1. Explain Media Richness in your own words.

The richness of media seems to be a measure of its timeliness, effectiveness, multi-dimensionality, directionality, and ease of use for the greatest range of spectrum of explicit and implicit message components delivered by it.

2. What are the four criteria used to judge Media Richness?

According to Dr. Newberry's article that I read for session-3, Media Theory uses the following metrics to determine media richness:

> **"First** is the *availability* of instant feedback;
>
> **Second** the *capacity* of the medium to transmit cues such as facial expression, body language and tone of voice;
>
> **Third** the *ability* of the medium to permit the communicator to use natural language; and
>
> **Forth**, the personal *focus* of the medium. "

3. Choose 4 or 5 technologies you might use in an online class and rate them on the four criteria.   Using these ratings suggest some eLearning activity that might or might not be appropriate for each technology you rate.   Explain your reasons.

A. **PowerPoints**-- to convey audio and visual messages, for lectures and/or labs;
B. **Podcasts**-- to convey audio-only messages to students;
C. **Adobe Acrobat pdf-Documents**-- to convey lecture/lab information;
D. **Skype**—to communicate interactively with students online;
E. **Email**—for back and forth questions and answer sessions, related to the course.
    (I know there are many others, but these are my five.)

I would grade these technologies, as follows, based upon the reasons listed:

A. **PowerPoints**—dual-channeling possible (good, rich, if used), can use text, stills, video & sound (good, rich, if used); can have high cognitive load (bad) depending on how it is used--attention multiplexing can impede learning, acting as a distraction (bad); is unidirectional (poor, lower richness, limited social presence): **grade=C+**

B. **Podcasts**--audio-only means attention can wonder if no text or other visual (bad), no dual-channeling (inefficient use of time vs. capacity to learn);unidirectional (poor, lower richness, limited social presence): **grade=C**

C. **Adobe Acrobat pdf-Documents**—no audio information; text and still graphics are the only available content (poorest, except for visual/symbolic learners); unidirectional (poorest, lowest richness, lowest social presence): **grade=D**

D. **Skype**—active audio and video of each participant (good); multiple simultaneous, non-co-located logins are possible (good); limited quality and responsiveness when non-co-located users login beyond three (bad, if more needed); bidirectional communications, near real-time feedback is possible (very good); can convey gestures (implicit info), as well as explicit words (richer content); this is the highest media richness of all these listed, with the highest social presence, in my view, having used it(very good); **grade=B+**

E. **Email**—text-based medium (poor, non-rich, possibly OK-to-great social presence, but not always); half-duplex, asynchronous medium, with possible high latency on replies without diligent monitoring of email on both, or all, ends (can be poor richness of medium, multiple-user dependent timing); can have relatively high or low social presence, dependent upon turn-around time on message replies, and follow-on replies (good, or bad, depending on users); sequential, rather than simultaneous bidirectional capability, even if somewhat synchronous (OK, or bad, depending on users, but still sequential send and receive of messages); very convenient, if widely varying schedules—one might send email at 3am, but would not normally dare to make phone call at that early hour); does not unambiguously deliver message content (can be easily misinterpreted without emoticons, or even with them—bad; poor richness; possibly poor social presence); cannot send implicit messages, like body language, with reduces media richness and social presence marks): **grade range (depends on users)=F to C+, at best.**

4. Explain Social Presence in your own words.

In an online environment, social presence seems to be a measure of how a participant's relative perception of realness and significance is, with respect to any communication medium utilized within that environment.

5. Explain the difference between Social Presence and Media Richness.

Media richness can be more objectively judged, based upon the four characteristics of the media, listed in the answer of question-2, above (*availability, capacity, ability, and focus*). Whereas, social presence uses a subjective assessment that is based more on the conveyed reality and significance of the communications experience that is sensed by a participant.   Therefore, media richness can be judged without witnessing the communication actually occurring. Whereas, social presence is entirely dependent upon an observer's perception of the medium's communication event actually happening.

6. Provide some Issues or Trends in eLearning that you are interested in pursuing for your annotated bibliography.   Remember, the annotated bibliography is NOT due this session!

(A) Effectiveness, appeal, and student satisfaction with respect to online media and tools; (B) best ways to present information; (C) how to make online courses more interactive; (D) best implementation of CMS/LMS tools, (E)maximizing media richness and/or social presence in an eLearning system, and (F) overall best practices for the preparatory design and end-use of eLearning systems.

Additionally, an issue that has really bothered me for some time is (G) how an instructor can be sure if the online student is cheating; also, if it is really someone else, who is being paid to take the course, and/or tests, for another registered student, rather than the registered student—what is being done to prevent all forms of cheating and fraud? After all, some programs are completely online. How can we be sure that ALL students deserve the degrees and/or certificates that are awarded to them? If the online students are local, they can be forced to take F2F, proctored exams in a local library or testing center. But, what if an online student is taking classes from another country? They cannot be reasonably forced to come here to take a proctored exam. How do we check them for cheating or fraud? I realize that this may be WAY off the topic of eLearning, and might more appropriately be in the area of computer security. But, I am still wondering about how this issue affects the credibility of online educational degrees and certificates related to ETEC. After all, my CSUSB experience has mostly been online. How will this affect how I am viewed after I have my online degrees and certificate? Should potential employers be wary of hiring someone with a strictly online degree or certificate? And, (H) if I am teaching a Blackboard class in the future, what precautions can I take to minimize these potential opportunities for student cheating and/or fraud in my course?

(7) Provide three articles that you think you might include in your annotated bibliography and explain how they are related to the trend or issue you are interested in having at the center of your annotated bibliography. Be sure to use APA formatting to present these three citations.

References (how social presence and media richness affect effectiveness and satisfaction online)

Hostetter, C., & Busch, M. (2006). Measuring up Online: The Relationship between Social Presence and Student Learning Satisfaction. *Journal Of Scholarship Of Teaching And Learning*, *6*(2), 1-12.

Havice, P. A., Davis, T. T., Foxx, K. W., & Havice, W. L. (2010). The Impact of Rich Media Presentations on a Distributed Learning Environment: Engagement and Satisfaction of Undergraduate Students. *Quarterly Review Of Distance Education*, *11*(1), 53-58.

Borup, J., West, R. E., & Graham, C. R. (2013). The Influence of Asynchronous Video Communication on Learner Social Presence: A Narrative Analysis of Four Cases. *Distance Education*, *34*(1), 48-63.

Session-3 got me interested in learning more about social presence and media richness online.