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Maintaining Global Engagement in the Face of National Integration in Hong Kong

GERARD A. POSTIGLIONE

The retrocession of Hong Kong to Chinese sovereignty has far-reaching implications for the academic profession in Hong Kong's universities. In recovering sovereignty over Hong Kong in July 1997, the People's Republic of China (PRC) acquired seven universities—three of which are among the top 10 in Asia—with over 5,000 full-time academic staff.¹ At least five are larger than more than 90 percent of China's universities.²

Hong Kong universities and their faculty differ in fundamental ways from those on the mainland, especially in their distinct Western academic traditions and autonomy, as well as their organization, governance, finance, and institutional cultures. The greater global integration of academics in Hong Kong is as much a function of technological resources as of academic freedom.³ Maintaining Hong Kong's universities as they are is a major challenge for the new Special Administrative Region (SAR) government as well as Beijing.

Academics are the driving force in Hong Kong universities. Compared with China's professoriate, Hong Kong's has greater influence on the flow and control of knowledge, as well as on academic policies at the department, school, and institutional levels.⁴ This has been due not only to the freedom of Hong Kong society but also to the composition of the professoriate, which includes a high proportion of overseas Chinese (most with foreign pass-

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¹ Those seven universities are the University of Hong Kong, the Chinese University of Hong Kong, the Hong Kong University of Science and Technology, Hong Kong Baptist University, the City University of Hong Kong, the Hong Kong Polytechnic University, and the Open Learning University. Lingnan College will be elevated to university status in due course, and there may be eight universities in Hong Kong by the time this article appears. For figures on the number of academic staff, see data derived from reports of the University Grants Committee of Hong Kong. See also *Asiaweek* 23, no. 20 (May 23, 1997): 34–44.

² See *Zhongguo jiaoyu tongji nianjian, 1995* (Educational statistics yearbook of China, 1995) (Beijing: People's Education Press, 1996).

³ See Gerard A. Postiglione, "Hong Kong Higher Education within the Global Academy," in *Hong Kong's Reunion with China: The Global Dimensions*, ed. Gerard A. Postiglione and James T. H. Tang (New York: Sharpe, 1997), pp. 239–68.

⁴ See Ruth Hayhoe, *China's Universities and the Open Door* (New York: Sharpe, 1989).

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ports) and foreign academics (most from Western democracies).⁵ Although China's universities have become more open, with larger numbers of academic staff engaged in international exchange, Hong Kong's professionals remain more international in composition.⁶ Nevertheless, academic internationalism in Hong Kong usually is associated with links to Australia, Britain, Canada, and the United States, while China's is more globally inclusive.⁷

Hong Kong's recognized position as a key communications hub coupled with unrestricted university access to the internet ensures full participation in global academic discourse.⁸ Since the mid-1990s, there has been a great deal of internet traffic, in both English and Chinese, between academics in Hong Kong and mainland China. When this is combined with Beijing's encouragement of closer ties between Hong Kong and Chinese universities, the result is a vibrant academic discourse.⁹ At the same time, however, academics in China are subject to restrictions on their internet usage despite this increased access. The academic profession in Hong Kong wrestles with the question of how to preserve academic freedom and institutional autonomy in the face of the retrocession to China and must do so as it deals with issues relating to the increasing student diversity following rapid expansion in the early 1990s, increased pressure to improve standards of research and teaching, and the devolution of responsibility for institutional governance and finance.¹⁰

The Hong Kong Context and Its Universities

After 35 consecutive years of real increases in gross domestic product, Hong Kong's over 6 million inhabitants (95 percent Cantonese-speaking Chinese) enjoy a living standard higher than some developed countries—including Britain.¹¹ But despite having had freedom of speech and the rule of law, it only gained a fully elected legislature in 1995, which was replaced

⁵ This can be seen in Gerard A. Postiglione, "The Future of Hong Kong's Academic Profession in a Period of Profound Change," in *The International Academic Profession: Portraits of Fourteen Countries*, ed. Philip Altbach (Princeton, N.J.: Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, 1996), table 5.1.

⁶ See Weifang Min, "China," in *Asian Higher Education: An International Handbook and Reference Guide*, ed. Gerard A. Postiglione and Grace C. L. Mak (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood, 1997), pp. 37–55.

⁷ China's academic exchanges encompass Africa and South America as well as Eastern Europe and the Middle East, while Hong Kong's academic relations have had little exchange with these regions and largely ignored Eastern Europe, including Russia, until the 1990s.

⁸ See Ernest L. Boyer, Philip G. Altbach, and Mary Jean Whitelaw, eds., *The Academic Profession: An International Perspective* (Princeton, N.J.: Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, 1994), fig. 37, p. 53. A higher proportion of the Hong Kong academic staff gave excellent ratings to their computer facilities than academic staff from any of the other 13 countries in this survey.

⁹ Many universities, including Peking University and Qinghua University in Beijing and Fudan University in Shanghai, have established offices and/or special agreements for academic exchange with universities in Hong Kong and Macau.

¹⁰ See University Grants Committee of Hong Kong, *Higher Education in Hong Kong* (Hong Kong: Government Printer, 1996).

