

Three Minute Thesis Competition

First round schedule

February 11, 2026



Each heat will begin with opening remarks by the moderator. Presentations will follow and will occur approximately every 4 minutes (3 minutes per presentation followed by approx. 1 minute for judges to finalize scores and to transition between presenters.)

Schedule is subject to change.
updated: 2-6-2026

Heat 1

9:15 - 10:30am | 227 K-State Student Union

First Name	Last Name	Degree	Program	Tentative Title	Faculty Mentor(s)
Mohsen	Davoudkhani	Doctoral	Psychology	Early Warning Signs: Detecting Mild Cognitive Impairment Before Memory Declines	Heather Bailey
Sarah	Fenn	Master's	Kinesiology	Physician Lifestyle Recommendations and Cardiometabolic Risk Factors in the Menopause Transition	Carl Ade
Stephen	Zimmer	Master's	Public Administration	Community improvement districts: Managing growth and building public-private partnerships	Ethan Bernick
Mariam	Gharib	Doctoral	Agricultural Economics	Wildfire and Severe Drought Effects on Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) Persistence.	Jason Bergtold
Kristina	Morrison	Master's	Kinesiology	Fixating on Frailty in Cancer Survivorship	Carl Ade
Oluwaseun	Sobola	Master's	English	Who Defines your Worth and Grace? A New Look at Women, Dignity and Respect	Karin Westman
Minnie	Adams	Master's	Interior Architecture	The Flavor of Place: Designing Interiors to Combat Food Insecurity	Mariana Junqueira

Mia	Reyes	Master's	Agricultural Education and Communication	Fields of opportunity: A Mixed-Method analysis of sustainable agritourism development in Kansas	Nellie Hill-Sullins
Oluyomibo	Asunlegan	Doctoral	Leadership Communication	Climate-Informed Public Health: Investigating the role of sustainable behavioural shifts in mitigating climate health impacts.	
Madeleine	Pike	Master's	Public Health	Nutritional, Microbiological, and Feasibility Evaluation of Sorghum-Based Hummus	Valentina Trinetta
Rachael	Cox	Doctoral	Curriculum and Instruction	Professional development for secondary English Language Arts teachers in rural, suburban, and urban contexts	Vicki Sherbert



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Heat 2

9:45 - 11:00am | Flinthills Room K-State Student Union

First Name	Last Name	Degree	Program	Tentative Title	Faculty Mentor(s)
Abby	Vollmar	Master's	Plant Pathology	Have You Ever Seen The Rain: Monitoring Environmental Impacts on Common Bunt Incidence	Erick DeWolf
Aprajita	Jha	Doctoral	Biochemistry	Can Bacteria Teach Us to Make Better Immune Therapies?	Brandon L. Garcia
Sandhya	Gopisetty	Doctoral	Plant Pathology	From Field to Food: A Toxic Fungus Story	Christopher Toomajian
Shubhangi	Arvelli	Doctoral	Biological and Agricultural Engineering	From trash to cash	Jikai Zhao
NISHADINI	WIDANAGAMAGE	Doctoral	Agronomy	Predicting soil properties using soil color	Gaurav Jha

Dhanashree Rajesh	Gaidhani	Master's	Grain Science	Unlocking Pathways to Greener Proteins from Pinto Beans	Kaliramesh Siliveru
Loveleen	Dhillon	Master's	Biochemistry	Dissecting the defense pathway in wheat against hessian fly.	Ming Shun Chen
Kelechi	Igwe	Doctoral	Biological and Agricultural Engineering	Beyond the Visible: An Early Warning System for Detecting Water Stress in Maize	Vaishali Sharda
Ngoc Huy	Truong	Doctoral	Mathematics	Modulus theory on networks	Pietro Poggi-Corradini
Saurav	Pantha	Doctoral	Pathobiology	Sex, Obesity and Immune response: A metabolic drama	Santosh Dhakal
Elana	Arazi	Master's	Agronomy	From the Roots Up: Selecting Crops for a Changing Climate	Terry Felderhoff, Charles Rice



