The Image of Kyoto Seika University,
Utilizing the Techniques of Kevin Lynch’s *The Image of the City*

IMAGAWA Akemi

In a city planning lecture at Kyoto Seika University in the second semester of 2002, I discussed the ideas presented in Kevin Lynch’s book *The Image of the City*. Once the students understood Lynch’s theory, I then had them prepare an image map of the campus using his city planning techniques.

In *The Image of the City*, Lynch argues that what he calls "legibility" is decisively important to the urban environment. He further says that a legible city is an "imageable" city, or one that gives an observer a strong, vivid image, and suggests that increasing a city’s imageability can help make its environment more beautiful and more enjoyable.

To illustrate these ideas, Lynch carried out surveys in Boston, Jersey City, and Los Angeles, and presented the results in the form of maps. Using these as a reference, I had the students draw their image of Kyoto Seika University in map form. The students’ image of the campus could be seen to vary greatly depending on which faculty they belonged to. In particular, since Humanities and Arts students use different facilities on a regular basis, the areas where they spend their time on campus were separated along an east-west axis, with the Ryukeikan, the Honkan, and the Meisokan marking the boundary.

According to Lynch, imageability refers not to the way that a city is visualized by individuals but to images held in common by a group, and he calls the image that is shared by the majority of a city’s residents its "public image." Understanding the public image of Kyoto Seika University among its students should serve as a step toward involving them in designing and creating the university community.