¹¹ See Donald Tsang, *Hong Kong Economic Outlook, 1997* (Hong Kong: Government Printer, 1997).

on July 1, 1997 with an appointed legislature.¹² Other features include an efficient civil service, effective communications and transportation networks, robust textile and electronics industries, a highly skilled and educated populace, and an internationally oriented university system.

In 1997, the territory became an SAR of the PRC under a “one country/two systems” arrangement, in which the previous education system is expected to remain.¹³ The new constitution—the Basic Law—calls for a high degree of autonomy and provides that the people of Hong Kong will rule themselves.¹⁴ The decolonization of higher education has come to mean closer, more frequent contacts with universities in China, declining legitimacy for colonial educational policy, localization of the highest administrative positions, efforts to step up as well as resist the pace of democratization, increased emigration of faculty with return migration of those who have acquired overseas passports, and expanding linkages with adjacent southern China—especially the Pearl River Delta.

As Hong Kong’s universities move closer to China they also are becoming increasingly globalized. Until 1990, Hong Kong for years had sent more students overseas for university education—mostly to Australia, Britain, Canada, and the United States—than it admitted to local universities. Even after 1994, when the number of students at local universities surpassed that going overseas,¹⁵ the international character of Hong Kong’s universities was underscored by the composition of its academic staff. Of those with doctorates, approximately 90 percent earned them outside Hong Kong.

Hong Kong’s academic profession has much to gain or lose in the coming years. It is more closely bound to Western university traditions and practices than elsewhere in Asia, which allows Hong Kong to offer China a unique model of successful East-West academic integration. In addition, given the precarious status of intellectuals in China, Hong Kong’s reincorporation could have major implications for academic freedom and institutional autonomy.¹⁶ The academic profession can contribute to a smooth transition as well as serve as a catalyst for change.

¹² The Hong Kong Provisional Legislature, composed of appointed members confirmed by Beijing, reversed civil liberties legislation enacted by Hong Kong’s fully elected Legislative Council, which it replaced on July 1, 1997.

¹³ See Gerard A. Postiglione, “From Capitalism to Socialism: Hong Kong Education within a Transitional Society,” *Comparative Education Review* 35, no. 4 (November 1991): 627–49, and “The Decolonization of Hong Kong Education,” in *The Hong Kong Reader: Transfer to Chinese Sovereignty*, ed. Ming K. Chan and Gerard A. Postiglione (New York: Sharpe, 1997), pp. 98–123.

¹⁴ See *The Basic Law of the Special Administrative Region of Hong Kong of the People’s Republic of China* (Hong Kong: Consultative Committee of the Basic Law, 1990).

¹⁵ Todd M. Davis, ed., *Open Doors, 1994–1995, Report on International Educational Exchanges* (New York: Institute of International Education, 1995).

¹⁶ See, e.g., Merle Goldman, with Timothy Creek and Carol Lee Hamrin, eds., *China’s Intellectuals and the State: In Search of a New Relationship*, Harvard Contemporary China Series no. 3, Council on East Asian Studies (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1987); Richard Madsen, “The Spiritual Crisis of China’s Intellectuals,” in *Chinese Society on the Eve of Tiananmen: The Impact of Reform*, ed. Deborah Davis and Ezra Vogel, Harvard Contemporary China Series no. 7, Council on East Asian Studies (Cam-

Academic freedom was never a major issue in Hong Kong. Within a community dedicated to commercial interests, the academic community historically was small and not very influential, and academics seldom, if ever, challenged the government. Until 1964, there was only one university—the University of Hong Kong—which was staffed mostly by British expatriates and British-educated Chinese and had close ties to government. Most high-level civil servants, even today, are graduates of this university. The Chinese University of Hong Kong, which was established to serve the increasing number of graduates from Chinese medium secondary schools, was staffed by a diverse group of Chinese academics with connections to many different Chinese communities. Although schools in Hong Kong were prohibited from any discussion of politics until after 1989,¹⁷ universities were under no such government ordinance and purges of university staff for their political views were unknown. Nevertheless, by 1990, there were indications that academic self-censorship was on the rise, as it was in the Hong Kong press.¹⁸ After July 1997, the first area of sensitivity would concern publications that advocated, directly or indirectly, two Chinas or one China and Taiwan.¹⁹

Since 1990, at least the academic profession has been marked by increasingly diverse views. Largely the result of higher education's expansion, this is partly due to the recruitment of more local Chinese as well as non-British-trained academics. A decision to nearly double the number of students admitted to university first-degree studies by 1994–95 was made in October 1989.²⁰ Referred to in some quarters as crisis management and “too little, too late,” the sudden expansion acted as a confidence booster in the wake of increased emigration following the Tiananmen crisis.²¹ Nevertheless, it improved the opportunities of secondary school graduates to attend university

bridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1990), pp. 243–60; and Merle Goldman, “The Intellectuals in the Deng Xiaoping Era,” in *State and Society in China: The Consequences of Reform*, ed. Arthur Lewis Rosenbaum (Boulder, Colo.: Westview, 1992), pp. 193–218.

