller University, he joined the Tulane faculty in 1985. He has published over 70 research articles, scholarly reviews, and book chapters, and held grants from the National Institutes of Health and the National Science Foundation. Dr. Dohanich is co-founder of Tulane's major and master's programs in Neuroscience and the recipient of several of Tulane's highest teaching awards.

MICHAEL FARLEY is the CEO of HBI Construction Group, Inc of New Orleans. When he is not out on construction sites he's volunteering his time as the Assistant Director of New Orleans Mardi Gras Indian Council. One of his duties at NOMGIC includes managing their partnership with Tulane's Service Learning Department.

DESIREE PACKARD earned her bachelor's degree in Economics from the University of Alabama and her Master's of Public Administration from the University of New Orleans. She spent a number of years in the banking and financial services industry before pivoting to work with and advocate for youth development opportunities. She now serves as the Executive Director of Tulane's Strategic Summer Programs.

LAWRENCE SMITH spent 10 years as a school business manager with the New Orleans Public School system. He began employment at Tulane University's Center for Public Service in 2006 and is currently the Senior Department Administrator. He is a United States Army veteran and a native New Orleanian.

CATHERINE TYNER earned her undergraduate and graduate degrees in Sociology from the University of New Orleans. Catherine spent 20 years working in the metropolitan area supporting individuals and families experiencing behavioral health challenges as well as housing insecurity and homelessness. Catherine entered the Higher Ed sector in 2013 when she arrived at Tulane in the office of Case Management & Victim Support Services. Catherine currently serves as the Assistant Dean of Students at Tulane University.

3MT Contestants

KASUN MENDIS

"Durable Solar Cells Through Controlling Power Generation"

Kasun Mendis is a PhD candidate specializing in ultrafast laser spectroscopy under the supervision of Dr. Igor Rubtsov. His research focuses on uncovering methods to control photo-induced processes through advanced ultrafast spectroscopy, with the aim of enhancing the efficiency of light-driven applications, such as solar cells. His work is inspired by his undergraduate research in Sri Lanka, where he developed eco-friendly electrolytes for lithium-ion batteries.

ALLISON CRUZ

"Student Affairs Staff as Culture Brokers on College Campuses"

Allison Cruz is a PhD student in sociology in the City, Culture, and Community program at the Tulane School of Liberal Arts. Allison is studying the cultural and organizational role of student affairs professionals in higher education institutions.

TAYLOR MARCUS

"Investigating the Self-Face Bias"

Taylor Marcus is a PhD candidate in the Neuroscience Program at Tulane University. Her work in Dr. Julie Markant's Learning and Brain Development lab investigates attention and learning across the lifespan, from infancy to adulthood. Broadly, Taylor is interested in how and why we pay attention to the people we encounter across our lives, and how these attention biases may shape what we learn about the world around us.

OLAIDE ADEKUSIBE

"Cucurbit[6]uril Initiated DNA Self-Assembly"

Olaide Adekusibe is a PhD student in the Department of Chemistry at Tulane University. Her current work in Dr. Janan's lab is focused on the assembly of DNA to form a mechanically

interlocked molecule using one of the pumpkin-shaped macrocycles known as Cucurbit[6]uril. This assembly is predicted to be useful in biological systems based on the inherent properties that its component possesses.

CAMERON LEAHY

“Disasters and Homelessness”

Cameron Leahy is a student in the Social Work - City, Culture, and Community program at Tulane University. He is interested in studying the interaction of disaster resilience and marginalized populations. Cameron also completed his Bachelor's at Tulane, and loves to stay involved through organizations like WTUL New Orleans.

SHIRINE MOUKALED

“A Perfect Storm: Chronic Illnesses Fueling Dementia”

Shirine Moukaled is a PhD student in neuroscience at Tulane University, dedicated to advancing the understanding and treatment of Alzheimer's disease, related dementias, and chronic disease epidemiology. Using data from studies like the Bogalusa Heart Study and the Health and Aging Brain Study-Health Disparities (HABS-HD), her research aims to understand the impact of multiple chronic conditions on dementia pathology and cognitive function.

T. PARKS REMCHO

“Vaccines – More Than Just a Shot!”

Parks is an MD/PhD Candidate in the Kolls lab in the Center for Translational Research in Infection and Inflammation. He works on mucosal vaccinations and on understanding the immune response to pathogens in the lung. He hopes to change how we get vaccinated and what we can be vaccinated against.

YUWEI BAO

“Applying Statistics to Understand Viral Evolution”

Yuwei Bao is a PhD candidate in the Mathematics Department. She is passionate about using statistical models to decode fragmented information hidden in genetic data by constructing phylogenies. She also collaborates with cancer biologists, applying bioinformatics and data analysis skills to explore cancer evolution. She aims to continuously bring scientific insights closer to real-world applications in improving human health.

ADEBIMPE ADEGBITE

“Yoruba Proverbs as a Tool for Reversing Language Shift”

Adebimpe Adegbite is a PhD student specializing in the Linguistics subfield of the Anthropology department at Tulane University. His research focuses on using proverbs, in the home, to teach Yoruba language to children who otherwise would not acquire the language. Adebimpe's research propounds a framework that minority language families can utilize in reversing language shift.

GRANT TALKINGTON

“Common Gut-Brain Mechanisms of Vascular Dementia and Long COVID”

Grant is an MD/PhD student in neuroscience at Tulane University. He earned two M.Sc. degrees at Mississippi College, one in biomedical sciences and one in neuroscience. His work in Dr. Bix's lab focuses on how changes in the gut microbiome can impact neurological disorders including vascular dementia and long COVID. Grant is interested in sustainable treatment of neurodegenerative conditions.

SHREYA BAVISHI

"Antibodies as Drug Treatment"

Shreya Bavishi is a fourth-year doctoral candidate in the Cell and Molecular Biology department at Tulane University, where she conducts research in the Meadows Lab under the guidance of Dr. Stryder Meadows. Shreya merges her medical background with cutting-edge molecular biology, advancing research and treatment of rare genetic disorders. Her thesis project focuses on developing innovative therapeutic strategies for managing Hereditary Hemorrhagic Telangiectasia, a hereditary vascular disease.

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THREE MINUTE THESIS IS BROUGHT TO YOU BY TULANE UNIVERSITY'S OFFICE OF GRADUATE AND POSTDOCTORAL STUDIES.