

EXERCISES TO ACCOMPANY:

CHAPTER 1:

WHAT IS COLOUR FORECASTING?

Exercise 1: Colour awareness

Objectives:

This series of exercises is aimed at introducing colour and how it is used in fashion and fashion-related products.

Strategy:

Research

Research can be prepared before the lessons or these two points can be used as an introductory lesson into research methodology.

- Using the trend forecast information that is available to you as a starting point, examine the key colour themes that have been promoted at the fibre or fabric trade fairs and the international designer collections. These are reviewed in seasonal trade magazines, online trend and reportage services, or published trend bureau packages. Also look at the current fashion publications for styling features and retail selections.
- Begin to develop your own observational and reasoning skills in order to assess and evaluate the changes in colour direction and timing. Build your own information resource by using a sketchbook and a camera, make notes and record the colours that are available at retail and those that you see actually being worn or used by the different types of consumer.

Developing an awareness of the commercial use of colour

Focus on one colour story throughout the following stages.

- Select one current colour story that you believe to be influential or commercially successful and collect visual information that supports your theory.
- Examine the possible reasons why this colour story has resonated with the consumer at this particular time. Colour is an important part of the product appeal but it may be that there are other elements that contribute to its overall success.
- Is there a cultural or historical reference that may have inspired the selected colour story? Consider how this can be interpreted across the different market sectors.

- Examine the key colour directions for the current season and identify your selected colour story. How has it been interpreted and promoted by different brands?

Task/outcome:

- Using your research information and relevant imagery create one mood board (A2 or A3 depending on preference) that illustrates the colour story and its subsequent development through the different levels, segments, or price points of the fashion market. Present and discuss the completed mood board.

Reading:

Chapter 1 pages 8 to 33 – an overview of colour forecasting
Chapter 5 pages 108 to 127 – inspiration, research and storyboard building

Notes for instructor:

- Depending on the size of the student cohort, the colour awareness workshop/exercises can be conducted individually or in small groups – teams of three to five work well.
- Each student should carry out his or her own research, and if this becomes a group project each individual will have contributed from the beginning.
- All of the stages are component parts of a whole workshop and, ideally, students should complete all of the stages.
- The research is the foundation for the colour awareness and task/outcome exercises and can be completed as preparation for the workshop. The first research point can be used as an introductory lesson into research methodology, with the second point used as a field trip.

Timing: This will depend on individual teaching schedules, and will also vary depending on whether it is an individual or group project. If enough research has been carried out beforehand, the tasks and final outcome can be completed as a two day workshop, otherwise this could be two to four days in total.

EXERCISES TO ACCOMPANY:

CHAPTER 2:

WHY AND HOW HAS COLOUR FORECASTING EVOLVED?

Exercise 2: Analyzing colour evolution

Objectives:

This exercise explores the importance of colour in fashion and how colour has evolved into the commercial discipline of today.

Strategy:

Research

- Examine the historical context of colour in costume by comparing the imagery from different artworks and paintings. Are there any colours that seem to be significant to a particular period of time, subject matter, or style?
- Look at the fashion illustrations, photographs, and film from the early twentieth century to the present day. Consider the way in which the fashions have been presented and analyze the style and the eventual market.
- Using available resources compare colour palettes from the same season. Look at the different ways in which the colours can be presented such as book or card format with tactile yarn tassels, fabric and paper swatches, or digital colour representations from online trend bureaux.

Analysis of colour evolution

- Compare the colour palettes produced by trend bureaux with a selection of colour palettes from fibre and fabric manufacturers from the same season and note the differences.
- Evaluate the changes in colour preference and consider the external influences that have contributed to this change.
- Technical developments in dyestuffs, fibres and fabrics have continued to expand the choice of colour for the consumer. Identify the pivotal points in the evolution of commercial colour production.

Task/outcome:

- The research documenting your findings with text and visuals can be presented in a fully referenced research folder.

Reading:

pages 36 to 63

Notes for instructor:

- All of the stages are component parts of a whole exercise and, ideally, students should complete all of the stages.
- The research is the foundation for the colour evolution analysis and outcome/task points. This can be based on a museum field trip, university library visit or independently.
- Depending on the size of the student cohort, the colour evolution analysis stages can be conducted individually or in small groups – teams of three to five work well.
- Each student should carry out his or her own research, and if this becomes a group project each individual will have contributed from the beginning.

Timing: This will vary depending on individual teaching schedules.

EXERCISES TO ACCOMPANY:

CHAPTER 3:

THE LANGUAGE OF COLOUR

Exercise 3: Understanding colour mixing

Objectives:

Using these exercises you can begin to put the theory and language of colour into practice and develop a clear understanding of colour mixing and the application to palettes.