¹⁷ In 1971, an Education Department ordinance stated, “No instruction, education, entertainment, recreation or propaganda or activity of any kind which, in the opinion of the Director, is in *any way of a political or partly political nature and* prejudicial to the public interest or the welfare of the pupils or of education generally or contrary to the approved syllabus, shall be permitted upon the occasion of any school activity” (see Education Department, *Education Regulations* [Hong Kong: Government Printer, 1971], chap. 279, sec. 84). The italicized text was deleted in 1990. See also “Call to End Ban on Politics in Schools,” *South China Morning Post* (June 7, 1989).

¹⁸ See letter of December 7, 1993, from the Dean, Faculty of Law, Registry of the University of Hong Kong, Annex N, University Senate Minutes, item no. 24, March 1, 1994.

¹⁹ This was made clear by the director of the Hong Kong and Macau office of the State Council of the People's Republic of China.

²⁰ See the reprint of the annual address by Governor David Wilson to the Legislative Council, October 11, 1989, in *Hong Kong, 1990: A Review of 1989*, ed. David Roberts (Hong Kong: Government Printer, 1990), pp. 4–22. See also University Grants Committee Secretariat, *University Grants Committee of Hong Kong, Facts and Figures, 1994* (Hong Kong: University Grants Committee Secretariat, April 1995). The figure of 58,000 refers only to the number of students in the seven institutions of higher education under the University Grants Committee and includes undergraduate and graduate, as well as subdegree students.

²¹ “Academic Hits Out at Crisis Intervention,” *South China Morning Post* (November 5, 1989).

in Hong Kong, and the mean percentage of the relevant age group admitted increased to 18 percent in 1994–95, when total enrollment reached almost 58,000. An estimated 25,000 or more attend universities overseas (excluding mainland China and Taiwan). The expansion also has been reflected in a drop in the number of overseas student visas issued since 1990.²²

There are nine degree-granting institutions of higher education in Hong Kong, including seven universities, a tertiary institution, and the Academy of Performing Arts. All but the Open Learning University are fully government funded.²³ Before 1990, most degree courses were offered in two universities. A third university was established in 1991. One polytechnic began offering degree courses in 1983, and the other polytechnic and one tertiary college began to offer degree courses in 1986, representing 42 percent of all first-degree enrollments in the major institutions by 1988–89. The polytechnics and one of the tertiary institutions earned university titles in 1994, while the Open Learning University earned the title in 1997. At least one more tertiary institution is expected to be elevated to university status by 1997–98. The three top-tier research universities—the University of Hong Kong, the Chinese University of Hong Kong, and the Hong Kong University of Science and Technology—each provides a range of programs leading to undergraduate and graduate degrees. They offer research programs in every subject area and allow faculty to undertake consultancy and collaborative projects with industry.²⁴ The medium of instruction is English except in the Chinese University of Hong Kong, which is bilingual.

The Hong Kong Polytechnic University and the City University of Hong Kong (the former polytechnics) offer courses leading to the awards of diploma, higher certificate, higher diploma, and a bachelor's degree. They also offer a small number of graduate degrees and have some research programs, emphasize the application of knowledge and vocational training, and maintain strong links with industry and employers. The Hong Kong Baptist University (formerly Baptist College) and Lingnan College provide undergraduate courses in the arts, sciences, social sciences, business, and communication. They plan to or already offer a small number of graduate courses, with research programs in some areas. The Open University, known as the Open Learning Institute until 1997, is a distance learning institution based on the British model.

The most influential body in higher education is the University Grants

²² University Grants Committee of Hong Kong, *Getting Ready for Tertiary Education*, abridged version, 4th ed. (May 1996), p. VIII-5. This is a study commissioned by the University Grants Committee.

²³ Hugh Witt, ed., *Hong Kong Yearbook, 1993: A Review of 1992* (Hong Kong: Government Printer, 1993). The seven universities and tertiary college are funded through the University Grants Committee as well as the Hong Kong Institute of Education, while the Academy of Performing Arts is funded through the recreation and culture branch of the government. Hong Kong has a postsecondary institution, Shue Yan College, which is privately funded.

²⁴ See the University Grants Committee of Hong Kong's "Appendix L," in their *Report for July 1991 to June 1995* (Hong Kong: Government Printer, May 1996), pp. 69–72.

Committee (UGC), which was established in 1965 to advise the government on the facilities, development, and financial needs of universities.²⁵ In 1996, the body included nine Hong Kong Chinese, six members from the United Kingdom, three Americans (including a professor of Hong Kong Chinese origin), and one Australian. The chief executive of the Hong Kong SAR appoints the members of the UGC, which was expected to include members from mainland China after the return of Chinese sovereignty. The first SAR chief executive named by an election committee in Hong Kong and approved by the National People's Congress in Beijing has targeted education as a priority and appointed the UGC chair as one of his executive counsellors.²⁶

Public knowledge of the UGC's recommendations for increased funds to cover massive expansion of higher education led to measures for greater accountability in teaching and research. The international makeup of UGC members resulted in moves to bring Hong Kong's universities, along with their relatively well-salaried academic staff, into the global movement to decentralize financial responsibility. By 1997, universities in Hong Kong faced budget cuts for the first time, even though the economy remained robust.