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Heat 3

10:45am - 12:00pm | 227 K-State Student Union

First Name	Last Name	Degree	Program	Tentative Title	Faculty Mentor(s)
Nilofar	Arabi	Master's	Biological and Agricultural Engineering	Ion-Exchange Resin Optimization for Food-Grade Purification for Tagatose-galactose syrup produced via CaO-Catalyzed Isomerization and CO2 Neutralization	Jikai Zhao
Ruchi	Chauhan	Doctoral	Food Science	Effect of dry heat treatment on low falling number wheat for food applications	J. Scott Smith
Amelia	Huebsch	Master's	Grain Science	Effects of 2% betaine intake in domestic cats	Julia Pezzali

Sumit	Chowdhury	Doctoral	Plant Pathology	How a Fungal Pathogen Adapts to Crops and Climate	Chris Toomajian
Meghan	Rice	Doctoral	Chemistry	Molecules with a Mission: Nature “Inspired Drug Delivery Systems	Ryan Rafferty
Niranjana	Unnithan	Doctoral	Computer Science	On Random Seeding for Influence Maximization in Private Graphs: Balancing Privacy and Utility	Geroge Amariuca, Bala Natarajan
Mostafa	Sadeghnejad	Doctoral	Geography	Predicting Landslides Before They Happen	Laura Moley
Mauro	Platero	Master's	Agronomy	Grain Sorghum Nitrogen Use Efficiency	Dorivar Ruiz Díaz
Prudhvira	Dhanapala	Doctoral	Electrical and Computer Engineering	Community-Centric Distributed Generation Planning in Power Grids	Balasubramaniam Natarajan
Olusola	Olagunju-Yusuf	Doctoral	Grain Science	Teaching Computers to See and Grade Wheat: An Optimized YOLO11 Model for Automated Grain Assessment	Yonghui Li
Sourajit	Dey	Doctoral	Agronomy	When Lesser is Better: Rethinking Irrigation Management for Alfalfa Production	Doohong Min, Gaurav Jha



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Heat 4
11:15am - 12:30pm | Flinthills Room K-State Student Union

First Name	Last Name	Degree	Program	Tentative Title	Faculty Mentor(s)
Yuri Adriano	Bezerra Gross	Master's	Agronomy	Adoption and perception of wheat and soybean relay intercropping from farmers in Kansas	Rachel Cott
Indira Priyadarshini	Lakkakula	Doctoral	Plant Pathology	Can plant hormones help fight disease?	Christopher Little
Shaghayegh	Janbazialamdari	Doctoral	Biological and Agricultural Engineering	Soil Compaction Prediction in Precision Agriculture Using Cultivator Shank Vibration and Soil Moisture Data	Edwin Brokesh
Luiza	Adami Monteiro de Castro	Doctoral	Genetics	From Water Bears to Stronger Plants: Building Drought Tolerant Wheat	Harold Trick
Victoria	Lopez	Master's	Food, Nutrition, Dietetics, and Health	Improving Sorghum Nutrition through Fermentation	Valentina Trinetta
Rajendra	Mishra	Doctoral	Agronomy	How Corn Has Been Breathing for 24 Years	Xiaomao Lin
Elif	Peker	Master's	Food Science	IMPROVING SORGHUM BYPRODUCTS FOR USE IN BIODEGRADABLE FOOD PACKAGING FILMS	Umut Yucel
Mir Tuhin	Billah	Doctoral	Grain Science	Lag Against the Machine - Using Data Science in Healthy Snack Processing	Sajid Alavi
Arijit	Roy	Doctoral	Mechanical Engineering	TMD alloy as anode material for alkali-ion batteries	Gurpreet Singh
Prativa	Bhatta	Master's	Biology	Transcriptional impact of Borrelia burgdorferi CyaB at host pathogen interface	Vanessa Ante
Vikas Kumar	Galipothu	Doctoral	Horticulture and Natural Resources	UV LIGHT AS A SANITATION TOOL IN FRESH PRODUCE SAFETY	Manreet Bhullar

