How does color influence us? Do we actually stop and think about the effect of color in our daily and professional lives? Does color change the way we act, think, proceed through the day—the choices we make? How much do we know about color? How does color matter?

Seeing and perceiving color is a sensory experience that depends on different conditions and one’s own awareness. It is a complex process involving physics, psychology, and culture. In this course students will learn about theories of color and examine how these theories have changed over time as a result of scientific discoveries and cultural shifts, including principal color systems, methods of color harmony, effects of visual phenomena, and cultural and historical implications—and how its application gives form to design intent. The course format includes lectures and discussions and focuses on readings and project reviews.

The projects will provide an opportunity to practice applying key color design principles. Selected student projects will be presented, reviewed and discussed in class. All projects and exams are graded on a percentage basis. Graduate students will also complete a presentation on an assigned topic. Midterm and final-exam will cover readings, lectures, lab sessions and projects.

References: Josef Albers, Willi Baumeister, David Batchelor, Faber Birren, Adolf Hoelzel, Paul Klee, Albert Munsell, Michel Pastoureau, Sauerbruch-Hutton, Fritz Seitz.