Although most of their funds come from the government, universities in Hong Kong are autonomous. Decisions about hiring, course content, staff evaluation, academic titling, salaries, and so forth are made by the individual institutions. Nevertheless, there are natural limitations to that autonomy. When the University of Hong Kong decided in 1988 to add a fourth year to its 3-year degree program, the Education Commission of Hong Kong undercut it by mandating that all secondary education had to last 7 rather than 6 years.²⁷ There are other limitations as well, as noted in a 1996 UGC review of higher education. "We take very much for granted in Hong Kong an adherence to institutional autonomy and academic freedom, as they have served us well in the past. These are not absolutes—there are restrictions—and their survival depends very much on pragmatic considerations of efficiency as on moral and ethical arguments. Nevertheless, there is a strong 'hands off' element in the relations between government (directly or indirectly through the advisory bodies) and higher educational institutions. It is important to maintain it."²⁸

This position has opened the door to challenge tenure on pragmatic rather than political grounds. Members of the UGC have noted the debate

²⁵ See the University Grants Committee website, <http://www.ugc.edu.hk>.

²⁶ *Basic Law of the Special Administrative Region of Hong Kong*. Also, see the speech by the chief executive, the Honorable Tung Chee Hwa, at the July 1, 1997, ceremony to celebrate the establishment of the Hong Kong SAR of the PRC, where he stated: "Education is the key to the future of Hong Kong. . . . It should encourage diversification and combine the strength of the east and west. We shall draw up a comprehensive plan to improve the quality of education and inject sufficient resources to achieve this goal" (<http://www.info.gov.HK.HK1997.handover.ecele.html>).

²⁷ *Education Commission Report Number 3* (Hong Kong: Government Printer, 1988).

²⁸ University Grants Committee of Hong Kong, *Higher Education in Hong Kong*, chap. 43, par. 3 (n. 10 above).

in the United States about the viability of tenure over the long-term. Given Hong Kong's economic philosophy, market forces will be welcomed increasingly into the academic arena, leaving open the possibility that tenure and the academic freedom it is supposed to protect will be less secure—a prospect of some concern at the time of the sovereignty transfer.

Institutional autonomy also has necessitated the formation of a committee composed of the heads of the seven higher education institutions that meets periodically to discuss matters of mutual interest and concern, including their common preference to convert to a 4-year system. University heads use these meetings to inform each other of changes within their institutions that may affect the larger system, such as the introduction of a credit unit system or alterations in the system of academic titles.

China's Professoriate

Higher education in China has changed dramatically since the late 1970s as universities have been pressed into the service of economic liberalization and reform. Regular enrollment was expanded by enlarging institutions and setting up new ones, although increased market forces, less government financial support, and expanding student numbers led to a degree of consolidation by the mid-1990s. Large numbers of students and scholars continue to go abroad as more international exchanges have been encouraged. Finally, *minban* (non-state-run, or private) universities and colleges are being established to mobilize more resources for accelerating higher education development.²⁹

Chinese institutions are funded and managed according to national regulations, but the government's insistence that universities raise more of their own funds has led to increased managerial autonomy. Unlike Hong Kong where there are no private universities, China has encouraged such institutions. Nevertheless, Hong Kong's universities enjoy an autonomy not found on the mainland.

Even with the consolidation since 1995, China still has more than 1,000 higher education institutions.³⁰ These are classified by specialization: comprehensive universities, natural science and technology, agriculture, forestry, medicine and pharmacy, teacher training, language and literature, finance and economics, political science and law, physical culture, art, and others. Institutions also are classified by the government department to which they are

²⁹ Min (n. 6 above); also see Ka-ho Mok, *Chinese Intellectuals and the State in Post-Mao China* (London: Macmillan, in press); and Feng Wei, *Zhongguo zhishijie: Dazhendang—Shanghai chenfuzhongde Zhongguo zhishi fenzi saomiao* (The great tremors in Chinese intellectual circles: An overview of intellectuals floundering in the sea of commercialism) (Beijing: Zhongguo shehui chubanshe, 1993).

³⁰ *Zhongguo jiaoyu tongji nianjian, 1995* (Educational statistics yearbook of China, 1995 [n. 2 above]) lists 1,054 institutions of higher education. See also Gerard A. Postiglione and Liu Fang, eds., "Higher Education in 1994: Selections from China Education News," *Chinese Education and Society* 28, no. 6 (November–December 1995): 1–91.

responsible, including the state education commission, central ministries and agencies, and local authorities (usually the provincial government).³¹ Comparing size, we find that only 137 of China's 1,054 institutions have more than 5,000 students, while four of Hong Kong's seven universities exceed 10,000. In short, about half of all Chinese institutions (536) have under 2,000 students, and 69 percent (729) have fewer than 3,000.³²

The traditionally older professoriate in China has become younger, although the proportion of faculty holding doctorates remains far below their counterparts in Hong Kong. Like Hong Kong, academic titles are heavily weighted at the bottom end of the scale, and the percentage of women faculty remains low (30 percent for China and 25 percent for Hong Kong).³³

The average age of Hong Kong faculty in 1996 was 43,³⁴ which is relatively young compared with countries such as Japan, Russia, and Israel, where the average age was 51 in 1993.³⁵ Most of China's full professors are between 56 and 60. Yet, almost 30 percent of academic staff across ranks equivalent to assistant, associate, and full professor are between 31 and 35.³⁶ Reasons for this include the expansion of higher education and the return of scholars from abroad who are dissatisfied with their employment prospects outside China.

