***3MR***

**HELPFUL IDEAS FOR THE 3 MINUTE RESEARCH COMPETITION**

**The most important questions:**

1. How can you distill your research down to its absolute essence, to the simplest possible level?
2. What is the single most important motivation for your research?
3. Why is your research important—and why should anyone care?

There are many potential audiences for a clear explanation of your research: a prospective employer; a doctoral program director; your family; professional meetings and conferences, an employer, and so on. There are situations in which your future career may depend on your ability to articulate a concise explanation of what you’ve studied and why it’s important.

Three minutes is at the high end of the average person’s attention span for topics in which they have no natural interest. It’s your job to convince them to be interested.

For longer presentations, the first three minutes will make or break the rest of the presentation! Think of this presentation as the introduction that would whet the audience’s appetite to hear more about your work.

And so . . . .

1. Everyone in the audience should understand your presentation without knowing anything about the topic beforehand.
2. There is no way for you to explain everything in 3 minutes—so don’t even try to do so.
3. Don’t speak in “bullet points” – your talk has to make sense as a conversation.
4. At the end of your three minutes, the audience should know the following

A Why they should care about your research topic

B What your project entailed

C Why your research is important

D How your research is original and interesting

E What your key results are

A 3-minute presentation is roughly two pages of 12-point text, double spaced. But DO NOT memorize your speech—instead, turn it into a kind of narrative. Stories are easier to remember when you are in front of an audience.

If time permits, we will hold a practice round.