I. Course Summary

This course integrates films and documentaries on the experience of dementia with the most recent innovative and very recent books on the topic. We will alternate film sessions (with some time for discussion) and book sessions. Film sessions will sometimes involve viewing a film in class, but will more often require you to view the film as class preparation via Netflix or whatever on-line venue you prefer. The readings will resonate with the films.

II. Course Format & Requirements

This course will be run as a graduate seminar, with two students responsible for co-facilitating each class. Attendance and active participation at each session is essential.

III. Books to Order


INTRODUCTION

*Week 1 (January 24)*

Initial thoughts on dementia

*Watch in Class*

*Alive Inside* (Dir. Rossoto-Bennett, 1 hour)

Discussion points:
- What does “alive inside” refer to and do you believe it?
- Is it too optimistic?
- Why is “continuing” selfhood important in an ethical sense?
- What do you think of Dan Cohen’s “mission”?
Readings

**TOPIC ONE: Physician Assisted Suicide and Progressive Dementia?**

**Week 2 (January 31)**

*Preparation:*
Watch *Still Alice* before class, and write a one-page paper (double-spaced) with one paragraph stating your best case against allowing pre-emptive assisted suicide for people with progressive dementia (of course, while they are still able to act), and your best case for disallowing this. This should be polished and well-crafted. You will each be asked to refer to your paragraphs and discuss. Hand these in in hard copy at the end of class. (4 points)

*Reading:*


**Week 3 (February 7)**

*Preparation:*
Watch *A Song for Martin* before class, and write a two-page reflection on it for class. This should be polished and well-crafted. (4 points)

*Readings*


**TOPIC TWO: SUBJECTIVE EXPERIENCE**

**Week 4 (February 14)**

*Preparation*
Watch *Away From Her* before class, and write a two-page reflection on it for class. (4 points)

*Readings*

**Week 5 (February 21)**

*Preparation*
Watch *Iris* before class, and write a two-page reflection on it for class. (4 points)

*Readings*

**TOPIC THREE: PERSONHOOD AND SELF-IDENTITY**

**Week 6 (February 28)**

*Readings*
Sam Fazio, *The Enduring Self in People with Alzheimer’s* (Baltimore: Health Professional’s Press, 2008) [chapters to be available in pdf form from SGP]

**Week 7 (March 7)**

*Watch in Class*
*You’re Looking at Me Like I Live Here and I Don’t*

*Discussion*

(NO CLASS SPRING BREAK MARCH 14)
TOPIC FOUR: ETHICAL ISSUES ACROSS THE PROGRESSION

Week 8 (March 21)

Readings
The Spectrum of Hope, chapters 1-8

Week 9 (March 28)

Readings
The Spectrum of Hope, chapters 9-16

TOPIC FIVE: POSITIVE PSYCHOLOGY APPROACHES TO DEMENTIA

Week 10 (April 4)

Readings
Positive Psychology Approaches to Dementia (chapters 1-5)

Week 11 (April 11)

Readings
Positive Psychology Approaches to Dementia (chapters 6 - 10)

CLASS PRESENTATIONS FOR RESEARCH PAPERS
WEEKS 12, 13 & 14 (April 18, April 26 & May 3)

Assigned Topics (these are not final)
1. Is PAS Ethically Acceptable in this Population
2. The Ethics of Diagnosis
3. Freedom and It’s Limits
4. Hypercognitive Bias and Personhood
5. Anti-dementia Drugs and Quality of Life
6. Communication
7. The Caregiver and Meaning
8. Sexual Intimacy and Integrity
9. The Problem of Pain
10. Feeding and PEGS
11. Dying
Etc.

Class Presentations of Rough Drafts for Papers with Peer Feedback (5-7 Powerpoint Slides)
1. Big Question and Significance
2. Thesis and Approach
3. Outline with Clear Headings
4. Conclusions and New Questions Raised
5. Seven References Beyond Assigned Readings
Grading

Reflective Responses to Movies (30 points)

Class Participation (10 points)

Presentation (10 points)

Research Paper (50 points)

From Official Stony Brook University Policy:
Statements required to appear in all syllabi on the Stony Brook campus: Americans with Disabilities Act:
If you have a physical, psychological, medical or learning disability that may impact your course work, please contact Disability Support Services, ECC (Educational Communications Center) Building, room128, (631) 632-6748. They will determine with you what accommodations, if any, are necessary and appropriate. All information and documentation is confidential.

Academic Integrity:
Each student must pursue his or her academic goals honestly and be personally accountable for all submitted work. Representing another person's work as your own is always wrong. Faculty are required to report and suspected instances of academic dishonesty to the Academic Judiciary. Faculty in the Health Sciences Center (Schools of Health Technology & Management, Nursing, Social Welfare, Dental Medicine) and School of Medicine are required to follow their school-specific procedures. For more comprehensive information on academic integrity, including categories of academic dishonesty, please refer to the academic judiciary website at http://www.stonybrook.edu/uaa/academicjudiciary/

Critical Incident Management:
Stony Brook University expects students to respect the rights, privileges, and property of other people. Faculty are required to report to the Office of Judicial Affairs any disruptive behavior that interrupts their ability to teach, compromises the safety of the learning environment, or inhibits students' ability to learn. Faculty in the HSC Schools and School of Medicine are required to follow their school-specific procedures.