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Heat 5

1:15 - 2:30pm | 227 K-State Student Union

First Name	Last Name	Degree	Program	Tentative Title	Faculty Mentor(s)
Giovanna	teixeira sandoval Moreira	Doctoral	Plant Pathology	Editing Wheat Gene to Combat Viral Threats	Harold Trick, John Fellers
Jannat Ara	Jabin	Master's	Civil Engineering	Evaluation of Prestressing Strand Bond with Type I/II and IL Cement	Parth Panchmatia
Sabreena	Parray	Doctoral	Agronomy	From Field to Feed: Breeding Forage Sorghum	Terry Felderhoff, Ramasamy Perumal
Nishadi	Dodampe Mudiyansele	Doctoral	Agronomy	Hidden Lead Exposure in Household Dust	Ganga Hettiarachchi
Lee J	Hinkle	Doctoral	Health and Human Sciences - Kinesiology	Learning from living history: Neuromuscular lessons from aging athletes.	Joshua Carr
Elisa	Tobar	Doctoral	Food, Nutrition, Dietetics and Health	Multispecies Biofilm Dynamics and Sanitizer Tolerance in Food Processing Environments	Valentina Trinetta
Asmita	Mahara	Doctoral	Biological and Agricultural Engineering	Nature's Cleanup Crew for Toxic Wastewater treatment	Mark R Wilkins
Nayara	Mota Miranda Soares	Doctoral	Grain Science	Producing sustainable dog food without compromising on taste	Julia Guazzelli Pezzali
Jasmine	Mehalic	Master's	Animal Science	Turning Cashew Byproducts into a Tool to Reduce Cattle Methane Emissions	Evan Titgemeyer
Aashna	Srivastava	Doctoral	Biochemistry	What's that on the surface of Lyme disease borrelia surface?: New proteins, old functions!	Brandon Garcia
Shristy	Budha Magar	Master's	Veterinary Biomedical Sciences		Santosh Dhakal

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Heat 6

1:45 -3:00pm | Flinthills Room K-State Student Union

First Name	Last Name	Degree	Program	Tentative Title	Faculty Mentor(s)
SHRUTHI	PULLANGARI	Doctoral	Genetics	Dissecting the Genetic Basis of Chinch Bug Resistance in Sorghum Using Genome-Wide Association Analysis	Terry Felderhoff, Harold Trick
Nilsson	Toro	Master's	Food, Nutrition, Dietetics, and Health	Evaluation of Cleaning and Disinfection Strategies to Control Escherichia coli aggregate and biofilms in the Swine Transportation Industry	Valentina Trinetta
Inisa	Shrestha	Master's	Plant Pathology	Fungal Mycobiome and secondary metabolites in corn	John Leslie
Shreyansh	Mishra	Doctoral	Industrial Engineering	Gas Sensors for Environmental Monitoring	Suprem Das
Audrey	Matheny	Doctoral	Pathobiology	Evaluation of licensed equine West Nile vaccines to cross protect domestic swine from Japanese encephalitis virus	Dana Vanlandingham
ABHINASH	BODDEPALLI	Master's	Entomology	Outsmarting Storage Pests Through Innovative Packaging	Kun Yan Zhu, Deanna Sheff
Nik	Carpenter	Doctoral	Health and Human Sciences - Kinesiology	Harnessing the Power of the Chili Pepper	Steven Copp
Dylan	Couch	Doctoral	Electrical and Computer Engineering	Improving brain cancer detection rates using quantum computing	Samee Khan
Nomenatiana	Bakoalijaona	Master's	Food Science	Health of Our Planet and Consumers - Addressing the Challenge at its Roots with Use of Kernza in Foods	Sajid Alavi
Shirin	Sheikhzadeh	Doctoral	Grain Science	Solving Environmental and Health Challenges Layer-by-Layer: 3D Printing of Plant-Based Meats	Sajid Alavi