More than half of Hong Kong academics have doctorates, while staff qualification levels in China resemble those in other developing countries. Within Chinese academia, less than 1 percent have doctorates, 5 percent possess master's degrees, 49 percent have bachelor's degrees, and the rest have lesser qualifications. Among full professors, 1 percent have a doctorate, another 1 percent have a master's, 27 percent have a bachelor's, and the rest have less.³⁷ The impact of the Cultural Revolution—when formal academic qualifications did not exist—must be considered when viewing these figures, however, as China's universities began to offer doctoral degrees only in the early 1980s, and then only at top universities in selected fields. Stringent standards limit professors, including those with doctorates, to carrying doctoral students only if they and their institutions receive approval of the State Education Commission.

In regard to academic rank, Hong Kong is bottom heavy compared with counterparts overseas. At the University of Hong Kong in 1995, for example,

³¹ See Min.

³² *Zhongguo jiaoyu tongji nianjian*, 1995 (Educational statistics yearbook of China, 1995), p. 16. The majority of institutions in China have small numbers of students: 68 have 4,001–5,000 students; 120 have 3,001–4,000 students; 193 have 2,001–3,000 students; 167 have 1,500–2,000 students; 184 have 1,001–1,499 students; 142 have 501–1,000 students; 24 have 300–999 students; and 10 have fewer than 300 students.

³³ *Ibid.*

³⁴ University Grants Committee of Hong Kong, *Higher Education in Hong Kong* (n. 10 above).

³⁵ See Boyer et al., fig. 2, p. 35 (n. 8 above).

³⁶ *Zhongguo jiaoyu tongji nianjian*, 1995 (Educational statistics yearbook of China, 1995), p. 28.

³⁷ *Ibid.*

less than 20 percent of the staff were full professors (including professor and reader categories) compared with 40–60 percent at most North American universities.³⁸ This situation is changing as a system of cross-retitling from British to American systems and upward retitling without pay have been introduced to improve international recruiting efforts as well as to provide incentives for longstanding lower-rank staff. As already noted, the imbalance is even more extreme in China. Of the full-time staff in the top three ranks of China's institutions in 1995, 10 percent were professors, 35 percent were associate professors, and 55 percent were assistant professors (lecturers).³⁹

Attributes and Attitudes of Academic Staff at Top Universities in Hong Kong and China

Educational differences resulting from capitalism and socialism are mitigated by many similarities that could be a result of cultural similarities, the dominance of state-funded universities, the economic integration between Hong Kong and the rest of China, market reforms in mainland China, and stepped-up academic exchanges not only between the two systems (the SAR and the rest of the PRC) but also within the larger global academy.⁴⁰ The latter has been spurred on by the fact that PRC academics returning home from overseas can visit Hong Kong without a visa.⁴¹ Illustrative comparisons can be made from faculty survey data collected at one of China's top universities (CTU) and Hong Kong's three top universities (HKTU).⁴²

The most prominent differences concern qualifications and salaries. Almost three-quarters of the HKTU faculty hold a doctorate compared with

³⁸ Calculations are from K. W. Ng's "Staff Ranks" (University of Hong Kong, Statistics Department, February 2, 1996), fig. 1: "Comparison of Academic Staff between the University of Hong Kong and North American Universities."

³⁹ *Zhongguo jiaoyu tongji nianjian, 1995* (Educational statistics yearbook of China, 1995), p. 28.

⁴⁰ See Ingmar Fagerlind and Lawrence J. Saha, "Education and Development under Capitalism and Socialism," in their *Education and National Development: A Comparative Perspective* (Oxford: Pergamon, 1983), pp. 195–233; see also Burton Clark, *The Higher Education System: Academic Organization in Cross-National Perspective* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1983).

⁴¹ Academics coming directly from China to Hong Kong must apply for a visa, a process that averages 3 to 4 months, more time than it takes to acquire a visa to visit the United States.

⁴² In Hong Kong, 222 academic staff from the University of Hong Kong, the Chinese University of Hong Kong, and the Hong Kong University of Science and Technology (collectively identified here as HKTU) were questioned in May 1993 as part of a survey of academic staff across all seven University Grants Committee institutions. The surveys sampled across academic ranks within all departments and similar academic units. A staff list from each institution was used. After selection of a random number, every third person was sampled across departmental listing arranged by rank. The University and Polytechnic Grants Committee figure for total academic staff across institutions in 1993–94 was 3,562. The sampling process using staff lists yielded 1,247 names, approximately 35 percent of the population. After selection of a random number, every third person was selected across departmental listings arranged by rank. There were 472 respondents for an approximately 37 percent response rate, which accounts for about 13 percent of the total population. Completed surveys were returned either to the General Post Office or to one of the institutional monitors. In China, 278 academic staff from CTU were surveyed in fall 1994. A total of 1,040 questionnaires were sent to CTU, which accounts for one-third of the total faculty. There was an approximately 27 percent response rate, which accounts for 11 percent of the total population. After selection of a random number, every third person on the staff list arranged by department by age was chosen. Questionnaires were mailed individually with a stamped preaddressed envelope.

