Grad Thesis SLAM Timeline

**February 15 - 29: Recommended Activities**

* Start thinking of one or two main points/takeaways for your presentation.
* Watch and analyze videos of previous winners. What is most engaging? How does the presenter speak? What language do they use to describe their research? Etc.
* Start an initial outline and the first few paragraphs of your talk. Keep it conversational!

**February 29, 3:00 – 4:30 pm: Preparation Series, Session 2:** Engaging Your Audience & Telling a Compelling Story (virtual)

* Brainstorm story options and other engaging aspects of your research to use in your talk.
* Refine your outline, applying story structure elements.

**March 1 - 14: Recommended Activities**

* Brainstorm potential resources you *could* use, including prop, audio, and video ideas.
* Start drafting your slide – bring your rough slide and presentation ideas to share during Session 3.

***March 4-8:*** *Spring Break – if you’re going to be seeing family and friends, talk to them about your research. Take note of what they find most interesting, what confuses them, etc.*

**March 14, 3:00 – 4:30 pm:** **Preparation Series, Session 3:** Slide Design & Presentation Skills (virtual)

* Finish designing your slide and polishing your presentation.

**March 15 - 21: Recommended Activities**

* Start practicing and refining your presentation. Practice placing emphasis, pausing, and using vocal variety (i.e., pace, volume, tone).
* Clock your speaking speed – aim for 110-140 words per minute.
* Record yourself giving your talk. Note your hand movements, posture, eye movements, filler words, etc. Then, record yourself again–practice controlling those aspects of the performance.
* Watch for more information on Virtual Office Hours with Sam and/or Kelly, where you can drop in and ask questions or get feedback on aspects of your presentation!

**March 21 or 22, 3:00 – 4:30 pm:** **Preparation Series, Session 4:** Practice Your Presentation & Receive Peer Feedback (*in person*)

* Practice your presentation in a supportive setting, and get and give supportive and constructive feedback.
* ***All competitors MUST do one practice session*** (~20 minutes) with Sam or Kelly, either as part of a Preparation Series group practice session or in one-on-one consultation.

**April 1 - 5: Preliminary Competition** (*in person*)

* **In this round, each competitor will have one opportunity to present to a small panel of judges.**
* **These presentations take place in person‑you will be provided a poll to help identify a date/time.**

**April 8 - 12: Recommended Activities** *(If selected for final competition)*

* Revise and practice using provided feedback from the Preliminary Round.
* Meet with Sam and/or Kelly to ask questions or get more feedback and recommendations.

**April 16: Final Grad Thesis SLAM Final Competition** (*in person*)

* **This event is free and open to the public, so tell your friends to come cheer you on!**
* **The Final Competition will take place in Alumni Hall, with the closest parking located in the Central Grounds Parking Deck.**