1. Define Persuasion

Persuasion is the use of media and speech to alter a person's stance on some subject or idea toward some desired end for either the speaker or the listener.

2. Describe the following theories in your own words.

**Theory of Reasoned Action:** our attitudes and ideas regarding specific subjects can be altered through our behavior regarding the subject and the ideas of our peers.

**Narrative Theories**: Stories are more effective as a persuasive medium than facts and arguments alone.

**SNM**:

**SMCR:** The basic idea that all persuasion breaks down into four distinct parts; Source, Message, Channel, and Receiver. The source being the sender of some message, the message being an idea or some form of persuasion, channel being the way a message is sent to the receiver, and the receiver is the person who takes the message and evaluates it.

**ELM**: Is the idea that people will process some message in one of two ways, peripherally or centrally. Peripheral processing is used when something is given little thought because it may not be worth the effort to process centrally or because we deem it unimportant, it requires little effort and is based on previous knowledge and experiences. Central processing is used for ideas and subjects that we can't immediately process using our peripherals. This is more active thought and uses information presented regarding the subject.

**Rank’s Model Of Persuasion:** This model states that people have a set of 6 tools to use and four methods of using them. We can downplay our weaknesses or our opponent’s strengths through omission, diversion, and confusion. We can also play to our strength’s and our opponents weakness through repetition, association, and composition.

3. Identify which of the above theories is most important for your major.

I would say that ELM is probably the most important for my major, that being Computer Science. Since computers can move massive amounts of info in front of your face in less time than it takes to make a microwave burrito, you can end up not processing all of it with a lot of care. Facebook and other companies use this to their advantage forcing you to peripherally process the ads that they post. Computers can present massive amounts of information that can either be peripherally or centrally. So it is important that I have understanding about how the human mind processes information since computers can present information in many ways.

4. Briefly describe the historical roots of persuasion.

Persuasion started with Aristotle (and probably Socrates and Plato, but they were sticklers for not having their ideas recorded). Aristotle produced the idea of Rhetoric and the Proofs, rhetoric being the capability of people to observe means of persuasion. Aristotle also based persuasion on the proofs of pathos, ethos, and logos. Which are inartistic and the artistic proofs such as evidence. From there the roman students developed ideas on what needed to be included in persuasive speech. Like inventing or discovering evidence, organizing it, styling, memorization, and delivering them skillfully. From there Brembeck and Howell redefined persuasion as “conscious attempts to modify thought and action by manipulating the motives of men toward predetermined ends.” Then Kenneth burke defined persuasion as artful use of the resources of ambiguity, this is where Burke came up with the concept of identification between the speaker and listeners. Finally, we get to Larson and Simons, although Simons much earlier who define persuasion as a co-creation of ideas between the speaker and listeners.

5. Why is culture an important consideration in a study of persuasion?

Because culture determines a portion of our identity and how we process messages. I used the example of Middle Eastern culture, they believe that showing the soles of your feet or the bottom of your shoes to be very rude. If an ad shows someone from below and it shows their feet pointing at the viewer, then Middle Easterners might be very offended. Other examples of major differences in culture is the dragon, Westerners see the dragon as a thing to be fought or destroyed, like the story of Saint George and the Dragon. However, people from Eastern Asia see the dragon as a source of wisdom or knowledge, people who are capable are likened to them.