Strategy:

Research

- There are several visual systems and structures that communicate colour information depending on the end use. Colour wheels are an efficient visual tool enabling us to see the reactions and interactions of colour. Identify the different colour wheels and systems and which visual art and design subjects they would be applied to.

Colour exercises

- Create your own twelve hue pigment colour wheel making notes of which are the primary, secondary and tertiary colours. You can mix paints to determine the hues, and also use papers, yarn or fabric samples to create individual colour combinations.
- You can also experiment with different types of palettes, for example, neutral combinations or a colour family group based around a single hue.
- Experiment with different colour schemes and consider the value, the saturation and the temperature of your colour selections as you play with the different colour harmonies discussed in this chapter:
 - analogous
 - complementary
 - split complementary
 - double split complementary
 - discordant
- Explore the more subtle possibilities of muted colour:
 - monochrome
 - achromatic
 - neutral

Task/outcome:

- This group of exercises can be completed as part of ongoing research and reference gathering.

Reading:

pages 66 to 83

Notes for instructor:

- The students do not need to complete all of the stages, although the research stage is important in order to gain a basic understanding of colour theory and increase their knowledge of colour.
- The colour exercises allow the student to experiment and play with different colour schemes and develop greater confidence in their knowledge of colour.
- Depending on the size of the student cohort, the exercises can be conducted individually, in pairs or in small groups

Timing: This will vary depending on individual teaching schedules.

EXERCISES TO ACCOMPANY:

CHAPTER 4:

UNDERSTANDING COLOUR CYCLES

Exercise 4: Tracking colour cycles

Objectives:

Colour cycles can be affected by social, cultural, technological and economic change. The purpose of these exercises is to identify influential changes, and track the development and progress of the trends at different levels of the commercial market.

Strategy:

You may select one or a combination of several of the following exercises to explore colour cycles using research books and working storyboards, with the final outcome being a Power Point presentation.

- Identify a particular colour family or combination and track its progress, when it first appeared on the fashion radar as a key colour and its varying positions in the market place. Is this a quick-fire fad that has a limited appeal or is the colour family more versatile with a longer commercial shelf life? The lifespan of the colour story can be demonstrated as a timeline.
- Use a research book or folder to collect and collate evidence of the development of the major colour stories that have featured over several consecutive seasons. How long has it taken for the colours to make an impact? Do the colours feature in a specific product area and then gradually become mainstream? Based on this evidence, create working storyboards that show a clear direction and development of a particular colour family of your choice. This can be the same family from a previous exercise or you can choose a different one. Use magazine tear sheets and your own street or retail photographs to build the story to support the initial trend information. This will help you to evaluate how the colour has been used over several seasons.
- By its very nature fashion is cyclical and historical style revivals often precipitate or inspire a related colour palette. Explore recent style revivals and examine the way that the colour has been selected and used. Research the history of a particular colour family again – this can be the same family as in a previous exercise or an alternative – and analyze any significant change in its use or popularity. Are the colours related to a particular period in time or style tribe and what is it that makes them relevant in the current climate?

- Consider how the colour palettes move from the early forecasts and international design collections through to retail or mail order, and how critical the timing is. Consider the potential longevity of the colour trends that you are researching. Document the movement of a specific colour story through the market levels in your research book.
- There are some colours or combinations that may only be popular for a single season. There are others that are popular for several seasons, which have gradually been updated so that they are still commercially relevant as consumer preferences change. Identify the origins and timeline of your particular colour selection and present the information in your research book.
- Major sports events, such as the Olympic Games and Football World Cup with their national colour identities are hugely influential. Other sporting events, such as the Winter Olympics, Tennis Grand Slams and the Golf Major championships, are also sources of inspiration. Examine the catwalk collections and retail ranges for the seasons that coincide with these sports events and identify the most influential colour combinations and their origins.

Task/outcome:

- Use the research findings from your selected exercises to develop into a Power Point presentation.

Reading:

pages 86 to 105

Notes for instructor:

- Depending on the size of the student cohort, the exercises can be conducted individually, in pairs or in small groups of three to five people.
- Each exercise can be worked as an individual or several worked together to build into a more comprehensive analysis of colour cycles.

Timing: This will vary depending on individual teaching schedules.

EXERCISES TO ACCOMPANY:

CHAPTER 5:

COLOUR FORECASTING TOOLS AND METHODOLOGIES

Exercise 5: Building a seasonal colour palette

Objectives:

Research is the first step in forecasting and the process is ongoing providing the forecaster with a factual foundation for a more intuitive or instinctive tuning in to change. This group of exercises aims to develop the skills to refine the process of building a commercial trend package and seasonal colour palette.