Katie	Janzen	Master's	Agronomy	Soybean Stress: Can Irrigation, Maturity Group, and Planting Date Help?	Tina Sullivan, DeAnn Presley
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Heat 7

2:45 - 4:00pm | 227 K-State Student Union

First Name	Last Name	Degree	Program	Tentative Title	Faculty Mentor(s)
Madison	Sultz	Master's	Agricultural Education and Communication	An analysis of crashes involving farm equipment in Kansas	Ed Brokesh, Jonathan Ulmer
Miracle	Okpala	Master's	English	ÄCërÄ¨ NnÄ©: Mother//Tongue	Traci Brimhall
Adji Zamtato	Gane-Bang	Master's	Agricultural Economics	Alternative Enterprise Opportunities for Western Kansas in the Face of Declining Water Availability: The Case of Sesame	Vincent Amanor-Boadu
Allison	Taylor	Master's	History	Carrier vs. Carrier: A Sailors Perspective of the Five Aircraft Carrier Battles of the Pacific War	Marjorie Galelli
Moloud	Sivandian	Doctoral	Health and Human Sciences - Couple and Family Therapy	Factors Predicting Relationship Instability in a Clinic Sample	
Faridah	Abraham	Master's	Communication Studies	Health Literacy: The Silent Crisis we cant Ignore	Samuel Mwangi
Adam	Hedelund	Doctoral	Health and Human Sciences - Couple and Family Therapy	Navigating Loss: A Phenomenological Study of Bereavement Among International College Students	Joyce Baptist
Lucas	Watson	Doctoral	Psychology	Predicting your next move: Identifying shorthand strategies humans use to choose where to go next in a video game	Gary Brase
Abena	Damuah	Doctoral	Agricultural Economics	The Structure of Food Manufacturing in Kansas	Vincent Amanor-Boadu

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Heat 8

3:15 - 4:30pm | Flinthills Room K-State Student Union

First Name	Last Name	Degree	Program	Tentative Title	Faculty Mentor(s)
MaRyka	Smith	Doctoral	Pathobiology	Cattle traceability: The ABCs of foot-and-mouth disease and electronic identification.	Mike Sanderson
Sudan	Baral	Master's	Biological and Agricultural Engineering	Design and Dynamic Modelling of Skid-steer Robotic Platform in Nvidia Isaac Sim	Ajay Sharda
Alex	Hutchinson	Doctoral	Grain Science	Freezer Burn No More: Antifreeze Peptides to Reduce Ice Recrystallization in Frozen Foods	Yonghui Li
Msgina	Aregawi	Master's	Biological and Agricultural Engineering	Growing crops when water is limited	Jonathan Aguilar
David	Hayes	Doctoral	Microbiology	How do fungi kill mosquito larvae?	Kristin Michel
Aytug	Ulutas	Doctoral	Genetics	How Plant Proteins Talk to Lipids: Unraveling the Hidden Conversations in Plants	Kathrin Schrick
Shubham	Kumar	Master's	Horticulture and Natural Resources - Urban Food Systems	Production of June-bearing strawberries in late season	Ravneet Sandhu
TAMIMA	RASHID	Doctoral	Electrical and Computer Engineering	Spatiotemporal imputation with Uncertainty Quantification	Bala Natarajan
Sadaf	Azhar	Doctoral	Food Science	THE EFFECT OF SOY PROTEIN ISOLATE AND ENZYMES ON FARINOGRAPH PROPERTIES OF WHEAT FLOUR	Kelly Getty, Elisa Karkle

Vidya	Nadar	Doctoral	Chemistry	Transforming a Picture Into Hope: Building a Potential Cancer Fighting Molecule	Ryan Rafferty
UDIT	DEBANGSHI	Doctoral	Agronomy	Using AI and Radar to Save Water in Kansas	Gaurav Jha
Olamide	Adesina	Doctoral	Plant Pathology	Understanding Maize Resistance to Bacteria Disease	Sanzhen Liu