23 percent at CTU. Unlike Hong Kong, where most academics expressed satisfaction with their salaries, only 6 percent of CTU faculty rated their salaries as good or excellent. More than half of CTU faculty say that paid consulting is necessary compared with 7 percent for HKTU, and more than 80 percent of CTU faculty hold other paid positions while less than 4 percent do so at HKTU. This trend is a result of increased educational marketization in China. In Hong Kong, where the cost of living is high, universities easily could lose prominent academics to the private sector if salaries were reduced.

Nevertheless, these surveys indicate a number of similarities regarding views toward student quality, research activity, governance, higher education and society, academic freedom, and international connections. Although more intellectual freedom exists at CTU than at other universities in mainland China, independent critiques of the system are not encouraged. At HKTU, such critiques are sometimes frowned on; the system evolved, after all, as a product of colonialism within a conservative Chinese society to support the status quo. Still, a critical tradition rooted in the Western university nevertheless survives. Western academics could hardly constitute a serious threat because of their generally limited integration into local culture and society.

Student Quality

More than 60 percent of CTU faculty rated their students as good or excellent compared with 45 percent at Hong Kong's three top universities. About 37 percent of CTU faculty disagreed with the statement that "students in their department are better now than 5 years ago," while the figure for HKTU was 44 percent. Student enrollment has risen in both places, but HKTU's more rapid expansion—almost 100 percent between 1989 and 1996—may account for the slightly different views. Nevertheless, higher education in China is likely to expand from 3 percent of the relevant age group in 1994 to 8 percent in 2000, which may well bring CTU faculty views more in line with those of HKTU.

Although Hong Kong faculty gave their students the highest rating in mathematics and quantitative reasoning skills in an international survey of 13 countries and Hong Kong conducted by the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, CTU faculty rated the preparation of their students even higher than HKTU faculty rated their students. Aside from the fact that CTU students are drawn from a much larger population pool, the CTU mathematics department is one of the country's most distinguished. Few Hong Kong faculty view their students as adequately prepared in written and oral communication skills (giving them among the lowest ratings in the international survey). CTU professors rated the preparation of their students in written and oral communication skills more than twice as high as the

Hong Kong figure. This can be accounted for by the fact that Chinese language learning was not given strong emphasis in Hong Kong under the colonial regime. English language education, while emphasized, did not provide most students with strong communication skills. This is due in large part to the fact that 98 percent of the Hong Kong population are Chinese, leaving few opportunities to use English. With the onset of Chinese sovereignty, most secondary schools converted to Chinese language (mostly Cantonese) as the medium of instruction, and the learning of standard Mandarin Chinese became compulsory beginning in primary school.

Research Activity

Views concerning research show the greatest similarities, with 55 percent of CTU faculty and 53 percent of HKTU faculty stating that their interests lie primarily in research rather than teaching. Moreover, 86 percent of CTU and 85 percent of HKTU faculty say that research plays an important role in staff evaluation. When asked if publications used for promotion are just counted and not qualitatively evaluated, approximately half the faculty at CTU and HKTU agreed.

With respect to expectations and pressures to do research, however, CTU faculty report being more challenged. Twenty-eight percent of HKTU faculty agreed that they frequently feel under pressure to do more research than they would actually like, while the figure for CTU is 44 percent. Eighty-five percent of HKTU faculty believe that regular research activity is expected of them, while 49 percent of CTU faculty so indicate. This may be accounted for in part by the shortage of research funds and facilities at CTU compared with HKTU. In fact, 38 percent of HKTU faculty agreed that research funding was easier to get than 5 years earlier, and only 17 percent of CTU faculty agree.

In an authoritarian society, one would expect restrictions on certain types of research publications. In fact, only 38 percent of CTU faculty agreed that there are no political or ideological restrictions on what scholars may publish, while 68 percent of HKTU agreed. Such restrictions apparently do not infringe on academics' connections with international counterparts, however, as 44 percent of HKTU faculty believe that international connections are important in staff evaluations compared with 57 percent of CTU faculty.

University Governance and Academic Freedom

Regarding the degree to which decision making is centralized, HKTU faculty viewed the selection of key administrators in their institutions as only slightly more centralized (78 percent) than CTU staff did (71 percent). Likewise, 56 percent of HKTU faculty indicated that decisions determining budget priorities were centralized compared with 62 percent of CTU faculty. Given China's many years of centralized planning and top-down decision making, that CTU academic staff still view most decisions—including the se-

lection of new faculty, faculty promotions, assignment of teaching loads, approval of new academic programs, and the establishment of admission standards—as more centralized is not surprising.

Faculty influence on academic policies must be understood in the context of a more hierarchical, less open, and more centralized tradition at CTU. Sixty-seven percent of CTU faculty see themselves as very, somewhat, or a little influential at the department level in shaping key academic policies, in contrast to 82 percent for HKTU faculty. This can be viewed within the context of institutional democracy, as HKTU staff elect either their department heads or deans (or both), and agendas and minutes from many committees, including those of the university senate, are circulated to all staff members. In addition, 42 percent of CTU faculty agree that the administration is often autocratic, compared with 57 percent of HKTU faculty. That most HKTU academics received their higher degrees in Western universities where the tradition was more open, less hierarchical, and more decentralized than in Hong Kong might account for certain aspects of their response patterns.