Strategy:

Research

- Developing and honing your observational skills is an ongoing process. Visit retail areas, markets and cultural and promotional events. When you are travelling, absorb the atmosphere and record what you see and hear. Take photographs and use a sketchbook to make notes or drawings. Keep collected images, magazine tear sheets, textile samples and old commercial colour cards to build into a visual knowledge and information archive.
- Compare commercial yarn or fabric colour cards that may be available to you with the trend predictions for the same season. Commercial palettes cater for specific product markets and although the colour selection reflects the seasonal trend directions, it will ultimately be driven by sales data. Identify the colours that appear on the catwalk and eventually at retail.

Building a colour palette

- As a seasonal starting point, review and analyze the current trends, the key colour stories that are already established on the catwalk and those that have filtered into the retail market. Make a note of any continuing colour themes that may have saturated the market, reached their peak or remained on the sale rails, and also examine the more innovative or individual palettes that may indicate change.
- As a projection for a new season, research contemporary issues, shifts in lifestyle interests and cultural trends that may influence future style tendencies. Use a large blank board or boards to assemble your inspirational visuals, colour snips and media references as a work in progress that can be added to, rearranged and analyzed as you begin to interpret the information. This serves as the factual evidence to support your intuitive inspirations.

- Based on the evidence you have gathered, and the themes and ideas that have begun to emerge, think about how you can further develop your information into coherent and relevant colour stories for a future season. Select the themes that you feel strongly about and create an individual board for each which concentrates on three to five statements. Match colour samples to the material already collected, adding and subtracting colours to refine each palette with approximately five to ten colours for each.
- Each storyboard should communicate a clear colour message. When you have several satisfactory colour stories that communicate a clear colour direction, you can begin to develop an overall colour palette on one board. There is no right or wrong way of creating an overall palette but one method to begin with is to rearrange the colour samples into light, mid tone, dark, neutral or bright levels, which will give you a good overview. Compare your developing palette with those of the previous seasons and identify the changes in the overall colour direction.
- You can work on the general colour directions for the season and then refine your ideas towards a more specific product application, market level and customer. Select a market area based on your ongoing research and colour palette development to create an appropriate colour palette. Identify the core or basic colours for the season as well as the more directional colours that will update the palette. Experiment with different combinations and proportions. Decide which colours work as the main shades or the accents.

Task/outcome:

- Present a selection of colour stories on boards, an overall colour palette and a colour storyboard for a market of your choice for a specific season.

Reading:

pages 108 to 137

Notes for instructor:

- Make sure that your students' research is ongoing.
- Depending on the size of the student cohort, the exercises can be conducted individually, in pairs or in small groups of three to five people.
- All of the stages are component parts of a whole and, ideally, students should complete all of the stages.

Timing: This will vary depending on individual teaching schedules.

EXERCISES TO ACCOMPANY:

CHAPTER 6:

COLOUR APPLICATION

Exercise 6: Exploring colour trends

Objectives:

The first set of exercises addresses the interpretation and application of colour trends directions to the varied levels of the market. The second set of exercises explores the application of seasonal colour trends to differing product areas and end use.

Strategy:

Interpretation and application of colour trends to varied levels of the market

Many brands and retailers now develop their own colour palettes for their target customer rather than just following the direction of subscription trend packages. Their colours are based on their in-house design research, overseas buying trips and consultations with independent colour forecasters.

- Visit at least three different brands, retailers or commercial websites at different levels of the market to analyze and compare seasonal colour stories. Use a storyboard format to assemble and map out the collected material.
- Examine the published retail reports and market analyses available (printed and online) and consider their findings in relation to the seasonal colour forecast information for the three brands that you have collated in the previous exercise.
- Select *three* fashion brands or retailers, either womenswear or menswear, from the different market levels listed below (with examples in brackets). Identify the colours or combinations that they have in common, make a note of any significant differences and consider how these relate to the brand's product and position in the market.
 - 1 Luxury designer brands (Boss, Burberry, Ralph Lauren, Loewe, Louis Vuitton, Zegna, etc.)
 - 2 Designer diffusion or bridge lines (DKNY, Marc by Marc Jacobs, Philosophy by Alberta Ferretti, See by Chloe, Adolfo Dominguez, etc.)
 - 3 Mid market/better retail brands (Reiss, Jigsaw, J Crew, Anthropologie, Kenneth Cole, etc.)
 - 4 Fast-fashion/mass market multiples (Topshop, Gap, Target, Zara, H&M, etc.)
- Look at the movement of colour directions from past and present seasons within the brands that you have selected and evaluate the longevity and versatility of individual colours and combinations and identify which have been the most successful colours over the current and preceding season (a Spring and Autumn season) and in which categories. It is

also a useful exercise to note the items that do not sell and explore the possible reasons why.

