

**THE HONG KONG SPECIAL ADMINISTRATIVE REGION:
MAKING “ONE COUNTRY, TWO SYSTEMS” WORK**

by

Percy Luen-Tim Lui

Charles T. Goodsell, Chairman

Center for Public Administration and Policy

(ABSTRACT)

The dissertation examines how the unprecedented principle, “one country, two systems,” can best work in Hong Kong. Because of the political, economic, legal, historical and cultural differences between Hong Kong and China, China pledges to let Hong Kong maintain its capitalist system and way of life. The Chinese socialist system and policies will not be practiced in Hong Kong. The Hong Kong people will have a high degree of autonomy in ruling themselves. The actual degree of autonomy that Hong Kong enjoys in governing itself will be the benchmark for evaluating whether the principle is a success or a failure. The best way for Hong Kong to secure its high degree of autonomy, this dissertation argues, is to construct an open and responsible government. To this end, this study proposes a series of institutional changes. These changes include: selecting the Chief Executive by universal suffrage; creating a system of ministerial responsibility; and enacting a freedom of information law. This study also suggests proposals to strengthen the operation of Hong Kong’s legislature, the Legislative Council (LegCo). These proposals include: removing restrictions on the legislators’ power to initiate “private members’ bills”; restoring the LegCo’s simple majority vote count system; and reforming the LegCo’s committee and staff support systems. The purpose of all these changes is to construct an open and responsible governmental system in Hong Kong. Field study included interviews with politicians and academics involved in Hong Kong politics, examining relevant government documents, academic studies, commentaries of the newspapers, and personal observation of the case. The ultimate aim of this dissertation is to contribute to the discussion now being conducted in Hong Kong on the creation of a responsible government and the successful implementation of the principle of “one country, two systems.”