Both HKTU and CTU tout academic freedom as an important value embodied in their university traditions,⁴³ and while China has a history of clamping down on intellectuals, 65 percent of HKTU (though only 34 percent of faculty at Hong Kong's other four institutions of higher education) and 55 percent of CTU faculty agreed that the administration supports academic freedom.⁴⁴ Yet, only half of CTU faculty and even fewer—44 percent—of PKU faculty indicated that they were free to determine the content of the courses they teach, in contrast to 78 percent at HKTU.⁴⁵

Higher Education Priorities

Sixty-three percent of CTU but only 44 percent of HKTU faculty agreed that the government has the responsibility of defining the overall purposes and policies of higher education. Moreover, 33 percent of HKTU faculty believe that the government should provide free tuition to students, while only 12 percent of CTU faculty thought so. However, about 40 percent of both faculty groups believe that there is far too much governmental interference in important academic policies. Relative agreement between the two groups also was displayed in regard to views about the role of business: 91 percent of CTU and 86 percent of HKTU faculty believed that businesses should contribute more to higher education.

At first glance, the CTU responses might seem unexpected in a socialist system. However, the changing context of economic reforms and the introduction of market mechanisms has penetrated the thinking of the academic

⁴³ See "Mission Statement of the University of Hong Kong," available from <http://www.hku.hk>.

⁴⁴ Of the CTU respondents, 7.2 percent did not answer this question, and 11.5 percent indicated that they did not know.

⁴⁵ Of the CTU respondents, 5.8 percent did not answer the question, and 2.9 percent indicated that they did not know.

TABLE 1
HIGHEST PRIORITIES FOR HIGHER EDUCATION IN THE FUTURE

Priorities	Hong Kong's Three Top Universities	China's Top Universities
Protect free intellectual inquiry	1	3
Promote scholarship and research	2	2
Strengthen the society's capacity to compete internationally	3	1
Educate students for leadership	4	7
Prepare students for work	5	6
Lifelong learning for adults	6	8
Help to solve basic social problems	7	4
Preserve cultural heritage	8	5

SOURCES.—Data for Hong Kong's three top universities are from the International Survey of the Academic Profession, 1991–93, conducted by the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching. Data for China's top universities are from a survey I conducted in 1994.

NOTE.—Rankings are based on the relative percentage of faculty that believe it should be assigned the highest priority by society. Priorities are ranked 1–8, 1 being the highest, 8 the lowest.

community. This is not only reflected in activities to supplement their incomes but also in their views toward the financial contribution that students should make toward a university education. In fact, CTU and more than 30 other institutions directly under the State Education Commission introduced tuition fees beginning in 1994.

The HKTU and CTU faculty ranked the same three concerns, within a field of eight, as the highest priorities for the future of higher education (see table 1), though they differed in the ordering.⁴⁶ Global competition is foremost in the minds of both faculties but more so at CTU. Likewise, free intellectual inquiry is seen as significant by both but more so by HKTU faculty. As decolonization proceeds, HKTU faculty place a higher priority on educating students for leadership than on the preservaton of cultural heritage.

International Academic Activity

The CTU academics, more than HKTU faculty, reported that foreign students are enrolled more frequently at their institutions and their own students have studied abroad more frequently. More CTU than HKTU faculty also reported that connections with overseas scholars were very important to their professional work. Eighty-eight percent of CTU academics indicated that they must read books and journals published overseas in order to keep up with developments in their fields, whereas the figure for HKTU academics, all of whom can read English, was 100 percent. Finally, 70 percent and 66 percent of CTU and HKTU academics, respectively, believe the curriculum should be more international in focus.

⁴⁶ Represented as the proportion of staff that indicated an issue should be the highest priority.

As expected, views of the faculties of HKTU and CTU differ based on contextual and institutional idiosyncracies. Yet, similarities abound and may very well be attributed not only to the factors mentioned at the beginning of this section but also to their increasingly similar interactions with the global academic community.

Hong Kong's Academics within the Global Academy

Although academics in both Hong Kong and China are young, those in Hong Kong are more credentialed and international in composition. Nevertheless, with the expansion of higher education in China, this situation could change within a decade. For Hong Kong, key issues are the maintenance of the academic profession, preservation of academic freedom, and continued integration into the global academy, in addition to contributing to China's economic development.

Maintenance of the profession will be difficult if academic staff leave in the early period of the SAR. In 1993, 37 percent of academic staff from Hong Kong's top three institutions and 47 percent from the others indicated that they were likely to leave their institutions within 5 years. The figure was 56 percent for overseas appointees and 33 percent for local appointees.⁴⁷ The expressed likelihood of academic staff leaving their institutions should be viewed in the context of increased emigration among the larger population prior to 1997 as well as in the generally high mobility rates that exist in Hong Kong across occupations. Also, to be sure, a wide gap may exist between expressed likelihood and a concrete decision to leave one's institution.

