

00011S01-Design Qualities

A. IMAGE AND CHARACTER

We have all felt a sense of being in a special place at one time or another. We feel it whenever we experience a building, open space or natural feature which has a special meaning, or leaves a memorable impression. These elements project a distinct image to us and they have a unique character which makes us form a lasting impression of them. Campus areas that are well-designed leave a positive image and are places in which people will choose to live, work and return to.

B. IDENTITY

Identity is that element of a place which helps to distinguish it from another. A sense of identity develops from those visual cues in an area that are different from any other place. Visual identifiers could be unique buildings or an interesting landscape. People remember places that are distinctive and have a unique, positive identity. Familiar visual cues and recognizable places make people feel comfortable in a campus setting and they encourage a feeling of ownership and a sense of pride.

C. ORGANIZATION AND PATTERN

The organization and pattern of a place are the ways the physical elements comprising a campus are put together. They address the relationship between streets, buildings, and open spaces.

Organization also relates to larger components of a campus, such as the library's location in relation to campus housing or the academic core. It deals with how streets are laid out and where they lead. Understanding these relationships make people feel comfortable and secure. An area that is visually understood, gives someone a sense of place and that helps orient people. Being able to visually understand the organization of a place and its pattern of land use helps make sense of unfamiliar surroundings. It fosters actions, and guides movement by providing familiar cues to which people can relate and it makes them feel comfortable. Good campus design strives to produce areas that are logical and can be understood by their users as well as those who designed them.

D. COMPATIBILITY AND HARMONY

The qualities of compatibility and harmony are critical to a well-designed campus. Buildings, streets, signs and green spaces that look as though they belong together and complement each other are much more appealing than areas that do not possess this quality. Compatibility means that the elements of campus form (for example building size or shape, color, age or density) within a given area have similar or complementary characteristics. Compatibility is the quality which allows individual elements to stand closely and harmoniously with one another.

E. VISUAL CLARITY

Visual Clarity is the quality of a landscape or campus zone that makes it appear organized, purposeful and cared for. Achieving visual clarity means eliminating distracting, inconsistent physical elements which clutter an area and leave a confused or negative impression. Visual clutter obscures character and diminishes the visual impression an area. Visual order and clarity help people orient themselves and suggests a sense of quality and concern for the needs of the inhabitants of the place.