Application of seasonal colour trends to differing product areas and end use

Many brands and retailers are multi-disciplinary and work in different product areas. The following exercises reflect this diversity

- Select *three* different product areas of the market to research from the different product areas listed below (with examples in brackets).
 - 1 Fashion brands – menswear and womenswear (from designer to mass market)
 - 2 Sportswear brands (Nike, Adidas, Puma, North Face, Helly Hanson, etc.)
 - 3 Cosmetics (Chanel, Estee Lauder, L'Oreal, Maybelline, etc.)
 - 4 Accessories (Mulberry, Manolo Blahnik, Kate Spade, Prada, Calvin Klein, etc.)
 - 5 Home and Interior (Ralph Lauren, Armani Casa, Designer Guild, Zara Home, etc.)
- Using an inspirational trend direction for a specific season, create colour stories for the three different areas, and consider the differences between the product applications.
- Choose a colour story that you consider unusual or unexpected in its application or a colour that has crossed the product or market boundaries and analyze the possible reasons for this.
- Compare the fashion and interior markets and note how quickly a colour that features on the catwalk captures the spirit of the times and will have an impact on the mid and mass fashion markets, accessories, sportswear, cosmetics, and home and interior products.

Task/outcome:

- The research documenting your findings with text and visuals (primary and secondary research) can be presented in a fully referenced research folder.

Reading: pages 142 to 159

Notes for instructor:

- There are two sets of exercises that address the levels of the market and also the product area. These exercises can be briefed as two separate modules but also as complementary sides of a whole.

Timing: This will vary depending on individual teaching schedules and research time, but could be two to four days.

EXERCISES TO ACCOMPANY:

CHAPTER 7:

INTUITION AND INSPIRATION IN COLOUR FORECASTING

Exercise 7: Developing forecasting skills

Objectives:

The exercises below are designed to develop rational, observational and collecting skills, together with the more intuitive radar that alerts us to what may be new and different. The forecaster engages the rational and intuitive areas of the brain using measurable quantitative research to underpin visual observations and the creative insights.

Strategy:

- Develop your observational and collecting skills by absorbing and recording visual information. Ask yourself what looks new or interesting and why.
- Build up a bank of your visual inspirations by using your own primary research such as photographs, drawings, notes and secondary research such as media references and found materials. Discover your own personal preferences for recording and collating information.
- Look at a wide variety of imagery such as fashion styling, interior styling, paper and fabric patterns, magazines or packaging, and analyze the influences and inspirations behind the visuals and the colour. Increase your knowledge and experience by exploring subjects, places and activities that are out of your regular comfort zone.
- Overseas travel is an opportunity to observe, absorb, and enjoy different cultures and environments. Record the experience using photographs and sketchbooks, also collect items of interest that are specific to the area.
- Networking and collaborative sharing and exchanging of information can shed new light or offer a new perspective on emerging trend concepts.
- Take street photographs and look at the way that people wear clothes and how they put colours together. Examine the photographs and identify any common themes or colour relationships.
- Visit museums and art galleries and draw inspiration from both historical and contemporary exhibitions. Paintings and artefacts can provide the starting point for a colour concept. Use several related works from an exhibition that you find

interesting and create a colour story for a specific season and market based around your selected images.

- Explore vintage stores and markets to look at clothing and accessories from different eras and compare the colour combinations with contemporary pieces. Select a particular colour combination or palette that you intuitively feel could have a new relevance for a future season. Build a storyboard with factual evidence that may support your instincts.
- Explore the possibilities for a future season and use a large board to assemble all the different inspirational visuals, references and assorted fragments of information that you believe are relevant. In some cases there may not be any logical reason for a particular selection, but intuitively you will sense that it should be there. At first the board will seem to be a random collection, but gradually as you continue to add information, you will start to connect areas of interest by grouping images, text, snips of fabric, etc., together. At this point you will continue to research, but you will be more methodical and reasoned in your work, editing redundant pieces where necessary as clearer messages begin to emerge that indicate possible change and potential new trend direction.

Reading:

Chapter 7 pages 162 to 171

Chapter 1 pages 18 to 23

Chapter 2 pages 36 to 43

Notes for instructor:

- Students should be encouraged to develop their observational, intuitive and analytical skills. Gathering information, learning to read the signals and recognizing the shifts in lifestyle preferences are all part of the forecasting process.