By 1996, few had actually left and the turnover rate, including overseas staff, was not abnormally high.⁴⁸ By that time, confidence in the future status of Hong Kong had grown as memories of the Tiananmen incident receded. In anticipation of an outflow, Hong Kong's universities had developed strategies to boost their ability to recruit internationally, especially by converting the title system from the British (lecturer, senior lecturer, reader, professor)

⁴⁷ Overseas appointees may remain in Hong Kong for less time than it takes to earn tenure. Overseas terms usually include better housing accommodations and travel allowances, along with other benefits in some cases. Eligibility is based on overseas residency, however, because Hong Kong is an emigrant, as well as an immigrant, society, and there are many Chinese (including those originating from Hong Kong, Taiwan, other parts of Southeast Asia, and Western countries and mainland Chinese who come via long periods of study in the United States and other places) as well as non-Chinese employed on overseas terms. Moreover, local appointees are not solely composed of those who are ethnic Chinese; there are also a few individuals, usually long-term residents of Hong Kong who are "Westerners," included in this category. The differences between local and overseas terms gradually disappear with promotion to higher rank. Nevertheless, the appointment itself is still classified as local or overseas. Since the survey was completed, universities have taken measures to dismantle differences between local and overseas terms.

⁴⁸ Interviews were conducted with the director of personnel of one HKTU institution and the vice director of personnel at another HKTU institution in early 1996. The former stated that no mass exodus of staff was expected, that resignation levels remained normal, and that if resignation levels increased, these individuals would probably be locals without foreign passports rather than overseas appointees. The latter stated that the turnover rate for tenured staff that year was 5.19 percent.

to the American (assistant, associate, professor) model. Upward retitling without pay also was instituted so that overseas academics could be recruited as associate professors on assistant professor salaries, which generally are higher than associate professor salaries in their country of origin. This measure helped to retain other key faculty who might have left Hong Kong. A further incentive was to offer an early payout of accumulated retirement benefits in lump sum and without loss of tenure to fearful academics. By 1997, Hong Kong's professoriate generally was still intact. Overseas academics in Hong Kong have foreign passports, and although they could be the first to leave if the situation deteriorated, it is the locals who more often go abroad, most just long enough to gain a foreign passport before they return. This practice is facilitated by an unofficial policy of extended leave without pay for valued academic staff.

Regardless of the staff outflow after 1997, the expansion of higher education will necessitate broader faculty recruitment. That surely includes China, despite the mainland's own shortage of doctorates and doctoral programs. This has created a large market for overseas doctoral programs, something that Hong Kong's universities also are tapping into by increasing the proportion of their doctoral students from mainland China. Hong Kong's universities also have begun to employ mainlanders with doctorates from the United States and other countries who have not returned to China.⁴⁹

There also were no overt attacks on academic freedom in Hong Kong as the return of Chinese rule approached. No politically motivated purges of academic staff occurred, with none expected in the short term. Academics with dissenting views—including members of the political party intentionally marginalized by Beijing—could still be found teaching.⁵⁰ University shops sold books not approved on the mainland, and university presses published books with dissenting views. Self-censorship was on the rise by 1997, however, in anticipation of change.

Continued integration into the global academy will help to ensure academic freedom as well as improve the quality of education and the standard of research. Such international engagement seems assured with so many fac-

⁴⁹ See Hyaewol Choi, *An International Scientific Community: Asian Scholars in the United States* (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood, 1995).

⁵⁰ On August 4, 1997, two universities in Hong Kong defended freedom of expression after a legislator from the Beijing-appointed Hong Kong Provisional Legislature wrote to the senior administration of two universities saying that two faculty members were unfit to receive public funding because they criticized his views on patriotic education. On July 17, 1997, new regulations on outside practice were issued at another university requiring staff to seek approval before giving interviews and preparing manuscripts for books and journals. See May Sin-Mi Hon, "Academic Freedom Roar over Clamp," and Shirley Kwok, "Colleges Defend Right to Criticize," both in *South China Morning Post* (August 5, 1997), p. 3. Although officials claim that the regulations are intended to restrict staff from engaging in outside work to earn extra income, faculty are demanding a written memorandum clarifying the regulations. See B. Sung, "Put 'Restrictive' New Rules in Writing, Staff Tells University," *Hong Kong Standard* (August 7, 1997), p. 1. On June 5, 1997, another university in Hong Kong permitted students to display a sculpture for 2 months that commemorates the Tiananmen tragedy of June 4, 1989.

ulty from the United Kingdom, Commonwealth countries, and the United States. Although faculty from other parts of the world are far fewer in number, this selective internationalism has served Hong Kong higher education well in many ways, including the maintenance of standards and the nurture of international academic interchange.

The main challenge to Hong Kong's professoriate is to maintain its globalism while fostering the rapid expansion of academic exchange with universities in China. This academic exchange relies on a variety of sources in Hong Kong and the rest of China. The UGC allocation, which alone was 2.5 million Hong Kong dollars for academic exchange with China in 1991–92, jumped to 4.4 million in 1995–96. As more of the academics recruited by Hong Kong are mainland Chinese who earned their doctorates in the United States and other Western countries, they will join their Hong Kong counterparts, serving as a bridge between the Hong Kong and mainland academic communities—unless the recruitment process becomes overly politicized and Hong Kong's academic culture changes radically.